

EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, AND THE
DISADVANTAGED
CASE STUDY ANALYSIS: THE INFORMALLY HOUSED, INTERNALLY DISPLACED
COMMUNITY POPULATION OF BOGOTA, COLOMBIA; SOUTH AMERICA

by

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Educational Empowerment, Community Development and the Disadvantaged
Case Study Analysis: The Informally Housed, Internally Displaced Community
Population of Bogota, Colombia; South America

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my loving parents, Luz Marina and Baltazar, and my brother Andrew. As my truest and greatest friends, their presence has provided an inspiration in my life that has always been, and remains invaluable. I am eternally grateful and indebted to them for their unconditional support, guidance and advice through the years.

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List of Abbreviations/Operational Definitions

<u><i>Structural Violence:</i></u>	The systematic exploitation of a people by the rich, by Government officials, and by mid level criminals.
<u><i>IDP:</i></u>	Internally Displaced Person.
<u><i>Basic human needs:</i></u>	Those needs without which there cannot be on-going social relationships and harmonious organizations.
<u><i>CODHES:</i></u>	Consultorio Para los derechos humanos y el desplazamiento (Colombian Commission for Human Rights and Displacement).
<u><i>Protracted Social Conflict:</i></u>	Process, by which conflict takes place over extended periods of time, Consisting of several crisis episodes of varying frequency and intensity.
<u><i>Child Combatants:</i></u>	As defined by the United Nations: Any person who is under 18 years of age who is part of any regular or irregular armed force or armed group acting in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers and anyone accompanying such groups.
<u><i>Department:</i></u>	Country subdivisions in Colombia, S.A. formed by a grouping of municipalities led by a democratically elected governor and department assembly.
<u><i>NGO:</i></u>	Nongovernmental Organization.
<u><i>FARC:</i></u>	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia).
<u><i>AUC:</i></u> Colombia).	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self Defense Forces of
<u><i>ELN:</i></u>	Ejercito de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army).
<u><i>Demobilized:</i></u>	The process of standing down a nation's armed forces or an individual soldier

Reintegration:

The movement of a minority group in a society into the mainstream of the society

UNICEF:

United Nations Children's Fund

SNAIPD:

Sistema Nacional de Atención Integral a la Población Desplazada por la Violencia (National Plan of Comprehensive Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons).

Abstract

EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE DISADVANTAGED. CASE STUDY ANALYSIS: THE INTERNALLY DISLACED, INFORMALLY HOUSED COMMUNITY POPULATION OF BOGOTA, COLOMBIA; SOUTH AMERICA.

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Thesis Committee Chair: Dr. Sandra Cheldelin

This thesis is a descriptive analysis of how specific governmental bodies and non state organizations in Bogotá, Colombia are working to further educational advancement and community development for the largest community populations of the internally displaced social group. Educational empowerment for the internally displaced is analyzed through an examination of literature and data underlying stated government provisions, specifically created for the protection of IDP rights in the educational social sector. Equal consideration is given to specific initiatives undertaken by non state actors to advance the access to and quality of education for the internally displaced. Community development in this thesis is defined by an analysis of the infrastructure, access to state funded institutional and economic support, as well as the relationship between established periphery host communities and the internally displaced living within those communities. This study is primarily a qualitative descriptive analysis of the internally displaced living in the periphery of the city of Bogotá, Colombia. Quantitative empirical research data is introduced as a

supplement to the underlying objectives of this research, and when necessary to identify the indicators of participation of the internally displaced within the educational system. Recommendations for the educational advancement and community development of the internally displaced population of Bogotá are provided in light of research findings.

Chapter 1 Implications of internal displacement on educational advancement and community development in Colombia

1.1 Preface

While the land upon which extraordinarily violent conflict is fought takes countless lives, it also remains the home of those who are fortunate enough to survive. The actions of armed groups engaging in warfare with a nation state or between one another invariably have consequences on the general population. These repercussions and the profound sorrow that they accompany are felt by individuals and families for years, decades and lifetimes. The death and displacement caused by internal combat not only erodes the fabric of society, but also threatens the mere humanity of a people.

I can vividly recall, as a child, conversations with my immediate family regarding the why so many left their homes in Colombia. An uneasy tension and sadness appeared on their faces as they recounted stories of so many killed in a civil war that even at that point, twenty five years ago, seemed as though it had no end. The realities of what happened to them and others were not held from me, as I was told from a young age very purposefully, that this was my history and I needed to know. It was important even then, whether I realized it completely or not, for me to understand how what was happening thousands of miles away was inextricably linked to my life and place in the world.

My father at times recalls the reason why he was forced to leave the country. As he grew into adulthood, it was clear that his hometown for his entire life became a “zona roja” or red zone. At that time in the late 1950s, it was liberals and conservatives who fought for control of the country over political and social ideals. He has said that seeing children and families slain on gravel streets was not uncommon, but rather a part of his everyday existence. There were constant reminders of excruciatingly pervasive violence. As a result, along with my grandparents and several other relatives, they decided that in order to survive, they would have to leave the country.

Within the month prior to my birth in the United States, my uncle, a military air force pilot and the youngest of my father’s brothers was murdered by guerilla forces as he flew over an area suspected of being a haven for illicit drug crop cultivation. I was named Edgard in his honor, a name that has served as a powerful reminder of the price that so many pay in this protracted conflict.

As I grew to know more about my uncle and his place within the conflict, I became ever more fascinated with the history of the country and a people so consistently affected by internal divisions and violent struggle. I realized unquestionably that fighting between militarily engaged combatants inevitably reached innocent civilians. The extent of this reality though, I could hardly begin to imagine.

1.2 Context of the research

With a population of over 45 million, it is estimated by the internal displacement monitoring center that Colombia is also home to an estimated 3.3 to 4.9 million internally displaced persons.¹ This figure reflects those displaced within the country's borders as a direct result of a protracted civil conflict. The figure identifies those who have been displaced since at least the year 1985. It is a commonly held assertion that the displaced within Colombia "tend to flee individually rather than in mass exodus and initially move to nearby villages, then to a farm, and last to a major urban center."² This pattern may be seen as indicative of the desire to remain nearby local support structures, while avoiding the higher rates of crime within larger urban conglomerations.

At present it is estimated that with a population of over seven million, the capital city of Bogotá is home to over 400,000 internally displaced persons, which account for 3% to 5% of the city's total population³. The vast majority of these people are relegated to slums and informal housing located on the periphery of the city. They are forced to migrate to this city because of underlining social, economic and civil conflict related concerns. The consequences of this forced expulsion from their properties and regions have been devastating and profound.

¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Americas Regional Overview', www.internaldisplacement.org, October 10, 2010. P.4

² Profile of internal displacement: Colombia. Global IDP database of the Norwegian Refugee Council. February 2004 p.3

³ Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement (CODHES). 2010 p.6

It has been noted that “at the individual, family, and social level the emotional impact of their experience affects’ the ability of IDPs to learn, become self sufficient and build a new life.”⁴ This forced migration subsequently leaves the individual with virtually no option but to find refuge in the larger urban areas of the country in order to escape the violence and devastation of the civil conflict. Various questions must be asked in order to arrive at a comprehensive analysis of what these individuals and families have and continue to endure, as well what is being done to improve their educational as well as social outlook.

1.3 Objectives of the research

Primarily, this study seeks to retrieve information about the population of internally displaced persons in the city of Bogotá, Colombia who have been removed or have had to flee their land due to the consequences of a civil war, and who are now working to rebuild their lives after displacement. This study will also acquire information about certain non state funded groups in the city, and their individual efforts to aid in the educational empowerment and community development of these people.

Community development in this thesis dissertation will be defined by an analysis of the infrastructure, access to state funded institutional and economic support, as well as the relationship between established periphery host communities and the displaced living within those communities. Focus will be

⁴ Carrillo, Angela Consuelo. Internal displacement in Colombia: humanitarian, economic and social consequences in urban settings and urban challenges. Vol 91. No. 875 September 2009. p.21

placed on the city's largest settlement of informally housed, internally displaced people. There will also be a focus placed on conflict resolution and peace building strategies developed by two of the city's most prominent nongovernmental organizations.

The impact of this protracted civil conflict on individuals and families in Colombia is immeasurable. The necessity for this study can be examined through its practical application in the lives of those affected by these atrocities. Their victimization over the course of several decades has been thoroughly documented.

Less focus has been directed toward the efforts being made for their educational advancement, their community development, and exactly what these initiatives are doing in practice to empower these people. This thesis seeks to make clear the necessity for exhaustive continued study and work on how the Colombian society can prepare to accept these internally displaced and provide for them the most promising opportunity for individual and collective group progress.

There is an urgent need for continued research and study relating to programs that foster educational empowerment and community development among the internally displaced. The relevance of this research to the field of conflict resolution lies primarily in the potential that this study has for not only understanding conflict, but also identifying mechanisms through which a society can begin to move forward toward pacification and resolution. It is important also, to understand the commonalities that are shared by nation states who endure violent

internal conflict, thus promoting the cross-cultural and transnational relevance of this work.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis work will be a descriptive academic analysis of how governmental and non state organizations in Bogotá, Colombia are working in the field to further educational advancement and community development for this social group. As an intensive descriptive analysis of a group, this study will be based upon the work of available literature and data that correspond to the internally displaced within Colombia, and specifically the city of Bogotá.

In practice, this study will essentially be a qualitative descriptive analysis of the internally displaced living in the periphery of the city of Bogotá, Colombia. Quantitative empirical research data will be introduced as a supplement to the underlying objectives of this research, and when necessary to identify the indicators of participation within the educational system. Primary sources that will be utilized are published academic books, as well as peer reviewed journals.

This study will employ the qualitative research method. The qualitative descriptions on what is being presently done on the ground in Bogotá be will of the most significant value. I have gathered the most pertinent and accurate research and data in order to identify how these programs and initiatives are aiding the internally displaced of Bogotá.

The common threads of migration patterns and what they can tell us about internal displacement and the subsequent state of human rights for a people are themes relatable to many afflicted nation states.

To comprehensively understand the current state of affairs for the internally displaced, it is essential that one take into account the history of forced migration and the factors that have led to large scale displacement. Through the careful analysis of available empirical research data, I can draw reliable conclusions on exactly how education and the development of community work to aid these people. I can also formulate recommendations on what can be done in the future to ensure that their varied needs are adequately met.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

In identifying the manners in which the Colombian government and non state actors are working to empower the internally displaced of Bogotá, Colombia through education and community development, various factors must be taken in to account. It is necessary to properly address the social consequences of displacement. It is also important to identify exactly what is being done in the field to progress education and the development of community for the internally displaced population of Bogotá.

Educational empowerment for the internally displaced must be analyzed through an examination of literature underlying stated government provisions, specifically created for the protection of IDP rights in the educational and social societal realms. An analysis of The New School foundation, which provides the most progressive programs to empower IDPs through education, and its' successes is completed through examination of available literature and data. The learning circles initiative created by the foundation will be of particular interest. The initiatives undertaken by the Colombian government to empower IDPs through education is sought through exhaustive analysis of country and city specific literature and data.

It is important to understand the outlying consequences that internal displacement can have on both an individual and family. Angela Consuelo Carillo⁵ is able to convey the great humanitarian cost of displacement in her work identifying the economic and social consequences of internal displacement in the Colombian urban setting and its' current challenges. This work allows for the effective "analysis of the humanitarian consequences faced by internally displaced persons (IDPs) when they move to an urban environment."⁶ This body of research and study also provides an examination of "the impact of the influx of IDPs into cities on the different actors involved, such as the government, national and international organizations, and host communities."⁷ By addressing the collateral damage that arises as a result of displacement, one can begin to comprehend the physical and structural violence that is endemic within the issue of displacement in Colombia.

A critical component of the study of internal displacement in Colombia is the effect that education has on political violence and armed conflict. The work of Godrun Ostby and Henrik Urdal⁸ underlines the "relationship between education and conflict, and identifies the emerging consensus in literature that education has a generally pacifying effect on conflict."⁹ The structure of this research is relative to

⁵ Carillo, Ángela Consuelo. Internal displacement in Colombia: Humanitarian, Economic, and Social consequences in urban setting and current challenges. *International Review of the Red Cross*. Volume 91 number 875 September 2009. P. 527

⁶ Ibid.p.527

⁷ Ibid.p.527

⁸ Ostby, Gudrun, & Urdal Henrik. *Education and civil conflict: A review of the quantitative empirical literature*. 2010 p.21

⁹ Ibid. p.21

identifying why citizens might choose to join armed illegal guerilla forces, and how the presence of education may in turn act as a powerful deterrent to their recruitment and active participation. By examining how education aides the process of conflict resolution, a structure by which conflict might be relieved in this context can be identified and analyzed.

In order to understand the mechanisms for the educational empowerment of the displaced in Bogotá, it is imperative that a lens be placed on the largest nongovernmental organization and the considerable influence that they have on the progress of the IDP population. Within these mechanisms exists the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) organization which has developed an Education in Emergencies and Post Crisis Transition (EEPCT) program. The extraordinary work of this program underlines the importance of nongovernmental organizations in Bogotá and identifies what is as of yet needed, in order to continue the work of assisting this community. This program has been a focus area of concentration because of its' vast budget and capabilities. The far reaching scope of the program allows the city and country to envision a more prosperous social and educational future for its IDP populations.

The development of community through efforts to build infrastructure and a basis for political and socio-economic participation among the internally displaced is integral to the work of identifying where this population presently stands in relation to the work that remains to be accomplished. Authors Carla Ines Atehortua

Arredondo and Jorge Salcedo¹⁰ help to identify the relationship between established periphery communities whose residents have resided in these informal settlements for at least a decade, and those who have been displaced as a result of the armed civil conflict and the forced expulsion from their homes.

It is therefore important to underline how state funded support for institutional and economic participation is aiding the IDP population of Bogotá, in addition to the efforts made by two of the city's most prominent nongovernmental organizations. These organizations provide an invaluable service to the internally displaced population of the city and have dedicated the time and resources necessary in order to attain measurable positive social progress. Also primary to the work of providing a comprehensive analysis of community and educational empowerment for IDPs in Bogotá is the analysis of the work done by government bodies.

The research conducted by Accion Social (Social Action) in Colombia in conjunction with the department for social prosperity is a leading governmental entity concerned with the crisis of internal displacement within Colombia and in Bogotá. Their analysis of strategies for the return of IDP populations to their place of origin is important, as well as their examination of the barriers therein. It is important to identify how governmental structures are aiding powerful non state

¹⁰ Arredondo, Carla Ines. Salcedo, Jorge. The effects of internal displacement on host communities. The Brookings institution and International Committee for the Red Cross in Colombia. October 2011. p.1

actors in the process of ensuring that IDPs are given the greatest opportunities to succeed in socio-economic life.

Chapter 3 Historical analysis of Colombian armed civil conflict and the effect of political violence on internal displacement and education

In order to understand the current situation in Colombia, it is imperative that one take into account how violent civil conflict between various actors in the past has contributed to the present state of affairs. It is important to identify key figures within the conflict spectrum, and the roles that they play within the conflict. In Colombia, political violence has pervaded virtually every facet of society. This violence, whether intentionally or not, affects all citizens and policy makers. It is important to comprehend how this political violence affects internal displacement, and specifically the educational outlook for those that have been displaced.

3.1 Armed civil conflict in Colombia

The republic of Colombia is a constitutional republic located in northwestern South America. Its population is roughly 45,900,000 and Holds the capital district city of Bogotá in the department (State) of Cundinamarca as its national capital. With 32 distinct departments, the country has long since been internationally recognized for “its production of coffee, flowers, emeralds, coal, oil and its biodiversity”¹¹. Unfortunately, since a period known simply as the violence in 1948,

¹¹ CIA world fact book (14 May 2009) p.1

the country has been forced to deal with internal tensions producing various powerful armed guerilla factions leading to an ongoing armed civil conflict.

The civil conflict gripping the country of Colombia began as early as 1948, with the assassination of populist presidential candidate Jorge Eliecer Gaitan. This assassination spurred what is internationally referred to as the violence, in which approximately 300,000 died, and nearly one million people were displaced. Hostilities though, would not end with the period of the violence.

In fact, it is evident that the Colombian society following this period of conflict and throughout the majority of the 20th century has been “marked by violent confrontations between successively peasants and landlords, liberals and conservatives, guerilla movements, paramilitaries and the government.”¹² The greatest tension that was continually manifested in violent clashes was among the liberal and conservative parties of the early 1950s. In the year 1957 as a result of constitutional reform, these parties and bitter rivals would find common ground in the “establishment of a bipartisan junta in defense of its’ collective urban interests, and thereby excluding other political sectors and the rural poor.”¹³

In practice, this reform served specifically as a “system of alternation and parity between the two majority parties, subsequently leaving other political sectors

¹² Profile of internal displacement: Colombia. Compilation of the information available in the IDP database of the Norwegian refugee council. February 2004. P.13

¹³ Ibid p.13

deprived of any share in power.¹⁴ This marginalization became a catalyst for peasant driven movements that would transform the landscape of violent socio-political conflict within the country. These guerilla movements would move to the forefront of internal civil conflict, in large part as a result of their polarization from the formal power structure of the nation state. From the period of the violence and the decade following the initial outset of violent clashes emerged powerful criminal non state actors and organizations.

The most prominent of these groups are the revolutionary armed forces of Colombia (FARC), united self defense forces of Colombia (AUC), and the national liberation army (ELN), among others. These groups continue to wage conflict throughout the country, most notably in the rural regions. As a result, literally millions of people have been either killed, forcibly removed from their land or have had to flee out of a palpable sense of fear.

The emergence of these factions is a direct result of what can be examined as a cyclical pattern of social inequality. As they began to form and evolve into armed battalions numbering thousands, they were primarily comprised of those that had been some of the most disregarded people in the country. Their motivation to create and sustain conflict though, cannot merely be analyzed as a blind hatred for the political structure of the time. Contrarily, anger was fermented by a “highly concentrated pattern of land ownership and an inefficient justice system which

¹⁴ Ibid p.13

created the necessary conditions for the development of these autonomous political movements.”¹⁵

Through these movements, the victims as it were, became the victimizers. The groups subsequently began to deprive the impoverished people of various regions within the country in much of the same way that they too had once been deprived. As a result of deadly conflict between these guerilla movements and the formal government, the citizen population of villages and cities found themselves directly in the crossfire. This reality would prove consistently to have increasingly deadly results.

The extraordinarily high levels of violence within the country during the decades 1950 – 1970 were further augmented by the sale and export of illegally trafficked drug crop, specifically those of marijuana and cocaine. It is noted that the “rise of the drug mafia in fact provoked a qualitative change in violence, contributing significantly to the devaluation of life throughout Colombia.”¹⁶ As the illicit drug trade flourished, so too rose the amount of indiscriminate killings throughout the country.

These guerilla movements have embedded themselves within the culture of drugs and arms trafficking in order to fund various enterprises and activities. The largest and most recognized of these movements remains the FARC-EP. Over the course of several decades, they have effectively sought and attained “control over

¹⁵ Ibid p.14

¹⁶ U.S. Library of Congress, November 1988, Colombia – A country study p.6

strategic zones, which offer a direct outlet to the sea, or a corridor for the transfer and trafficking of drugs and arms.”¹⁷

The violence perpetrated by the FARC-EP in addition to other autonomous armed groups can now be readily seen as part of a complex strategic plan to instill fear in the general citizenry, while maintaining control over criminal enterprises, and yet still at least in part under the premise that they seek equality between the marginalized population and the governing class.

As the conflict has continued into the 21st century, ebbs and flows in the violent struggle have been witnessed. While comprehensive reforms have been implemented in formal governmental documentation and constitutional rhetoric, the incidence of internal displacement and the accompanying consequences remain ever prevalent. Over a decade ago, “in the year 2000, more than 4,000 people were the victim of political killings, and an estimated 300,000 people were internally displaced.”¹⁸ In addition to these figures and in the same year, “over 1,500 were kidnapped by armed opposition groups and paramilitary organizations, while mass kidnappings of civilians continued.”¹⁹

In the present day, it is apparent that “Colombia is currently the only country in Latin America with a growing internal displacement crisis.”²⁰ This alarming trend is indicative of continued tensions among these groups and the government with nominal gains in the form of officially recognized or maintained peace accords or

¹⁷ Profile of internal displacement: Colombia. Norwegian refugee council. February 2004. P.13

¹⁸ Amnesty International (AI).2001.Annual Report 2001:Colombia.p.2

¹⁹ Ibid p.15

²⁰ Internal displacement in the Americas: A global survey. 2007, p.43

treaties. Armed groups are not being held accountable to the rule of law, and as such continue to terrorize the population with relative impunity.

The mass displacement effected on people living within the country is by no means an unintentional byproduct of armed struggle between conflict parties. The action taken by these heavily armed groups is done extremely purposefully. Indeed it has been noted that “displacement in Colombia is a deliberate strategy of war wielded to establish control over strategic territories in order to expand the cultivation of illicit crops, and to take possession over land and private properties.”²¹ It is clear then that various factors must be taken in to account when identifying and examining the various issues surrounding displacement. Human rights violations on the part of virtually all parties concerned have included the pervasive use of violence to instill fear and terrorize a society and population.

The basic human needs theory presented by John Burton in 1979 is of particular importance when identifying exactly what has occurred among the people of Colombia in relation to the conflict during this decade’s long protracted conflict. It is Burton who alluded to the concern for “the individual needs that have a societal significance, i.e., those needs without which there cannot be on-going social relationships and harmonious organizations, including those rights of independence, dignity, and participation.”²²

²¹ Ibid p.88

²² Burton, John (1979). *Deviance, Terrorism and War* (St. Martin’s Press) pp.37,45

We see that these rights were systematically taken from the people during this time frame, as they are in the present day and replaced with unspeakable violent hatred. For the Colombian society to ever hope for their needs to be met, a basic structure of inclusion and participation is crucial. While depriving the citizens of their very right to live, armed groups effectively displace thousands into various surrounding communities and primary urban centers. These people are not allowed to return to their homes, and as such are forced to create informal communities within the mountain landscapes of the country's largest cities.

3.2 Migration of internally displaced persons and families to Bogotá

In Colombia, the major urban center most affected by the migration of IDPs is the city of Bogotá. While the city is home to nearly eight million people, there is also a community of internally displaced persons and families that is estimated at over 300,000. This figure is fluid and consistently transforming as the amount of people displaced can change with virtually each passing day.

These children, adults and families are forced to live in informal housing on the periphery of the city in order to survive. They are relegated to these sectors of the city as a result of extremely low educational abilities and financial capacity. Subsequently, it is important to understand their pattern of migration to the capital city, and how their participation in the daily life of Bogotá is diminished through lack of proper of assessment and evaluation.

Migration of the internally displaced to the metropolitan region of Bogotá is marked by an arrival in the cities most developmentally strained communities and neighborhoods. Human Rights Watch observes that the localities most affected include “Bosa, Ciudad Bolívar, and Ciudad Kennedy, in and around the neighboring municipality of Soacha, and particularly in makeshift housing within the mountain hills, known as the Altos de Cazuca, as well as in rural communities in the capital district, such as Usme.”²³ These areas to this day remain the epicenter of city life for the internally displaced in Bogotá.

As displaced persons arrive to these areas of the city from various departments within the country, they are again subject to violence and insecurity, though of a different form. Here it has been noted through extensive field research that “these communities tend to have high levels of violence, the result of both gang activity and the presence of one or more of the paramilitary and guerilla groups.”²⁴ After having undergone the trauma of forced displacement, these individuals and families are again subject to the violence that remains commonplace and essentially an everyday occurrence within these portions of the city.

Of particular importance when identifying the migration pattern of internally displaced persons within Colombia to major urban centers and to Bogotá

²³ Marta Beltrán, “El último refugio de los desplazados,”: “The Last refuge of the displaced” *El Tiempo* (Santafé de Bogotá), July 31, 2004, p.2

²⁴ Letter from Red de Organizaciones Sociales de Ciudad Bolívar to Luis Eduardo Garzón, alcalde mayor de Bogotá, September 1, 2005; Médicos sin Fronteras, *Altos de Cazucá: “Hasta cuándo en el olvido” “how long to remain forgotten”* (Bogotá: Médicos sin Fronteras, 2005), p. 5

specifically is the racial and ethnic background of those being most affected. The Commission for human rights and displacement (CODHES) estimates that while “making up less than 4% of the national population, Afro-Colombians make up roughly 33% of those displaced within the country in the year 2002 alone.”²⁵ In a similar vein, the commission also observes that “some 12% of Colombia’s displaced population is indigenous, even though indigenous peoples make up less than 2.5% of the national population.”²⁶ These figures are alarming and extremely telling when one begins to examine the groups of people who have most readily been affected by displacement as a result of the conflict.

It is important to recognize these groups as the ones in need of immediate attention and concentration. The Colombian government would be well served by implementing strategies to aid these populations after initial identification. It is important to underline the registration process for the internally displaced, and how it assists in formalizing their entrance to metropolitan city life.

As the internally displaced arrive in the city of Bogotá, they are encouraged to seek assistance through government funded programs designed specifically for the IDP population. First though, it is essential that they enter themselves into the formal government registry. This registration in itself, can present a significant obstacle, as it is recognized that the “governmental formal registry excludes large

²⁵ CODHES, *Situación de conflicto y desplazamiento en las fronteras, situation of conflict and displacement at the border* p. 26.

²⁶ Ibid P. 33

numbers of IDPs who are often wrongly considered as economic migrants.²⁷ There is undoubtedly an immense disparity between an economic migrant seeking reprieve from financial instability, and one whose migration to the city is a direct result of violent armed civil conflict. It is imperative that the government of Colombia properly register each IDP within the proper category so that an adequate assessment of the growing problem can be tabulated correctly and addressed.

Another concern in registering individual and family populations of IDPs is the inherent safety issues associated with merely being an internally displaced person. Primarily, these concerns revolve around the fact that “many IDPs do not register out of fear of being the targets of attacks.”²⁸ These attacks can come in the form of reprisals for providing the government with any information as to where guerilla insurgent combatants may be located or where these groups may be headed in the future. In Bogotá specifically, with such a great population of internally displaced, it is crucial that these people are provided with additional support in the form of formalized protection and higher concentrations of policing forces in the periphery regions where they most often live.

Without proper documentation and access to the government sponsored internally displaced national registry, these families are unable to participate in basic civilian life. An individual or group of IDPs without basic documentation needed for the purpose of identification is “unable to vote, work, drive, move

²⁷ Profile of Internal displacement: Colombia. Norwegian Refugee Council. February 2004. p.2

²⁸ Ibid p.145

residence, or send their children to public schools.”²⁹ Without the ability to attend school, these children are significantly impeded from attaining the intellectual growth and development so crucial in their early stages of development.

The city of Bogotá and its government structure has increasingly appeared to be unable to properly identify or deal with the amount of those displaced within city limits. Research continually suggests that in Bogotá, “with the continuous influx of IDPs and insufficient attention, the misery belt is expanding rapidly, while levels of poverty are on the increase.”³⁰ These socio-demographic changes are a result of an ineffective policy structure that fails to provide a consistent safety structure. The question in turn remains how then can the government implement measures and reforms that are both transparent and able to hold policy makers and policing forces accountable for their proper functioning?

3.3 Structural violence and the social consequences of internal displacement in the Colombian urban setting: Bogotá

At the heart of the civil armed conflict lies the civilian population affected each day by the violent struggle. The race for power, economic gains and territory by illegal forces, has consequently lead to massive internal displacement. As a result of allowing paramilitary factions to play an instrumental role in the conflict while working alongside government forces, the Colombian government whether intentionally or not has exacerbated the prevalence of structural violence upon the

²⁹ Ibid p.146

³⁰ Ibid p.145

Colombian people. The repercussions of this structural violence have been excessively widespread.

Throughout decades of fighting, conflict in Colombia has been marked and characterized by the “wrongful killing of peasants believed to be counterinsurgents, and systematic internal displacement.”³¹ This purposeful internal displacement was effected by paramilitary organizations which sought to eradicate segments of the population thought to have been protecting guerilla members and battalions. In fact it is known that specifically in the 1980s, “the Colombian military worked hand in hand with paramilitary forces to effectively cleanse entire regions of guerilla sympathizers.”³² Having been brought to fruition by the government itself, the incidence of structural violence upon the Colombian people became ever more prevalent.

The government policies that foster exclusion among the internally displaced of Colombia further deepen inequality among the citizenry. Structural violence in Colombia is manifested in the manner in which “government institutions have excluded the internally displaced people politically, denied them access to services and welfare, and exploited them for economic gains.”³³ These policies have created significant barriers to individual and group progress. They in turn must be

³¹ Rojas Rodríguez, Jorge E. 2001. Desplazados: Lógicas de Guerra – Incertidumbres de paz. *Forced internal displacement in Colombia: Conflict, Peace and Development*. Edited by CODHES. Bogotá: Editorial Kimpress Ltda.p.26

³² Palacios, Marco. 2006. *Between Legitimacy and Violence: A History of Colombia, 1875-2002*. Translated by Richard Stoller. Durham: Duke University Press.p.16

³³ Farmer, Paul. 2004. An Anthropology of Structural Violence. *Current Anthropology* 45(3)p.305

addressed properly in order build and sustain levels of transparency and accountability necessary for the progress and achievement of IDP populations.

A stark example of the form that structural violence has taken in Colombia can be witnessed through the implementation of newly effected government reforms. For instance, “the government’s adoption of neoliberal reforms, which seek to transfer economic control from the public to the private sector in order to qualify for foreign aid, has led to the rollback of state subsidies and social welfare programs. This impacts the integration of IDPs in urban centers by limiting their ability to find jobs and their access to adequate assistance.”³⁴ Without the ability to access the labor market, social and economic gains for entire populations of internally displaced people in Bogotá and elsewhere are withheld. The inability to provide necessary economic assistance to these individuals is indicative of a fractured system that on paper seems transformative in scope, while in practice fails to meet the needs of displaced individuals.

These socioeconomic policies have far reaching social consequences for the IDP population of Bogotá. Having arrived to the city with minimal experience of participation within a market based economy; IDP populations are ill equipped to successfully make the transition from rural to city life. Without a reliable support structure, and “lacking education, experiences, or references, IDPs often fail to integrate into the market economy and must participate in an informal economy as

³⁴ Zea, Juan Esteban. 2010. *Internal Displacement in Colombia: Violence, Resettlement, and Resistance*. Portland State University, MA thesis. p.32

street vendors or day laborers.”³⁵ If additional reforms are not enacted to empower these individuals through education and strategic job related skill advancement, their future outlook will remain dim and cease to attain positive tangible results.

The structural violence endured by the internally displaced in Bogotá indeed has taken many forms. Those attempting to merely register for and attain aid may be subjected to harsh treatment and have to deal with excessive delays as they attempt to maneuver through an inefficient bureaucratic structure. In fact, it noteworthy to underline the problems associated with the city office for attention and orientation. Charged with aiding in the process of registration for the internally displaced, the organization has also been accused of “implementing bureaucratic steps that hinder IDPs from receiving state aid.”³⁶

As a consequence of the delay in receiving desperately needed assistance, IDPs in Bogotá are subsequently unable to perform the most basic of socioeconomic participatory functions and are further delayed in their ability to progress beyond their current societal position. The physical violence perpetrated upon the internally displaced is in turn compounded by the structural violence that they encounter in the capital district should they be fortunate enough to survive initial displacement. These individuals and families are further stigmatized by a society which does not seem to fully comprehend their plight, or the underlining social consequences that become a part of their lives.

³⁵ Ibid p.7

³⁶ Zea, Juan Esteban. 2010. *Internal Displacement in Colombia: Violence, Resettlement, and Resistance*. Portland State University, MA thesis.p.36

It has been observed that in Colombia, “the non - displaced public often views IDPs as non – citizens who use up resources.”³⁷ This form of stigmatization takes the form of social manners of behavior in which an individual or group either through purposeful or unintentional malice begins to demonize the other by placing them in a lesser human state than their own. Subsequently sectors of the majority Colombian population begin to see internally displaced “refugees as amoral populations who by losing their homeland have also lost their moral bearings, and whereby broken roots or displacement signal an ailing cultural identity and damaged nationality.”³⁸

With their mere identity as a Colombian citizen challenged and threatened, the struggle for acceptance and progress become exponentially more difficult. Having been forcibly displaced and now finding themselves hundreds of miles from their homes, all sense of community is essentially lost. Subsequently, these individuals and groups find themselves incapable of participating in an increasingly skilled labor force. It is also necessary to highlight the domestic consequences of displacement and the effect that these consequences have on everyday life.

Through extensive field research, Human Rights Watch observes that “domestic violence is higher among displaced families in Bogotá than in the population as a whole and is another consequence of the stresses that displaced

³⁷ Bourdieu, Pierre. 1994. Structures, Habitus, Power: Basis for a Theory of Symbolic Power. *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*.p. 155

³⁸ Malkki, Liisa. 1992. National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees. *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1).p.24

families face.”³⁹ It is clear that displacement produces unstable familial and home structures with tragic results. As such, a seemingly untenable situation gives rise to volatile conflict within the domestic home environment and leaves displaced woman in this case vulnerable to the collateral consequences of displacement.

3.4 Education and armed civil conflict

The transformative effect of education on armed civil conflict cannot be denied or understated. Educational progress for individuals who have been affected by political violence translates to desperately needed opportunities to enter the workforce and attain a sense of self fulfillment necessary for both personal and social progress. The notion that education may also lead to a more peaceful society is also one that must be understood and examined. It is essential first, to arrive at a more comprehensive analysis of exactly why individuals may choose to join a rebel movement.

It is also necessary to understand how education within the context of armed civil conflict and political violence might lead to a society in which individuals are far less likely to participate in a cycle of violence inevitably leading to destruction and large scale social devastation.

Studies revolving around the effect of education on armed conflict have focused in part around the manner in which government led initiatives to promote education can help work to diminish the grievances within a society. For instance,

³⁹ Gabriel Ojeda and Rocío Murad, *Salud sexual y reproductiva en zonas marginales: Situación de las mujeres Desplazadas. Sexual and reproductive health in marginalized zones: situation of displaced women* (Santafé de Bogotá: Pro familia, 2001), p. 109.

the World Bank reports that “government investment in education is a means by which governments can make a direct and lasting positive impact on people’s lives, which may directly reduce the level of grievances in society.”⁴⁰ While this may come as little surprise to those interested in the effect of education on conflict, it is important to underline the idea within the context of the Colombian state and its’ relationship with internally displaced populations.

In a study conducted with over 800 former rebel combatants in the capital of Bogotá and the cities of Cucuta and Monteria in the north-west and north-east of the country, researchers were able to uncover that there were three primary reasons for which an individual might choose to join a rebel group and engage in political violence. “First, joining could be understood as a reaction meant to rectify grievances, second, individuals may join based on the expectation of monetary or other material personal gain, and third, a person may be attracted to political violence by the promise of non-material rewards such as security.”⁴¹ These indicators are important to underline when identifying individual reasoning for joining a guerrilla group and choosing to remain as a combatant within insurgent anti governmental forces.

⁴⁰ Aoki, Aya; Barbara Bruns, Michael Drabble, Mmantetsa Marope, Alain Mingat, Peter Moock, Patrick Murphy, Pirella Paci, Harry Patrinos, Jee-Peng Tan, Christopher Thomas, Carolyn Winter & Hongyu Yang, 2002. ‘Chapter 19: Education’, in *PRSP Education* (<http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/81136/Nairobi2004/readings/ed/edprspsourcebookeng.pdf>) p.126

⁴¹ Arjona, Ana & Stathis Kalyvas, 2007. ‘Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Recruitment: An Analysis of Survey Data from Colombia’, paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Chicago IL, 28 February–3 March.p.13

The reality that these youth are devoid of alternatives to their attachment to one of these regiments becomes painfully evident. This need or desire to join a movement is compounded by a lack of education and the opportunities that an education may provide. It was noted through the work of the study cited above that “In terms of education, close to half of all respondents completed elementary school or attended for a few years. Guerrilla members are less likely to have attended high school than paramilitaries, and that they are also less likely to have attended school at all.”⁴² Had these children been given the opportunity and encouragement through educational reform, there is certainly a vastly greater probability that they indeed may not have chosen to join this guerilla movement.

The Colombian government through a strategic investing of capital into education for the displaced population of Bogotá would serve to promote a marginalized portion of the city population to the level of a skilled labor force that would in turn invest capital back into the city economy as a result of a newly acquired purchasing power. The jobs created for this population would subsequently be a direct result of education, and also diminish the resentment felt by IDPs toward the state, thus minimizing societal grievances. Further, it has been rightly posited that “educational spending can reduce grievances and conflict by spurring economic development and social equality.”⁴³ This economic development

⁴² Ibid p.15

⁴³ Thyne, Clayton, 2006. ‘ABC’s, 123’s, and the Golden Rule: The Pacifying Effect of Education on Civil War, 1980–1999’, *International Studies Quarterly* 50(4):p.754.

could lead to a transformation of not only the prospects for internally displaced persons, but also the economic growth of the city as well.

Through the development of governmentally sponsored programs focused on education for the displaced, the Colombian government may also skew the amount of youth and others who are recruited or decide to join armed rebellions within metropolitan and rural regions throughout the country. It has been noted that in “countries with large potential groups of rebel recruits (such as Colombia), due to large young male cohorts, increasing education at any level will help reduce this pool considerably.”⁴⁴ It is abundantly clear through research and analysis that lack of education fosters discontent among youth populations and can exacerbate tensions.

This reality can cause youth to be more likely to participate in the civil conflict as rebels themselves. As a result of a complete lack of opportunity and social standing, incentives presented by rebel leaders in the form of pay, housing, or group membership may become more attractive to an otherwise completely disenfranchised youth population. By implementing mechanisms to promote youth education, the Colombian government can offer tangible alternatives to joining a guerilla movement, and ones that will lead to measureable positive results.

There are a multitude of reasons behind the decision to join an insurgent or rebel guerilla group. A common factor though, is consistently believed to be

⁴⁴ Barakat, Bilal & Henrik Urdal, 2009. “Breaking the waves? Does education mediate the waves between youth Bulges and Political Violence. Policy research working paper 5114, Washington DC: The World Bank.p.16

centered on educational attainment. The structure which surrounds those whose educational opportunity and attainment remains excessively low, is a particular point of interest. In fact, it has been noted as an expectation that “individuals joining insurgent groups should be poorer and less educated, consider themselves to be poorer, come from poorer households and communities, and feel more excluded compared to those who join counterinsurgent groups” ⁴⁵(such as formal military bodies). This notion is especially telling when considering the most powerful armed groups militarily engaged in Colombia’s civil conflict.

It has been observed within the civil conflict in Colombia that “despite having different political goals, both the FARC and paramilitary forces appear to be attracting people from the poorest and less educated sides of society.”⁴⁶ It can then be determined that by educating the internally displaced population and creating structures by which they might create the semblance of community, the Colombian nation state might effectively deter members of this population from joining a guerilla or non sanctioned criminal paramilitary force. Further, it is imperative that the Colombian government pursue reforms in policy as it relates to the internally displaced population.

The need for policy reforms in Colombia indeed form some of the most pressing and substantial changes that can be made to empower the internally displaced through education. It has been noted that “compared to most other factors

⁴⁵ Ostby, Gudrun, & Urdal Henrik. Education and civil conflict: A review of the quantitative empirical literature. 2010 p.21

⁴⁶ Ibid p.21

that are known to affect political violence, education is something that almost all governments can alter through national policy.”⁴⁷ By addressing the importance of education specifically for the internally displaced in the city of Bogotá and elsewhere throughout the country, the Colombian government would take significant steps in dissuading the participation of the internally displaced in the ongoing civil conflict.

3.5 Review of armed conflict and internal displacement in Colombia

The internal displacement crisis in Colombia is growing at an alarming rate as a result of the armed civil conflict presently being fought throughout the country. Thousands of internally displaced persons are forced to migrate to the city of Bogotá and other major urban conglomerations each and every day. The displacement of “at least 2,977,209 people make it the country with the largest IDP population after Sudan.”⁴⁸ This tragic humanitarian crisis once brought on by internal divisions between powerful political entities has now permanently transfixed the reality of millions of Colombian citizens.

It has been observed that “the expulsion of a population by armed groups is also a war strategy to prevent collective action, destroy social networks and intimidate people, as a means of controlling the civilian population.”⁴⁹ These attacks

⁴⁷ Thyne, Clayton, 2006. ‘ABC’s, 123’s, and the Golden Rule: The Pacifying Effect of Education on Civil War, 1980–1999’, *International Studies Quarterly* 50(4):p.733.

⁴⁸ Carillo, Ángela Consuelo. Internal displacement in Colombia: Humanitarian, Economic, and Social consequences in urban setting and current challenges. *International Review of the Red Cross*. Volume 91 number 875 September 2009. P. 527

⁴⁹ Ibáñez, Ana María, Moya Andrés, Velásquez, Andrea. *Hacia una política proactiva para la población desplazada (Towards a Proactive Policy for the Displaced)*, Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá ,

along with a forced expulsion leave families desperate to escape warfare and unable to remain in their present living conditions. They are in turn forced into metropolitan regions where they simply do not have the market-based skills necessary to succeed and progress. This change has indeed been noted to have “profound humanitarian, economic and social consequences.”⁵⁰

These individuals and families often times had previously inhabited plots of land within rural regions and depended on their ability to farm for food production and sustenance. Along with their social network, they were able to survive and in some cases thrive in the rural social setting. As they are forcibly removed from their land and subsequently transposed to major urban settings, the displaced are forced to compete for scarce resources with the rest of the cities’ impoverished populations. As poverty spikes among this group, the level of poverty within the city climbs as well.

The issue of poverty in Colombia is also of great relevance when examining the plight of the internally displaced. While it recognized that “around 70% of the rural population in Colombia is living below the poverty line, 99% of people displaced from rural areas to urban areas are living in poverty.”⁵¹ This figure is as staggering as it is disheartening. A great majority of those living in rural areas find themselves living within dire economic constraints. Forced displacement as a result

May 2006.p.5

⁵⁰ Carrillo, Angela Consuelo. Internal displacement in Colombia: Humanitarian, Economic, and Social consequences in urban setting and current challenges. International Review of the Red Cross. Volume 91 number 875 September 2009. P.528

⁵¹ Ibid p.534

of the civil conflict compounds this strain tenfold. Though this figure concerning poverty and displacement exceeds a great amount of attention, the mere registration as an IDP in Bogotá and other regions has become a major issue as well.

The national registry is seemingly ill equipped to deal with the mounting number of IDP entering the city of Bogotá, and at times has been accused of a blatant unwillingness to cooperate with individuals and families attempting to register themselves. It is important to understand the types of people that are being forced to register, and their relation to the population of the country as a whole.

It has been documented that in Colombia, two types of forced displacement are formally defined: massive and individual displacement. Under this assertion, “massive displacement in this context is defined as the displacement of ten or more households together, while individual displacement is the displacement of a person or family on its own.”⁵² With this in mind, it has also been identified that “almost 80% of those included in the IDP register were displaced individually.”⁵³ When realizing that the overwhelming amount of internally displaced within the country are indeed individuals or individual families, the systematic way in which they are displaced by armed guerilla forces becomes ever more apparent.

It is clear that the crisis of internal displacement in Colombia is pervasive and witnessed throughout the various departments of the country. Of great significance, though, are patterns that arise when identifying the areas where the majority of

⁵² Ibid. 534

⁵³ Ibid. p. 529

these populations come from? In Colombia, “it is confirmed that 16% of all IDPs in the country come from the ten municipalities with the highest expulsion figures. Half of the IDP population is concentrated in 23 municipalities, indicating a definite preference for some places over others.” When considering the expulsion figures of the municipalities most affected, the Colombian government must implement strategies for focusing efforts to combat internal displacement on these regions and municipalities specifically.

After expulsion, and with roughly 8.20% of the total IDP population⁵⁴, the city of Bogotá is consistently the most affected municipality in the country. This pressure placed on the city is a direct result of a civil conflict that has been ongoing for over 40 years. With no immediate end in sight, the responsibility remains on the Colombian government to combat insurgent forces that would seek to consistently terrorize the civilian populations with the intention of maintaining an expansive and dominating control.

⁵⁴ Accion Social (Social Action). The ten cities with the largest IDP populations. March 2009. P.8

Chapter 4 Educational empowerment for the internally displaced

The right to education is an internationally recognized principle and one of the most basic underpinnings of a properly functioning society. In Colombia, education for the internally displaced has been a clearly stated priority for successive governments. The Colombian congress has passed various laws that echo the necessity for a focus on education for the displaced and are as progressive as any created for IDP populations around the world.

In practice though, the internally displaced continue to suffer educational insecurity, and are not realizing the benefits of the laws that have been passed to protect them. In order to understand what educational empowerment means for the internally displaced of Colombia and of Bogotá, it is imperative to highlight how laws enacted for IDP populations are attempting to foster progress in this arena. It is also critical to assess how education can effectively become a mechanism for conflict resolution, as well how non state actors and organizations are working to fulfill the promise of education for an intensely marginalized population.

4.1.1 Constitutional Court of Colombia Writ 116 of 2008

In working to promote educational empowerment among the internally displaced, the Constitutional Court of Colombia notably enacted writ 116 in 2008.

This provision was set in place as a series of indicators that would underline the right to education established by the court and how effectively they were being implemented. The targeted group of individuals ranged in age from 5 to 17 years of age. First, the writ highlighted the notion that for internally displaced children, absolutely no educational cost would be incurred by their families. This was to include all materials that would need to be used, as well as transportation costs to and from their homes. Also set out in the provisions of the law were mandates to impede any form of discrimination in allowing these children access to the schools.

Of the most progressive components within the law was the stipulation that there would be established educational norms and models for implementing the often times special education that would be required by internally displaced children. It is important to note that special education in this sense is not necessarily geared toward children with mental or physical disabilities, but rather takes into account the traumatic experiences they have endured. Further, educators are trained to be cognizant of these issues when assisting the population of internally displaced in succeeding academically. This approach to educational empowerment is essential for the progress of children who have been affected by displacement.

To provide a clear indication of how the enacted law has been serving the population, the government has implemented bench marks for assessing the educational levels of the parents of IDP children as well. The studies being undertaken will also seek to measure the assistance that educated parents can

provide for their children in completing assignments and other school work. These initiatives and their individual levels of success will be monitored over the course of the following several years. They are important steps forward in creating a comprehensive analysis of how education is reaching these children and what still needs to be done in order to ensure the rights to education that have been clearly stipulated for them.

4.1.2 Colombian Government issued decree 4313

Another educational initiative being undertaken and implemented by the Colombian government is the government issued decree 4313. This decree was proposed as a way in which to effectively transfer and outsource education services to the private sector. The decree was specifically initiated to “provide quality education to four of the most vulnerable groups of the Colombian population: children affected by armed conflict, indigenous populations, children with disabilities and children from rural areas.”⁵⁵ The decree, passed in 2004, has seen considerable success.

4.1.3 Constitutional Court of Colombia, guiding principles 23.3 & 23.4

The Constitutional Court of Colombia has outlined a vast array of legal provisions created to protect the internally displaced within the country. In 2008, the court set out to bolster its’ claims of progressive IDP representation by underlining a series of guiding principles that would take effect immediately and be

⁵⁵ Ministry of Education. Educational coverage to aid vulnerable population through contractual educational service report.p.2

consistently reviewed in subsequent years. Guiding principle 23.3 was “aimed at diminishing the negative impact of displacement on the situation of women by ensuring the full and equal participation of women and girls in education programs.”⁵⁶ Further, guiding principle 23.4 was meant to “provide access to education and training facilities.”⁵⁷

These mechanisms, in theory, were meant to effectively provide a system of checks and balances through which the Colombian government could be held accountable for the mishandling of the IDP population with regard to their educational opportunities and empowerment. As a result of subsequent analysis as to how the government was enforcing the provisions set forth, severe criticisms were levied by the court. The court had ordered in its mandate that the Colombian government was “to adopt through its relevant agencies thirteen specific, tailor made, differential programs to protect displaced women from these risks i.e., programs to effectively guarantee their rights.”⁵⁸ The court would find that these initiatives had not been properly undertaken, and in turn take due action.

4.1.4 Constitutional Court of Colombia, Writ 237, 19 September 2008

As the Colombian Constitutional court began to come to terms with what was occurring throughout the country and within Bogotá as the city and municipality with the highest number of registered IDPs, it implemented legally binding strategies for the future of IDPs in Colombia. In 2004, with the implementation of

⁵⁶ Internal displacement monitoring center. Country profile: Colombia. July 3, 2009.p.2

⁵⁷ Ibid.p.2

⁵⁸ Ibid.p.2

decision T-025, the court effectively declared “that an unconstitutional state of affairs existed as a result of the gap between the rights guaranteed to IDPs by domestic law and the insufficient resources and institutional capacity of the government to protect these rights.”⁵⁹ This judgment in definite terms would define the state of inequality for the IDP population and have a significant reverberating effect in subsequent years.

In a landmark decision within the Colombian government and legal judiciary system, the constitutional court on September 19, 2008 “declared that the Government of Colombia had not fulfilled the orders handed down in writ 092. The court ruled that given that the government had not been able to come up with the thirteen programs to protect displaced women, and that civil society organizations working for women’s rights had, the programs suggested by the latter would become the mandatory programs for the former.”⁶⁰ This decision has far reaching implications for the Colombian government and its’ treatment of internally displaced persons.

The mere fact that the government was unable to comprehensively define 13 unique programs for the protection of displaced women is undeniably telling. With the inability to define these programs, comes the reality that the government would potentially be unable to properly audit and ensure both their individual and collective success. The court addressed this inability of the government to provide

⁵⁹ Rivadeneira Arango, Rodolfo. Judicial protection of internally displaced persons: The Colombian experience. The Brookings institution- University of Bern Project on internal displacement. November 2009. p.6

⁶⁰ Constitutional Court of Colombia. 19 September 2009. p. 21

progressive social initiatives including educational opportunities for the IDP population by giving the power to civil organizations. By doing so, the court very purposefully raises the question of which entities in the Colombian society have the benefit and progress of the internally displaced population most readily in perspective.

4.1.5 Constitutional Court of Colombia: Ley 387 (Law 387) 24 July 2007

Of the most promising provisions outlining the rights of the internally displaced to a fair and equitable civil life and education is “ley 387” (law 387). This law, when implemented was a “means by which measures were adopted for the prevention of forced displacement, and for assistance, protection, socioeconomic consolidation and stabilization of persons internally displaced by violence in the Republic of Colombia.”⁶¹

By clearly defining exactly who constitutes an internally displaced person and creating an additional sector of laws that will protect them, the government took immense strides in providing a voice for the IDP population. In part, law 387: “Guarantees the right of IDPs to solicit humanitarian aid, receive basic human rights under international law; be protected from discrimination due to their situation, socioeconomic status, ethnic background, language, religion, public and political opinion, place of origin or disability, reunite with family members lost due to violence, demand the resolution to their problems; return to their place of origin;

⁶¹ Diario oficial. (Official Gazette) No. 43,091 of July 24, 1997. Issued in Ibagué, Colombia July 18, 1997. P.1

receive personal security (that violent events will not occur again) and move without restriction throughout the country”⁶²

The law was notably progressive in nature, as never before had the Colombian government implemented such a strategy to define the needs of the IDP population and their individual as well as collective group rights. It is noted that before law 387 “ a specific national policy to address the problem of IDPs did not exist, and that aid of any sort was provided to IDPs within the general social welfare and emergency response systems.”⁶³

By creating a structure whereby the needs of this ever growing population were going to be specifically addressed, Colombian officials formally recognized the crisis at hand and its astronomical effects on the human condition within Colombian civil society. Among the most notable value of the provisions underlined by this law include the following successive strategies for empowering the IDP population.

TABLE 1 Contributions of Constitutional Court of Colombia Ley 387 (Law 387)

➤ contributed to identifying IDPs’ specificities and particular needs;
➤ officially recognized the gravity of the problem of forced displacement in Colombia;
➤ increased the visibility of and priority of assistance toward IDPs at all the relevant official levels;
➤ countered the risks of policy discontinuance resulting from the periodic change of public officials;

⁶² Rivadeneira Arango, Rodolfo. Judicial protection of internally displaced persons: The Colombian experience. The Brookings institution- University of Bern Project on internal displacement. November 2009. p.6

⁶³ Ibid. p.7

➤ provided a stable framework for protection;
➤ distinguished the special situation of IDPs from the classic response to “emergencies;”
➤ created a bureaucracy specifically charged with assisting IDPs;
➤ Involved the entire Colombian State within the response system; and initiated the introduction of a “rights-based” perspective for the protection of the rights of IDPs. ⁶⁴

Table provided by Brookings Institution-University of Bern Project on internal displacement

These guarantees, while comprehensive in scope, are not being adequately implemented in practice. The law, though, does, in theory, guarantee that the IDP population will be given adequate support in the social sector, and allow for a process of the resolution to their individual concerns. Prominent nongovernmental civil actors and organizations continue in the work of in effect auditing the governments’ progress in the realm of these proposals. It is through a collaborative effort that the government and these civil organizations can best empower the IDP population in Bogotá and throughout the cities and regions most affected by internal displacement.

4.2 Escuela Nueva Fundación; Volvamos a la gente: Bogotá (New School Foundation: back to the people: Bogotá)

To properly examine what educational empowerment means within the city of Bogotá for the internally displaced population, it is essential that a focus be

⁶⁴ Ministry of Education. Educational coverage to aid vulnerable population through contractual educational service report.p.2

concentrated on organizations working to make a measureable positive difference for the civil and social reality of these people. There are a multitude of organizations operating within the city and metropolitan region. I have chosen to highlight the New School Foundation of Bogotá as a result of the comprehensive and purely innovative nature through which they work to educate the city's internally displaced population.

The Escuela Nueva Fundacion—or New School, as it will be henceforth referred to, addresses schooling for the displaced, using a “learning circles” methodology. These “learning circles are places of learning within the community of Bogotá and are linked to mainstream schools through shared academic calendars, grading systems and extracurricular programs. This relationship is mutually beneficial as learning circles ease the transition from the streets to school and local schools gain additional resources to support children who are out of sync with the traditional system.”⁶⁵

By working alongside the city's formal educational structure, the learning circles program and the New School foundation have achieved immensely positive results and earned a reputation of providing profoundly transformative change. The holistic manner in which they aid the internally displaced in the city is of particular interest.

⁶⁵ Changemakers.net. Learning Circles: Education for displaced children in Colombia. Website portal found at: <http://proxied.changemakers.net/journal/peace/displaypeace.cfm-ID=220> p.1

These learning circles address education by focusing on individual student needs within society, in addition to that of their formal education. The circles group method and learning communities provide not only “basic skills, but also counseling and social services for children who have special needs for rehabilitation and reintegration into society.”⁶⁶ The foundation recognizes that as nontraditional students, these individuals must have access to various support structures in order to enter a society that may be completely foreign to them. Of the foundation’s greatest achievements have been its recognition by the Colombian government within the national and international dialogue concerning education and at risk populations.

In the present day, there are over 87 New School learning circles throughout the country and within “7 municipalities with high rates of IDP; serving 87 tutors and over 1,305 students”⁶⁷. The New School model has, in fact, been imbedded in the national education strategy for the internally displaced of country. Internationally, the new school model had already gained an extraordinary reputation. It is observed that in 1989, the New School model was recognized by the World Bank as being one of the three most successful policy reforms in developing countries around the world.”⁶⁸ With over two decades of experience in the field of education

⁶⁶ Ibid.p.1

⁶⁷ Fundación Escuela Nueva; Volvamos a la gente guía de información. Círculos de aprendizaje Escuela Nueva Activa (New School Foundation; Back to the people informational program guide. New School Learning circles). 2005. P.4

⁶⁸ Ibid. P.4

for the displaced and marginalized population of Bogotá, the foundation continues to gain strength and recognition for its innovations in the field.

The New School and its system of learning circles incorporate a “program for migrant, internally displaced children in the city of Bogotá.”⁶⁹ It is understood that as a result of the armed conflict, millions have been displaced from their land of origin. The New School stipulates in its formal statement of the issue, that of those displaced, “many thousands are children suffering the results of violence, extreme poverty, inadequate social services and numerous barriers to education.”⁷⁰ Further, the foundation recognizes the various methods that have been implemented around the world in conflict regions to aid the internally displaced through education, and their inefficiencies.

The new school acknowledges the various methods to “educate internally displaced children including mobile kits, scholarship program, and infrastructure initiatives; and the fact that yet more than 27 million children in conflict areas worldwide still have no access to schooling.”⁷¹ By recognizing this daunting fact, the foundation and its staff place itself in a position to underline their own strategy for how to educate the displaced within the confines of the unique sprawling metropolis that is Bogotá. With the needs of individuals and groups being varied, the program has created a structure to identify and address these differences in the school structure.

⁶⁹ Ibid p.1

⁷⁰ Ibid p.1

⁷¹ Ibid. p.2

The New School has, “since 2001 provided quality education to children, ages to 6-15, who have been internally displaced by violence and unable to enroll in school, while also providing a safe environment and flexible strategies that are attuned to their transitional status, age and cultural heterogeneity.”⁷² This structure is so progressive as a result of the variables taken into account. With the realization that individuals may have been displaced in a variety of ways, the New School takes into account how they were brought to them in the city as a part of their educational plan. By addressing their cultural heterogeneity, the New School comes to terms with that fact that certain populations are far more likely to be victims of displacement, and creates a space for them to freely learn in an unbiased environment.

This organization has created a systematic and detailed set of guidelines for bettering the educational opportunities of the internally displaced. Through the setting of specific benchmarks for analyzing progress and success, the organization is able to consistently underline its progress and benefit to the IDP population of Bogotá. By adapting to the ever changing needs of the internally displaced within the city, the foundation remains relevant and in tune with what the individual and groups of students require for their educational needs to be met.

This organization stands as a beacon of hope for the internally displaced of the city. Their structure can also be of use for the city and national government as

⁷² Ibid. p.2

the city government of Bogotá and that of the nation state as a whole continue to address the many social and economic concerns realized by the displaced.

The field of conflict resolution can also benefit from an analysis of the work of the New School in Bogotá. By “facilitating the transition of migrant displaced children into schools in the city of Bogotá, the program contributes to conflict management, developing habits of peaceful coexistence, constructive behavior and social integration.”⁷³ By integrating social counseling along with traditional schooling, the program provides an outlet for youth and adults alike to address frustrations and the memories of tragic experiences as victims of the ongoing civil conflict.

The foundation further acknowledges the great benefit that education may have on a war stricken individual, people and society. As a guiding principle, the “foundation seeks to lead an open discussion to focus the necessary investments in the area with the greatest return for both economic development and peace building: educating the nation’s future citizens.”⁷⁴

This statement will resonate with any researcher or practitioner attempting to build peace in a nation burdened by armed conflict through education. These children, who will form part of the nation’s future, must be made to understand their great potential within society and individual self worth. A well grounded education will, in turn, make them far less likely to participate in hostilities as

⁷³ Ministry of Education. Educational coverage to aid vulnerable population through contractual educational service report.p.2

⁷⁴ Changemakers.net. Learning Circles: Education for displaced children in Colombia. Website portal found at: <http://proxied.changemakers.net/journal/peace/displaypeace.cfm-ID=220> p.1

recruited combatants. The basic school and life skills will benefit them throughout the remainder of their lives. Subsequently, the internally displaced population and their needs must not be with apathy, but rather a systemic strategy focused on providing them the best opportunity to succeed in society, being that of the attainment of an education. It is important than to continue the discussion of exactly how this school functions, delivers support, and hopes to continue educational expansion through inclusion.

This desire for inclusion is defined through a method of “modular learning” adopted by the foundation. The modular learning method incorporates a system of “flexible promotion as opposed to rigid grade promotion allowing children to learn at their own pace, addressing gaps in their educational experience.”⁷⁵ It is widely understood that children who have been the victims of displacement may have long periods of time within which they were not able or allowed to attend school due to safety concerns. By including this flexible model for educational attainment, the New School further complies with its promise of promoting a sense of community among disenfranchised youth. While these students must be held to an academic standard, the way that they learn and in what time frame must also account for their unique experiences and background.

The foundation has also seen significant progress in implementing strategies for social reintegration, seen as a critical component of future social and educational potential. The New School has created IDP population specific text that “combine

⁷⁵ Ibid.p.1

math, language, social and natural sciences into thematic books such as “my school as a place of peaceful coexistence” and “me, my family and my home” to focus on both academic and social integration.”⁷⁶ It is important to note that academic and social integration are together a complete strategy for progress, and one without the other would certainly be doing the youth involved in the program a great disservice.

By allowing tutors in the program to incorporate both principles in the daily lives of these students, youth are compelled to progressively address difficult issues in their lives, a process that will serve to benefit them as they continue within the formal structure of urban city life. To this end, the sense of community responsibility brought forth by the program must also be identified.

The New School actively promotes community participation by allowing “parents and community members the opportunity to assume responsibility for school events and the care of school premises.”⁷⁷ By allowing parents and other members of the communities where these schools are placed to have such responsibility, a great sense of ownership and community pride is instilled. The members of these extremely poor and unkempt communities are now given the opportunity to care for small institutions where their children will learn and grow both personally and academically. This entire structure remains under the premise that the foundation seeks to instill the “message that education can be life saving

⁷⁶ Ibid.p.1

⁷⁷ Ibid. p.2

and life-sustaining through the dissemination of basic skills and social support.”⁷⁸

The knowledge that education can hold such a profound place in the future of these children’s lives is not lost on the organizations desire to bring education advocacy to the forefront of a national debate.

In practice, the model of delivery for the dissemination of the New Schools Foundational objectives rests upon the desire to attract national attention and recognition. It is observed that the New School “initiative reaches the intended beneficiaries through advocacy at national level and partnerships with the local education authorities, private sector organizations and communities in order to attract funding, bring human resources to and create additional resources within the community.”⁷⁹ It is imperative that the organization raise awareness of the issue of education for the internally displaced within all spheres of national public and political life. The need for these partnerships is solidified by the fact that in Colombia, virtually everyone is affected by the incidence of displacement, and that these affected youth are inherently innocent as mere pawns or collateral damage of a war between the guerillas and the state.

As a result of this tireless lobbying for educational reforms through the New School Foundation, and “after the pilot project financed by USAID successfully concluded in 2003, the learning circles program gained the complete political

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.2

⁷⁹ Ibid. p.1

backing from Colombia's ministry of education."⁸⁰ This initial backing had led to continued support and acknowledgement from various leading humanitarian organizations dedicated to working with refugee, displaced and at risk populations. These organizations in 2005 included support from the Norwegian Council of Refugees the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees). These continued partnerships have been integral to the success of the New School and must consistently be sustained and expanded.

In the vein of continued expansion among donors and proposed partnerships, the foundation has sought and secured over 30 partnerships with local NGOs to provide psychological support.⁸¹ These alliances have included working relationships with many of the city's most visible entities. They include community service, private sector, media, and youth organizations. Further, through collaborative efforts with the government, it is realized that "the Colombian government ratified legislation to recognize the learning circle program as the official education program for displaced children." This monumental step has secured the place of the New School within the Colombian society and its efforts to empower displaced youth through education.

Subsequent agreements among the New School and the international office of migration and Plan International have brought the work of the foundation and its

⁸⁰ Fundación Escuela Nueva; Volvamos a la gente guía de información. Círculos de aprendizaje Escuela Nueva Activa (New School Foundation; Back to the people informational program guide. New School Learning circles). Website portal found at: <http://www.escuelanueva.org/portal/en/escuela-nueva-model.html> p.1

⁸¹ Changemakers.net. Learning Circles: Education for displaced children in Colombia. Website portal found at: <http://proxied.changemakers.net/journal/peace/displaypeace.cfm-ID=220> p.1

learning circles initiatives to a broader global audience. It is observed and acknowledged by the foundation that “local participation is an integral part of the program because it provides children with a sense of hope and normalcy when their lives have been disrupted, while national and international partnerships underwrite the program’s success and serve as critical building blocks for expansion.”⁸² It is this mechanism and structure of combining local social resources and international awareness that will continue to forge new relationships at home in Colombia and abroad. This initiative then will not only continue to aid the displaced through education in Colombia, but also in other world regions.

In addition to these fruitful endeavors, and the principle work being undertaken in Bogotá, the New School looks forward to utilizing a national network of over 30,000 schools to place an emphasis on developing partnerships with local municipalities with autonomous decision making for budget and procurement to ensure education for all displaced children in Colombia.”⁸³ These lofty objectives are only being met by an unrivaled local and national support. Such support means that this foundation and initiative may indeed be the most viable program of its kind in the history of Colombia, and sincerely have an opportunity of educating the vast majority of internally displaced children. Together with partnerships and dedicated implementation, it is not surprising that upon an examination of results and

⁸² Ibid. p.3

⁸³ Ibid. p.3

achievements, the New School Foundation has become the national benchmark for educational achievement among the internally displaced.

With a total of 50 learning circles initiated in 2005, a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) comparative study conducted between learning circles and traditional school environments for IDP students “found a greater rate of improvement in learning circles - 36% language, 30% math and out – performance of learning circles scoring 18 and 14 points above the national average in math and language.” Also, the Catholic University of Chile through an independent study “found a 20% improvement in self esteem, while other observers found that children learned to solve conflicts peacefully, cooperate and respect each other, thus becoming more responsible and developing a sense of belonging.”⁸⁴

The potential for education to serve as a catalyst for conflict resolution becomes ever more apparent. These children, though principally affected by violent conflict that has engrossed their reality can succeed both socially and academically when given the proper opportunity and support. As a result of the success of the initial pilot study, the program was rolled out by the Colombian government and “Ministry of education whose goal it was to reach 7,856 in 13 departments and 33 municipalities.”⁸⁵ With the success of this latest documented program, the

⁸⁴ Ibid. p.2

⁸⁵ Escuela Nueva Fundación. “We consolidate New School for vulnerable populations and emergency.”p.1 <http://www.escuelanueva.org/portal/en/our-programs/national/learning-circles.html>

Colombian state continues to display a sense of support and solidarity with the transcendiary program and initiative.

This support is crucial in providing the proper support structure necessary for this program to continue with success. The Colombian government must not waver in its' commitment to this initiative and supply field workers with the necessary tools for continued and expansive rollout. The results reported by the program thus far, and within the first decade of implementation are included in the following table:

TABLE 2: Results of New School Foundation learning circles initiative

<u>Results</u>
➤ Shaped national education policy for the integration of displaced, migrant children. f Improvement in school retention rates and school effectiveness
➤ Demonstrable improvement in academic performance demonstrated through increases in English and Math scores on national standardized tests
➤ Improvement in student democratic behavior, peaceful co-existence and self-esteem
➤ Increases in motivation of students and tutors to further their studies and competencies
➤ Decreases in violence, crime and aggression
➤ Increases in parent and community interest and participation in student's lives
➤ Alliances with municipal organizations to provide free registration, physical and mental health services, sex education and social services
Acceptance by students, tutors, families and local communities of Learning Circles as an effective means of reaching and educating "at-risk" children and youth
<i>Table provided by The New School Foundation; back to the people. Project assessment guide. 2004-2007</i> ⁸⁶

⁸⁶ The New School Foundation; back to the people. Project assessment guide. 2004-2007. P.6

In further examining and analyzing the work of the New School, it is important to underline what the organizations future objectives entail, and how they plan to successfully meet their institutional goals. In what is referred to by the organization as a scaling up strategy and expansion plan, the foundation plans to “increase national resources for displaced children and through advocacy raise municipal awareness about learning circles, involve business and communities in expansion activities, and partner with universities for teacher practicum programs.”⁸⁷ Through this systematic plan of expansion, the foundation, in effect, promises to stand firm in its dedication to education for the internally displaced. It is apparent that as a result of continued governmental and international support, the New School learning circles will continue to remain a staple within Colombian society and specifically the arena of education for the displaced.

To further promote the expansion of the learning circles method within Colombian society, the New School plans to “develop cultural content for indigenous and Afro-Colombian children.”⁸⁸ With the Afro-Colombian population being one of the groups most affected by internal displacement, the program justly recognizes their unique position. By addressing the need for culturally appropriate content, the learning circles progressively evolve their method of implementation and meet the standard of inclusion to which they strive.

⁸⁷ Ibid. p.2

⁸⁸ Ibid.p.2

In attempting to broaden the implementation of the learning circles program to a worldwide audience, the New School hopes to “scale the program internationally with the foundations international strategy: empower local organizations to provide education where it is needed most.”⁸⁹ With the successes of the program in Colombia being felt throughout the IDP population in Bogotá and elsewhere, it is only fitting that the initiative be offered to other nations dealing with the problem of mass displacement as a result of armed conflict. An increasingly international profile will reach tens of thousands around the world and effectively aid the pacification of conflict through a progressive education for internally displaced persons.

4.3 Access to education for the internally displaced in Bogotá

The first step in the process of creating a proper educational structure for internally displaced populations is providing access to the resources by which the state will attempt to educate this sector of the population. The access to proper education for the internally displaced of Bogotá, and throughout Colombia has been plagued by ineffective policy and slow response to the ever expanding population of internally displaced persons entering the city and throughout major urban conglomerations in other regions of the country. An examination of their individual and group access to an adequate education is necessary in order to underline potential solutions and remedies. It is important to focus on the sheer numbers of

⁸⁹ Changemakers.net. Learning Circles: Education for displaced children in Colombia. Website portal found at: <http://proxied.changemakers.net/journal/peace/displaypeace.cfm-ID=220> p.3

those displaced within the city in relation to the country, and concentrate on the extent to which their educational needs are being effectively met.

In Colombia, it has been observed by the Norwegian Refugee Council that in “2002 about 216, 000 children left school throughout the country as a result of displacement, while in the same year, education for IDPs covered only 8.8% of the total needs, and about 29% of the needs of IDPs in Bogotá.”⁹⁰ With informal communities becoming larger and expanding in population within the periphery of the city, access to educational tools and resources continues to be relatively dismal at best. These resources are desperately needed by the students of the city’s largest settlements of IDP populations, but inexplicably unavailable in one of Latin Americas richest countries. It is noted that at a city level “insufficient resources are allocated to local schools to cover the needs of the displaced, with neither book nor uniforms provided through government assistance, only small kits with pencils and papers.”⁹¹ With the inadequacies of an inefficient system pervading the city culture, important reforms and strategies for improvement are necessary.

In the city area of Soacha, located on the southern edge of Bogotá, it is “estimated that only 20% of those displaced have access to primary education, while only 5% can access secondary education, with schools overcrowded and in concentrated areas of displacement lacking the capacity to take on new kids thus

⁹⁰ Profile of internal displacement: Colombia. Compilation of the information available in the global IDP database of the Norwegian Refugee Council. February 4, 2004. P. 129

⁹¹ Ibid p.129

exacerbating extremely high illiteracy levels.”⁹² The effect of low education for the internally displaced of the city subsequently has dramatic consequences for the IDP population and continually threatens their human right to education as well as their potential for progress. The Colombian government must in turn focus on these city suburbs and areas of high IDP concentrations to provide for the most basic of their individual and collective educational needs.

Yet another city slum, faced with a history of low educational access for the internally displaced, is known as Altos de Cazuca where it is observed that “over 10,000 children are without access to primary education, with 70% of them being displaced.”⁹³ This alarming trend is indicative of a pattern that engulfs the internally displaced communities of Bogotá. The lack of commitment by the government to create access to education for the displaced threatens the future of the residents of these areas, and with each passing day becomes a more prevalent concern. The problem is expounded by the nature of displacement to the city. With hundreds of displaced entering these city regions each year, the Colombian state is pressed to create new social reforms, when as of yet, it has been unable to deal with the problem in the present. That is to say that as the problem grows, so too must a response evolve to deal with the issues.

More than a decade ago, in 1999, the issue of education for the displaced in Bogotá drew national attention. It was reported that of the 60,000 children unable

⁹² Ibid.p.129

⁹³ Project Counseling Services. Deteriorating Bogotá: Displacement and war in Urban Areas. December 31, 2002. P.68

to access education in the city, “24,000 that were not granted placement in any school as a result of no further capacity, were in fact displaced, thus demonstrating the institutional incapacity of the state.”⁹⁴ This incapacity has continued throughout the course of the last decade and is realized by IDPs throughout the city. With this city specific data in mind, it is important to also address the educational context for at risk populations throughout Colombia.

The Colombian government has stated that there is full educational coverage throughout the country. A study commissioned by the attorney general’s office though “has found that only 34.1 percent of children between the ages of 5-17 enjoy the right to quality education, while the other 65.9% either do not have access to education, have access but fail the grade they are enrolled in, or pass the grade but do not learn the skills they need to succeed in personal, civil, social, cultural, economic, or political life.”⁹⁵ These figures stand in sharp contrast to what the Colombian government purports to be an efficient and comprehensive structure for educational support. These populations of displaced and otherwise marginalized populations are simply not being afforded the opportunity to be educated within the confines of governmentally assured stipulations for educational attainment. Further, it is necessary to underline other factors that stand as barriers to educational advancement.

⁹⁴ Ibid.p.68

⁹⁵ Procuraduría General de la Nación. El derecho a la educación. (Office of the attorney general. The right to education) 2006. P.6

It has been noted that displaced children in the school system who have been entered into the national registry are often made to purchase school related clothing, such as uniforms, in addition to other school related costs such as inscription as well as other enrollment fees. Generally the Colombian government has created provisions for those who cannot afford these costs and otherwise would not be able to attend school. In spite of the provisions set forth, children are finding it increasingly difficult to actually attend school. It also has been noted that “even if displaced and registered cardholders have the right to be exempted from boarding fees, it still depends on the number of places available, and the school.”⁹⁶ This reality could force children to seek education in areas further from their homes, which raises problems of transportation to any school outside of their district.

In considering the extent IDP children are being schooled in Bogotá and throughout the country, it was realized that as early as 2001, IDP children in Colombia “were entitled to free school enrollment for only year, with no budget allocated for them and nothing planned for education afterward.”⁹⁷ With the oldest children often having to care for younger siblings (as well as other domestic concerns in the home) their plight is compounded resulting in access to education gravely limited. They must be afforded more years without educational expenses and subsidies paid in place of any cost to them. The reality is that even the most

⁹⁶ Gonzalez, Bustelo M. Forced displacement in Colombia. Journal publication. Doctors without borders: Spain. December 2001 p.13

⁹⁷ Profile of internal displacement: Colombia. Compilation of the information available in the global IDP database of the Norwegian Refugee Council. February 4, 2004. P. 129

nominal costs of the education may present large scale problems for individual IDP families and effectively impede them from enrolling in school.

In assessing access to education for IDPs within Colombia, it is critical to examine the effect that armed conflict has had on both teachers and schools alike. In 2002 alone, it was observed that “82 teachers and school employees were killed, while over 100 schools were destroyed in attacks by armed groups.”⁹⁸ These figures are sobering when contrasted with the fact that the killings of school teachers had actually doubled from the previous year.

Since 2000, in fact, Education International and the Colombian Federation of teachers have observed “that unidentified armed groups have murdered 310 teachers.”⁹⁹ When teachers and the school structures themselves become targets, the barriers to educational advancement among this population are compounded tenfold. As learning centers are destroyed and teachers are arbitrarily murdered, the hope of a better future for Colombian children is also dealt extraordinarily blows.

The summary executions of educators in the country speaks further to the deterioration of a sector of society that has lost all conscious for human life and whose depravity seems to have absolutely no bounds. Teachers are seen as the enemy by guerrilla and other armed forces quite possibly because an educated population threatens the mistrust that these groups have sought to solidify between

⁹⁸ Ibid. p. 131

⁹⁹ Education International, Colombia: EI takes action to end the killing of teachers’, 2010, www.ei-ie.org/rights/en/newsshow.php?id=1234&theme=rights&country=colombia. P.1

impoverished and marginalized groups in the country and the government. These tactics seek to further paralyze the country's educators and instill fear in communities nationwide.

4.4 Principle initiatives being undertaken by the Colombian government in Bogotá

It is essential to comprehensively understand the assessment and descriptive analysis of the scope and depth of educational advancement efforts that have been implemented for the internally displaced population of the capital city of Bogota, Colombia. By identifying and analyzing these initiatives, a more profound examination of the state of human rights for the internally displaced and in particular the right to education, as well as the access therein can be effectively undertaken.

In the present day, it is important to understand what the Colombian government is doing to protect the right to education for these individuals, and exactly what is being done to aid the development of their communities in the informal settings within which many of these people presently find themselves. Of great significance, is exactly how these provisions aid these people in their daily lives, and how they benefit the individual and group as a whole?

It is clear that the groups of individuals most greatly affected with regard to participation in the Colombian educational system are IDPs. While this may come as little surprise, the extent to which this fact has become a reality is staggering. It has been noted that "the statistics regarding IDP children's access to education vary

between 70 and 85 percent of IDP children not attending school.”¹⁰⁰ These figures have, for a great period of time served as riotous pleas for greater governmental intervention and assistance. In the midst of apparent dismay and ineffective action, the Colombian government has taken it upon themselves to create and implement strategies for dealing with the increasingly alarming issue.

The Colombian constitutional court has solidified deadlines for the reporting of progress with regard to various provisions set out in a recent 2011 court ruling. The constitutional court seeks to address the “strengthening of institutions, budgeting, and prevention of displacement, physical security and protection of internally displaced persons at risk, inadequate official registration procedures, and IDP participation in decision making.”¹⁰¹ The implementations of these provisions are principally a result of the restructuring of the National System for the Attention to the Displaced Population (SNAIPD). The work of this organization has been hampered by internal organizational issues and a lack of commitment from the various agencies involved in the national system.

With the initiation of these procedures, the Colombian government continues the task of creating and sustaining organizations that can aid the most vulnerable individuals and groups of people within the country, specifically internally displaced persons. Of the most promising governmental programs directly affecting the IDP population is that of the Department for social prosperity (Accion Social). The

¹⁰⁰ Watch List on children and Armed Conflict report. Page 18

¹⁰¹ Constitutional Court of Colombia. October 13, 2011. Plan 219

primary responsibility of this program is to address cases of extreme poverty through comprehensive social protection including a specifically designated social work program initiative. The internally displaced persons involved with this organization enter into an agreement by signing a “co-responsibility agreement stating their intention to engage with social workers and be jointly responsible for their own development.”¹⁰²

These types of programs are of the most progressive in nature simply through the manner in which they work with the IDP. By providing the individual with an opportunity to take ownership of their situation, they can begin to recapture the great sense of dignity that may have been lost as a result of displacement and expulsion from their home. The aforementioned program also allows the IDP to feel as though he/she is engaged in the process of rebuilding and moving forward with their lives.

By creating a structure in which the affected individual can engage with certain governmental groups, it can help to instill or aid in reaffirming a trust for the government that may have been lost as a result of their experiences. In fact, it has been documented that the program of Red Unidos (The Together Network) “is essential in giving IDPs and other vulnerable people access to long term government

¹⁰² Red Juntos. December 31, 2010 p.4

support, and helps them to take charge of their own processes to overcome the vulnerability associated with their displacement.”¹⁰³

Among the newly implemented provisions outlined by the Colombian government to aid IDPs in beginning to recover from displacement is the aptly entitled “victims law”. This governmental provision was passed in June of 2011 and has begun to be enforced throughout the country in recent months. The law stipulates a property restitution which would reestablish land rights for victims of displacement where made possible by a cease fire in the area and no further perceived threat. The law has met with considerable backlash from criminal non state actors, and will certainly see a long and arduous process through fruition. In fact, it has been noted that within the last year alone, “21 land restitution advocates have been assassinated, a surge in violence likely to increase as implementation continues to gather pace.”¹⁰⁴

What is essential to take away from the prevalence of violence against these advocates is that the Colombian government must continue to implement strategies to protect not only the internally displaced person, but also those attempting to aid them in regaining the land they have lost, so that they can continue to move on with their lives. While it would be short sighted to assume that this process would be a simple or easy one, it is without question unacceptable that these individuals are

¹⁰³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) “Property restitution in sight, but integration still distant” September 5, 2011. P.1

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. P.6

being systematically targeted without the protection necessary to properly do their work. Local government at the municipal level must seek to engage the regional and national apparatus in order to establish mechanisms for the protection of these aid workers.

The importance of this land restitution initiative in relation to education cannot be underscored. When the individual IDP is allowed to return to their home, they are provided with the opportunity to enroll their children at a school in an established community. This stabilization can prove to be a significant precursor for educational participation and achievement. The uncertainty inherent to informal IDP communities based in the periphery of cities such as Bogotá offers little semblance of educational routine, consistently impeding progress.

As a result of thorough analysis performed by Colombian governmental officials in 2008 with regard to educational opportunity for the internally displaced, serious shortfalls were effectively uncovered. In fact, it was the Colombian constitutional court that found “serious problems in education, especially pertaining to access, permanency, flexibility, and adaptability of the system.”¹⁰⁵ The Constitutional Court continued its’ harsh criticisms of the educational system by concluding unanimously that “the Colombian state has gravely ignored its’ constitutional duties in this respect.”¹⁰⁶ The proclamations made by such a visible political organ are monumental in tackling the issue head on, and attempting to

¹⁰⁵ Constitutional Court of Colombia, Writ 251. 2008 p.3

¹⁰⁶ The rights of internally displaced women | Colombia | IDP Voices. P.3

ensure not only legitimacy in the legal system, but also a willingness to aid those victimized.

4.5 Educational initiatives undertaken by non- state actors: UNICEF & the EEPCT Program: Bogotá

Of the most prominent non Colombian state actors to be involved in creating and implementing programs for the educational advancement of IDPs is the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The UNICEF mission in Colombia, aided by a U.S. 201 million dollar partnership between UNICEF and the Government of the Netherlands created a five year country program from 2008-2012¹⁰⁷. This program was designed with a clear and coherent focus on a “rights-based approach, contributing to the full realization of children and adolescent rights in Colombia as recognized by international law (convention on the rights of a child) and Colombian law.”¹⁰⁸

The EEPCT (Education in emergencies and post crisis transition program) initiative is meant to aid individuals and families who have undergone significant trauma as a result of the armed conflict. In fact, it is the underlining objective of the program to “increase education coverage and reduce repetition and dropout rates, as well as scale up successful initiatives that promote gender equality in education.”¹⁰⁹ By implementing the program in 11 of the country’s 32 departments,

¹⁰⁷ UNICEF Education in emergencies and post-crisis transition program: Colombia Case study. April 2011 p. 42

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p.421

¹⁰⁹ Ibid p.11

the initiative is able to serve citizens throughout the country and in Bogotá within the city's most profoundly affected neighborhoods. Through a focus in gender equality, the program also incorporates outlying factors that are integral to the educational progress of some of the most vulnerable groups within the IDP population affected by the educational crisis.

The UNICEF organization and EEPCT program in Colombia works hand in hand with the Colombian ministry of education to allow for the smoothest possible implementation of strategy and the fulfillment of project objectives. This five year plan and strategy has also had an objective closely aligned to the Colombian national development plan for 2006-2012, as well as the ten year education plan which is to "achieve universal coverage of basic education by focusing on vulnerable children, including those affected by natural disasters and complex emergencies."¹¹⁰ This main objective is important to note when identifying the strides that the Colombian government has taken in recent years.

The Colombian government took a monumental step forward in attempting to assure education for the displaced and other marginalized populations, when, on May 10, 2010, "the Constitutional Court of Colombia ordered the immediate implementation of mandatory and free primary education throughout the entire national territory."¹¹¹ This ruling had been long overdue, but is an assurance that the government understands and acknowledges the need for educational reform.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.p.11

¹¹¹ Ruing C-376/10, Colombia Constitutional Court. 19 of May 2010 p.2

With this mechanism in place, the general population will benefit greatly in terms of educational outlook. It is clear though, that the work of educational reform is by no means complete or all together comprehensive.

These reforms are seen as fragile in the eyes of UNICEF and other independent bodies of investigation and assistance. It is noted that “achievements in education are not shared by all, as displaced, indigenous and afro-Colombian communities remain victims of structural inequities that hinder their progress, given the realities of persistent poverty, internal displacement, natural disaster and continued armed conflict.”¹¹² While the movement toward free primary education was of course welcome and undeniably necessary, a greater focus on specifically the internally displaced must be realized.

Among the stated goals of the EEPCT program are strategies to identify and assist those in the most need of attention and aid. Underlined objectives include “increasing the resilience of the education sector services in delivery in chronic crisis, and deteriorating contexts, as well as the education sectors contributions to better prediction, prevention and preparedness for emergencies due to natural disasters and conflict.”¹¹³ The necessity for a strengthening of education services already in place is evidenced by the reality that the needs of socially and economically disenfranchised populations within the country are not presently

¹¹² UNICEF Education in emergencies and post-crisis transition program: Colombia Case study. April 2011 p.34

¹¹³ Ibid. p.11

being met. UNICEF Colombia has sought to partially remedy these concerns by integrating specific programs within the EEPCT initiative.

Of the most important components under the umbrella of the EEPCT initiative is the creation of “The school looking for the child program”¹¹⁴. This program effectively seeks to “identify out of school children through a door-to-door census, family visits, radio campaigns, and word of mouth in order to eliminate the barriers that impede access to schools.”¹¹⁵ By properly utilizing this on the ground and street based model, UNICEF and the EEPCT program cut through mechanisms of bureaucracy that would delay immediate benefits to these children. This program also works to ease the tension on the state, and expand opportunities for the exposure of the program.

In fact, as a sign of the progress and success that the program has experienced, it was identified that “by introducing the program to two departments with large displaced populations, the program extended the government capacity to meet the educational needs of vulnerable groups in the area.”¹¹⁶ Though the Colombian government is responsible for ensuring the educational advancement of its population, it is also a governmental body spread thin by the modern world’s longest standing armed conflict. The resources that must be allocated for education,

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p.11

¹¹⁵ Ibid. p.22

¹¹⁶ Ibid. p.22

must also be tempered with this reality in mind, but also absolutely never cut short as a result of resource expenditure on the conflict.

By implementing strategies to also promote peace in the classrooms, the EEPCT program firmly identifies the need for psycho social analysis and response. It is important to underscore that within the program, teachers are expected to create classroom agreements, incorporate child friendly teaching practices, and prepare youth for work as conflict mediators for more peaceful and democratic schools¹¹⁷." These mechanisms were incorporated to deal with issues of school violence from children that exhibit psychological concerns and detachment as result of displacement and other conflict related concerns. The program itself is extraordinary in the manner that similar to the New School Foundation learning circles; it envisions a holistic approach to education and one that takes into account these children's unique backgrounds and experiences.

The significance of this program and its benefit to the internally displaced becomes twofold. First, the implementation of these programs directly aides the distressed individual or population. Further, the program places often times necessary pressure on the hosting government to continue and more importantly increase their efforts. This specific program formed by the UNICEF organization is extraordinary primarily because of its' comprehensive nature.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. p.12

In action, the program “supports national policies and plans for children and adolescents, conducts pilot projects and community interventions that promote the right to participate throughout the life cycle, and strengthens the capacity of children and adolescents to participate in school, family and community environments.¹¹⁸” by implementing such strategies, UNICEF aids the Colombian government in identifying the varying needs of communities in Bogotá and elsewhere. The Program is also given the ability to independently audit successes and deficiencies, thus ensuring a greater sense of transparency. Finally, through capacity building the program allows children to better cope with what they have undergone and subsequently be better prepared to succeed later in life.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. P. 10

Chapter 5: Community development and the internally displaced of Bogotá

Internal displacement in Colombia effectively and violently transfers thousands of individuals from their permanent rural home structures most often to the periphery populations of the country's largest cities and municipalities. Individuals seek out these urban areas in order to find reprieve from violence or the threats of violence made by guerilla and other non state and illegal armed groups. They arrive with the understanding that they may indeed never be able to return home, or for that matter see relatives ever again. As they escape imminent death and arrive in the country's capital and largest city though, they are far from being out of harm's way. Their struggle, rather, is only beginning as they fight to survive among the poorest of the poor in a place that they can hardly begin to understand.

It has been noted and documented that upon arriving in the city; the displaced "typically reside in peripheral and poor areas, experiencing harsh living conditions and limited economic opportunity among host communities who have previously settled there."¹¹⁹ With the city already home to over 7 million people, its resources are constantly being utilized by an ever growing general civilian population.

¹¹⁹ Arredondo-Atehortua, Inés Clara; Salcedo, Jorge. The effects of internal displacement on host communities. A case study of Suba and Ciudad Bolívar localities in Bogotá, Colombia. Brooking Institution – London School of Economics project on internal displacement. October 2011. Pp.1-22

With staggering poverty among many citizens not affected by displacement, the displaced are often times forced to compete for scarce resources with this sector of the population. They are in turn left to in essence fend for themselves, a reality which has staggering consequences. As such, it is important to underline how these communities function, as well as the relationship between IDPs and their newly acquired community within Bogotá. Community development as follows in the remainder of this chapter will be defined by an analysis of institutional, economic, and social support structures in place within the community that serves as home to city's largest IDP population. It is also important to define what is being done to foster a sense of community among this population and develop these areas in order to better represent their present living, and socio-economic conditions.

5.1 The Case of Ciudad Bolivar (Bolívar City)

With Bogotá's greatest population of internally displaced people, Ciudad Bolívar is consistently at the center of any discussion regarding IDPs and the capital city. The sheer population of displaced and urban poor within the municipality is of great significance, as well as issues of social conditions, urbanization and infrastructure. Also important to underline is the development of a political culture among the displaced and other inhabitants. As this municipality within Bogotá continues to expand, the participation of displaced in social and political life must continue to evolve. It is critical that the needs of the inhabitants of Ciudad Bolívar be progressively addressed and taken in to account.

Researchers at the World Bank estimate that “with 10% of Bogotá’s population, Ciudad Bolívar has grown the fastest of any municipality in recent decades and by 50% in between 1993-2002 alone.”¹²⁰ While the city has been an informal settlement for over 25 years, the influx of internally displaced in recent years has placed further stresses on a municipality with a population of between 715,000 to over 1.2 million according to city reporting mechanisms.¹²¹ These inhabitants are then forced to create homes from whatever material they can gather, and begin a completely new and foreign existence in the national capital.

The indicators of the poor social conditions realized by the population of Bolívar are of great concern. It is observed that Ciudad Bolívar indeed has “the worst social conditions in Bogotá, with the lowest level of equipment, lowest level of green space per inhabitant (1.92m²), lowest number of police stations (1 per 100,000 inhabitants), and high violence with assaults being the first cause of death for people aged 15 - 44 and second for people aged 45-59.”¹²² These figures are astounding and provide dramatic examples of what has become a city crisis. Particularly, the low amounts of police presence are of concern as there is simply no sense of security for a people who have already been displaced and expelled from their homes after suffering horrifying physical and emotional violence. While improvements have been made by dedicated recently elected municipal mayors, a vast amount of work has yet to be done.

¹²⁰ Echanove, Sandoa Matías. Bogotá at the edge; planning the barrios. 2004 p.8

¹²¹ Ibid. p.1

¹²² Ibid. p.1

An analysis of urbanization in the municipality also brings about a unique set of issues to be addressed. It is widely understood that the manners in which houses are built include planning and zoning without requisite permits or proper structural planning. Then, homes are many times augmented to include additional floors that present extraordinary problems with regard to the structural integrity of the buildings throughout the municipality.

In assessing informal urbanization, it has been noted that in terms of population density per square kilometer, that the neighborhood of “San Francisco in Cuidad Bolivar holds a higher population density than the cities of Tokyo, Japan; New York, U.S.A.; Barcelona, Spain and San Diego, U.S.A.”¹²³ As a result of such a great number of people within exceedingly small spaces, the quality of life in Cuidad Bolivar also declines substantially, with very little hope for the future.

Public infrastructure in Cuidad Bolivar remains one of the gravest concerns for city planners and political as well as social entities attempting to foster change in these expansive slums. The city has reported marked cases of instability in the municipality, and has little power to impede the displaced and those living in absolute poverty from building structures wherever they might find open plots of land. In fact, the city has indeed issued reports stating that “despite the numerous interventions realized in the locality by international organizations, non-governmental organizations and public institutions, Cuidad Bolivar keeps presenting a deficit of access to public services characterized by a low number of

¹²³ Ibid p.2

telephone lines, connection failures with the aqueduct and sewage system and insufficient collection of the garbage collection services.”¹²⁴

This inability to provide for desperately needed measures of infrastructure is indicative of the immense levels of assistance that these people require. It is not as if there is no emphasis on the municipality itself, but rather that with an ever growing population and more displaced arriving each week, month and year, the city is increasingly hard pressed to find durable solutions. Further, there is also the great need to provide affordable transportation within the city.

Efforts have been made to make available a bus line of the Transmilenio above ground light rail service, but, as of yet, it can only reach the very end of the municipality, with other buses then used to transport people deeper within the locality.¹²⁵ The service, though of the lowest cost, may still represent barriers to travel within the city Bogotá itself. This reality makes the necessity to register for IDP assistance critical in order to subsidize the cost of travel and allow for continued searches for opportunities within the labor market of the formal city structure.

The city of Bogotá has recognized some of the deficiencies plaguing inhabitants of Ciudad Bolívar and the city proper itself by implementing city wide social reforms that aid in the effort to develop a more participatory population. In fact, it was “the plan for economic, social and urban development for Bogotá from

¹²⁴ El Gobierno Distrital, Las Localidades, Ciudad Bolívar, Localidad 19, (The district government, the municipalities, Bolívar City, municipality 19. Bogotá 2004. <http://www.idct.gov.co> p.3

¹²⁵ Echanove, Sandoa Matías. Bogota at the edge; planning the barrios. 2004. p.2

2004 -2008 that sought the participation of citizens in public decision making and promoted the strengthening of social organizations and the construction of social capital.”¹²⁶ These initiatives are integral to the process of building a socially conscious municipality of Ciudad Bolivar, and may allow citizens to realize that their needs and aspirations are important to the structure and progress of the city as a whole. The building of social capital can also provide displaced inhabitants of this community a sense of ownership and subsequently build a desire to participate more fully in the city system. This participation will in turn ease integration to the city and form the substance from which social gains are eventually attained.

Of the most interesting initiatives undertaken within Bogotá and in the municipality of Ciudad Bolivar for inclusion and community development has been the Bogotá como vamos campaign (Bogotá, how are we doing). Established by popular mayor Antanas Mockus, the project itself has a stated “purpose of evaluating changes in the quality of life from the local inhabitants’ viewpoint and enabling the evaluation of the public administration’s performance and the betterment of its’ impact.”¹²⁷ This initiative through the work of surveys, workshops, and debates with experts allows for participatory actions that hold officials and the public administration accountable for their actions. The program is a marked improvement in the socio-political relationship between displaced

¹²⁶ Ibid. p 2

¹²⁷ UN Habitat, Best Practices, Bogotá, How are we doing, The Together Foundation and UNCHS, 2002 p.3

residents and policy leaders. Similar initiatives must be created in order to encourage social participation that can lead to progressive reform.

5.2 Established periphery communities in Bogotá and internally displaced persons

In the community of Ciudad Bolívar, it is recognized that both the formal community who has inhabited the area and the newly integrated populations of IDPs in large part live under the strain of absolute poverty. What is important to recognize though is the unequal relationship that is shared between IDPs and those previously based in the community. An analysis of this relationship is necessary to undertake in order to better understand the barriers to community funds and access to resources.

It is recognized that in the Ciudad Bolívar community, those who have resided in the community “enjoy greater access to housing, services, and work in both the formal and informal sector, and that in contrast, internally displaced families are largely disadvantaged due to their lack of social network, their dependence on state assistance, and their difficulty in accessing formal and informal labor markets.”¹²⁸ While it is unsurprising that individual IDPs and families will not have nearly as extensive a network as the already established community population, it is also clear that their struggle to access these markets should be acknowledged by the city government. Further, housing allocation must be

¹²⁸ Ibid. p.3

distributed in a fashion whereby the displaced are not consistently and inherently disallowed to seek available opportunities.

The origin of IDPs also becomes of relevance to their new community and can be used to discern the likelihood of a more amicable integration to the community. In fact, periphery communities in Bogotá “single out IDPs based on their recent arrival to the city, where in Colombia they have arrived from, and their access to state assistance.”¹²⁹ These manners in which to discriminate against IDPs in the community could be skewed by government sponsored programs to protect anonymity among IDPs, so as not to immediately place them at odds with the periphery community. The government must also continue to further promote solidarity between the IDPs and the periphery community by better educating these periphery communities on what the tragic incidence of displacement has meant for these people in general.

It continuing to examine the ways in which IDPs in Bogotá may be discriminated against upon arrival, it is necessary to highlight the blame that may be placed on them simply due to their background and proposed integration to the city. It has been observed that “in general, IDPs are viewed with hostility by the general public, viewed with fear, subjected to persecution for being displaced, and blamed for increased crime rates.”¹³⁰ Within newly acquired community, there is often a sense of discernible indifference for the plight of the displaced and to a great extent,

¹²⁹ Ibid. p.3

¹³⁰ Ibid. p.3

anger due to a proposed shrinking of resources within the community as a whole. Persecution can come in various forms, including social exclusion and violence further perpetrated on the specific population of IDPs within the community.

The personal individual social differences between IDPs and the established periphery population can exacerbate tensions within the community. It has been identified that “cultural, religious, regional, and ethnic differences often produce conflicts between the two communities and become excuses for racism and discrimination in daily life, such as in the workplace and the landlord to tenant relationship.”¹³¹ These incidences of racism that affect their employer and tenant relations can become increasingly difficult to quell and may only deepen resentment and disdain among the two populations. The lack of inclusion present in turn threatens to dissolve any sense of community that IDPs may be attempting to create and further engrains an “us against them” mentality, harmful and detrimental for all.

The racism mentioned above is explicitly seen from the periphery community toward Afro-Colombian or indigenous populations especially. It has been noted through exhaustive investigation that in periphery populations within Bogotá, Afro-Descendants have faced a long history of problems, with signs posting ‘apartments for rent, but not to blacks’ or ‘get out of here, you son of a bitch blacks’¹³². This form of aggravated racism has existed for several years, and is compounded by the reality that Afro-Colombians form a large portion of the

¹³¹ Ibid. p.2

¹³² Ibid. p.13

internally displaced within the region. With these realities in place, Afro-Colombians, especially originating from coastal regions, are unfairly targeted and once again may face the prospect of displacement. Displacement in this sense would be intra-urban as their movement would have to be from one periphery community to the next.

The marginal access that the IDP populations have to state funds is also a divisive issue which causes tension among the displaced and the rest of the established periphery community. It has been observed that “host community members resent the special treatment that IDPs receive, resulting in accusation that the displaced persons are: not truly displaced, bad workers, people who do not know how to take advantage of opportunities, and do not work.”¹³³ These biases toward the newly arrived IDPs effectively fan the flames that create a tension increasingly difficult to overcome.

The IDP population in this sense is barred from participation within the community and isolated from a desperately needed sense of social cohesion. They may also subsequently become the victims of violent threats and attacks by other community members.

Another origin of clashes threatening the creation of community for the internally displaced in Bogotá is a result of the familial structure that an IDP family may have when they initially enter a periphery community. In this context, large families are especially frowned upon and treated poorly. These large families pose a

¹³³ Ibid. p.12

particularly significant perceived threat as it is acknowledged that “these families are discriminated against because they may rent lodging and share the space with several family members, increasing pressure on public services and can lead to uncomfortable coexistence between the displaced and the rest of the community”.¹³⁴ The issue of safety, again, becomes a grave concern for these families. Young children along with other members of these families may be threatened on a daily basis and live in constant fear of reprisals from established members of the periphery population.

It is important to note that though there may be significant divisions and potentially dangerous tensions between IDP populations and the communities within which they live in Bogotá, there also exists the undeniable truth that they in fact are living together and whether purposefully or not share a certain bond. They are tied together, not only by geographical proximity, but also the inevitable sharing of resources. It is thus important to underline the sense of apparent dependency that has been formed between the two distinct populations.

It has been noted that “despite the differences that exist between host communities and IDPs, they eventually establish relations of mutual dependence, as IDPs are an important part of the demand for rental housing and the consumption of goods and services in poor neighborhoods.”¹³⁵ This dependence can help to potentially normalize otherwise combative relationships. By recognizing the need

¹³⁴ Ibid. p.12

¹³⁵ Ibid. p.13

that periphery communities have for the buying power of IDPs, there may also be uncovered a platform whereby the two separate communities may be able to initiate dialogue and seek common ground. These relationships may also be built through social structures present within the general community.

In Ciudad Bolivar there are unique places that can form the basis for integration and better understanding among the two groups. A primary example of this kind of structure is found in the church, where it was observed by a member of the clergy in Ciudad Bolivar that “through pastoral work in the parish, activities are carried out that bring together host communities and IDPs.”¹³⁶ Wherever these activities are undertaken is, of course, of less relevance than the fact that they are indeed being undertaken.

Local schools and other organizations promoting social cohesion within the community could also be effectively utilized for the purpose of bringing people together and fostering a climate of inclusion. The notion that these two groups simply cannot get along is ludicrous and must not be entertained.

5.3 State funded institutional and economic support in Bogotá

It is essential in conducting a study of community development for the internally displaced to examine assistance provided by the city and national government, and to what extent it is reaching IDP populations. It is important to identify initiatives undertaken by the communities where the largest populations of IDPs can be found. In Bogotá, these communities include Ciudad Bolivar and the

¹³⁶ Ibid. P.13

community of Suba, the areas with the largest and fourth largest concentrations of IDPs respectively. By also focusing on economic support mechanisms for IDPs, a more comprehensive portrait of social and economic community development strategies can be effectively created.

The relationships between local policy makers and the IDP populations that they serve is an important one to underline when identifying political structures in place to provide community development assistance. It has been recognized through extensive field research that in “Cuidad Bolivar, researchers have found a certain degree of willingness on the part of the local administration to attend to the needs of IDPs, while by contrast in Suba, researchers have found more resistance to providing assistance to IDPs.”¹³⁷ The willingness and unwillingness to provide aid to IDPs is the platform by which aid will be addressed and the basis for future relationships. If local politicians and prominent stake holders are unwilling to aid IDPs, their access to social and economic gains is lessened exponentially.

In the vein of fruitful participation from the state, the community of Cuidad Bolivar has indeed begun to provide a benchmark for progressive and positive relations. For instance, it has been noted that in Cuidad Bolivar, “internally displaced persons have been incorporated into the public agenda by means of earmarking resources for the promotion of livelihood projects.”¹³⁸ The earmarking of resources is exactly what must be done on a consistent basis in order to afford the displaced a

¹³⁷ Arredondo-Atehortua, Inés Clara; Salcedo, Jorge. The effects of internal displacement on host communities. A case study of Suba and Cuidad Bolivar localities in Bogota, Colombia. Brooking Institution – London School of Economics project on internal displacement. October 2011. P.22

¹³⁸ Ibid. p.13

truly viable opportunity to succeed in everyday life. The livelihood projects including the development of infrastructure, health care projects and education programs must also remain as pressing topics on the public agenda.

The community of Ciudad Bolivar local committee for the displaced, by its mere existence, is a positive step forward in creating a mutually beneficial relationship between the displaced in Bogotá and the periphery communities as well between the displaced and the city government. By acknowledging that the displaced require and deserve such a committee to address their unique issues and concerns, the city takes notice of an issue that has long since plagued hundreds of thousands throughout the country. The mayor of Ciudad Bolivar has openly spoken of an “action plan that will be drawn up to deal with the displaced populations’ prioritization on the issues of housing and income generation as well as the decentralization of the political-administrative structure at the district level.”¹³⁹ This decentralization is key to cutting through red tape that would slow the process of progressive individual and collective social development.

By addressing the issue of housing for the displaced, the political power structure within Ciudad Bolivar acknowledges the great deficiencies in the present system, which is the first step in the process of change. Through an emphasis on income generation within the formal labor market, the IDP population of Bogotá is given hope that they might be afforded access to jobs within the community. Of the

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*p.13

most important mechanisms offered by the mayor is the decentralization of the political-administrative structure.

It is critical that programs are effected in the community without the undue burden of a lagging bureaucracy, unable to efficiently tend to the needs of the displaced. By decentralizing this structure at a district level, the municipality can offer specific care and attention to the displaced in a timely fashion. Displaced individuals and families are also given a better sense of where they might be able to properly voice their concerns, while feeling as though their issues, needs and desires are being sincerely taken into account. This decentralization will also aid the administration in better identifying the concerns of the displaced and developing strategies for progressive social change.

Programs created to promote the safety and individual well being for the displaced have also been generated within the community of Ciudad Bolivar. For example, it has been noted that within the community there “exists general assistance programs for older adults, homeless people, female heads of households, and youth who are highly at risk of delinquency, in addition to free education and area health care.”¹⁴⁰ These programs are expansive, and, undoubtedly necessary for the displaced of Bogotá. There must also exist mechanisms to ensure that these services are being delivered in an efficient and encompassing manner.

Persistent barriers to the access of these social programs and structures also arise within the city. Noted issues throughout the IDP community have included

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. p.13

“lack of officials, inadequate space, infrastructures and buildings that are difficult to access for the physically handicapped and an extremely slow computer database system.”¹⁴¹ It is clear that there remains an immense amount of work to be done in order to develop the communities in which the displaced live throughout the city. These concerns can be addressed through continued state and national funding strategies that would seek to empower these people by offering them readily available access to desperately need services.

The political participation of the internally displaced is also an integral component of their community development. It has been noted that in both the communities of Ciudad Bolivar and Suba, “host communities enjoy higher levels of political participation than IDPs, manifested in greater representation of host community residents in community organizations, political groups and churches, permitting them to exert greater influence on the institutions and guide local resources toward their own priorities.”¹⁴² This domination of political social capital cannot continue to go unaddressed. While it clear that a majority population will most often exert greater political influence in any democratic structure, mechanisms can be put in place to aid IDPs socially. For instance, mandatory seats on committees that govern these communities could be instilled to create a certainty that IDP concerns will be addressed. While it is acknowledged that this may foster resentment among the periphery community population, it may is absolutely

¹⁴¹ Ibid. p.14

¹⁴² Ibid. p.14

necessary and helpful in promoting understanding and inclusion as well as social cohesion.

In the economic sector of these communities, it is important to recognize the manners in which IDPs in Bogotá use the resources available to generate household income and survive amidst staggering poverty. The state funded seed projects effectively allow for capital inflows to an individual IDP or family, and can form the basis for which they might begin a small business venture within the community. This seed grant, though, can only be transferred once, and is inefficient, as it does not take into account external factors that may affect the ways in which IDPs may have to use the funds. In fact, it has been noted that “in the midst of extreme poverty any contingency constitutes a sufficient need to use the seed capital, and since it is only provided once, the displaced are left without the ability to generate income or a recognized claim to further assistance from the state system.”¹⁴³

This system is highly flawed as the state must begin to recognize outlying factors that contribute to the forced use of these funds. First, the funds should not be a onetime offer, but rather several times over the course of an agreed period of time. Though it is difficult to speculate as to how many grants and over how many months or years the money should be given, it is clear that one lump sum is not the comprehensive benefit that IDPs in Bogotá require. The IDPs who are making use of these funds should also be able to file petitions with institutional bodies that govern

¹⁴³ Ibid. p.18

the allocation of these funds, in order to address the reasons for why the money was used, and why an additional seed grant is necessary.

In underlining the IDP access to the formal labor market, it is important to understand the types of jobs that they are doing and the employment that they are able to attain. It has been noted that in the community of Ciudad Bolívar “construction and domestic work are the principle sources of temporary employment for IDPs.”¹⁴⁴ This unskilled labor is indicative of a population unable to access a formal educational structure that would provide for the development of intellectual capacity, which could then be used in the skilled positions throughout the city. It is also necessary to underline key reasoning behind why introduction to the labor market has become so difficult for IDPs in Bogotá.

It is understood that IDPs will not participate in the formal labor market because of the grave consequences that it may have with regard to the assistance they are provided by the state. It has been noted that in fact, “the work to which they have access is of short duration, and would mean being enrolled in the formal social security program, which in turn would automatically remove them from the health services and aid programs to which they have a right as registered IDPs.” This vicious cycle is one that entraps IDP populations in Bogotá, and threatens their ability to ever progress.

The state can remedy these concerns by choosing to continue to provide assistance after their initial recruitment or initiation in the formal labor market.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. p.19

IDPs cannot be put in a position whereby actually seeking out and attaining long term employment is seen as a detriment. If not addressed, this inequity will forever pigeon hold this population and inhibit them from realizing their potential as citizens of the city and of the nation state.

The competitive nature of the informal market in these IDP populated communities is also of interest and concern. For instance, as opposed to owning formal businesses, IDPs are forced to compete with the established periphery communities for informal economic gains in the form of street vending and such. These endeavors are not only unsustainable, but have also led to “led to confrontations with formal shopkeepers”¹⁴⁵ who of course fear the imposition to their very own livelihood. The displaced are then forced to use this method of vending in their own neighborhoods which drastically lessens the economic gains that they will be able to attain from sales of products and merchandise.

The precarious nature of the housing market for IDPs in Bogotá is quite possibly of the greatest concern when identifying their needs within the newly adopted and established periphery community. It was noted by the mayor of Ciudad Bolívar as early as 2011, that the “impact of IDPs is huge in the housing sector, and that many invasions are carried out by the displaced population, and we have to evict people; we try to find alternative solutions, but in truth, there is not enough housing.”¹⁴⁶ This statement is also very telling in the simple use of the term

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. p.19

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. P.19

invasions to describe the migration of internally displaced to the community. With the migration of these IDP populations causing major strain on the housing sector, continued tensions rise and are exacerbated.

Individuals from the established periphery population are much more likely to have homes and potential rooms that they may be able to rent out to IDPs. The question of how a displaced person will continue to pay the rent though becomes a question of the balance of insufficient government support and the needs of the IDP population. It is observed that because “IDPs can face long, indefinite periods of time without state assistance, they become undesirable tenants causing successive evictions, and movement to ever more precarious conditions, leaving a system of state assistance that is too insufficient and too intermittent to fulfill IDPs rights.” This inefficiency must be countered by programs to investigate the delay of funds and ensure that they arrive to the IDPs in a timely fashion in order to allow for their mere survival.

5.4 Initiatives undertaken by non state actors

In identifying the most promising undertakings implemented to foster the development of community within Bogotá’s most poverty ridden and marginalized sections as well as among the internally displaced, it is important highlight the extraordinary work of non state actors. The tireless work of these dedicated individuals and organizations in promoting peace and development has resonated with inhabitants desperate for change and progress. The work consistently being done by these entities effectively responds to deficiencies in governmental

initiatives by implementing socially geared strategies for development. By addressing the need for sustainable peace among inhabitants of these communities, the organizations involved offer manners in which residents can come to terms with their past and prepare for a brighter future.

Of the most promising initiatives has been initiated by the Escuelas de Paz (Schools for Peace) organization in Bogotá. This organization operates primarily in the municipality of Soacha, home to 30, 850 registered internally displaced and amassing 40% of the internally displaced in the Cundinamarca department.¹⁴⁷ Within this community, it is believed that “between three to four registered IDP families arrive to Soacha each day, and has an unemployment rate of 20%, while 45% of the people do not have their basic needs met.”¹⁴⁸ In this community, these schools for peace have focused on structural changes that can help to promote peace building.¹⁴⁹ It is important then to underline the work of the initiative as well as its’ implementation.

Within the schools for peace program is the life and rights component. This life and rights initiative is a work of collaboration between the UNICEF program in Colombia and in conjunction with the commune of the municipality of Soacha. This program is run out of a local youth center, and “contributes to the integral development of young people (12-26 years old) through their knowledge and skills,

¹⁴⁷ Torres, Uribe Lucia María. Peace education in Colombia. March 2012. P.1

¹⁴⁸ Alcaldía Municipal- Soacha. (Municipal Town Hall – Soacha). 2008 p.5

¹⁴⁹ Torres, Uribe Lucia María. Peace education in Colombia. March 2012. P.1

the protection of their rights, and the provision of more opportunities to exercise their citizenship.”¹⁵⁰ These mechanisms are integral to the development of a more peaceful and equitable climate in a municipality that is also observed to have over 15,000 demobilized people from illegal armed groups.¹⁵¹ Now reintegrated into society, it is imperative that the displaced and demobilized along with the rest of the established periphery community be allowed to create mechanisms for peaceful coexistence, and individual as well as collective group progress.

Through the training of youth in participation and production, the life and rights program “trains on issues of human rights, democracy and citizenship participation, and on new technologies to enhance their skills as promoters of development and producers of culture, in turn training them to become community educators and run activities with other youth.”¹⁵² These programs undeniably empower youth in these communities to take ownership of community development for their municipality and its’ inhabitants. By promoting the attainment of job and life skills, the programs give youth the tools necessary to seek the measureable benefit of social progress. It also provides the displaced and others with a sense of ownership over their situation in addition to the ability to help others make positive change within the municipality and the city as a whole.

The life and rights program also seeks to create longstanding relationships between youth and public officials. It is noted that the program seeks to “strengthen

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. p.1

¹⁵¹ Ibid. p.1

¹⁵² Ibid. p.1

the social fabric by fostering intergenerational cooperation between youth and policy makers in order to generate collective responsibilities and ensure that youth's needs, views and expectations are considered in public policies.”¹⁵³ This strategy is an objective that could have monumental positive social repercussions for the displaced citizens of Bogotá. By allowing the creation of a structure by which public officials and administrators are able to coordinate with youth in the city's most troubling sections, the city takes necessary steps toward reconciliation and the resolution of conflicts. If these youth are then able to see that certain positive changes and reforms are being made to aid their development, their interest and participation will only continue to peak in the structure that governs their lives.

Finally, the life and rights program has established mechanisms to promote joint services that provide a range of benefits including “health services, educational and cultural opportunities, training possibilities, development of entrepreneurial skills, and access to recreational facilities.”¹⁵⁴ Along with the effective monitoring of the success of these programs, the life and rights initiative has established the benchmark for community development among the displaced as well as other at risk populations within these municipalities of Bogotá. This nongovernmental program has aided countless youth since its inception and looks to continue in the work of addressing the dynamic of poverty and society among the displaced of Bogotá. With

¹⁵³ Ibid. P.1

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. p.2

continued governmental cooperation, the fruits of this labor will yield both positive and peaceful social revolution and change.

Another of the most effective and inspiring non state sponsored programs for peace building and community development among the displaced and disenfranchised is presented through an examination of the SERCOLDES organization and their Servicio Colombiano de desarrollo social (Colombian service for social development). The work of this NGO over the course of 40 years in Colombia, and specifically in Bogotá, has continued to gain strength and promise. Their achievements in addressing the need for community development among the most at risk populations has become a prime example of success for marginalized populations.

The stated mission of the SERCOLDES organization is one of inclusivity, and promotes “social and cultural rights through educational programs for individuals and social groups in vulnerable situations, to expand human capabilities, improve their quality of life, and strengthen civil society within the exercise of participatory democracy in which no one is excluded.”¹⁵⁵ This promotion of inclusivity is imperative for the displaced of Bogotá, as they desperately search for and require measures by which they can actively participate in society. They must be afforded the opportunity to come together with others who find themselves in similar situations. This process can foster a sense of understanding among the displaced and positively impact their future civic engagement.

¹⁵⁵ Sercoldes. Servicio Colombiano de desarrollo social. <http://www.sercoldes.org.co/> 2012. p.3

The SERCOLDES programs which include initiatives geared toward a culture of peace, human rights, popular education, gender and social participation are integral to the future social successes of the displaced and disenfranchised. Each individual program created by the organization is built under the premise of peace and coexistence through social reconstruction, community and leadership by increasing social capital, and social research that can provide the knowledge to transform present realities.¹⁵⁶ These three unique building blocks have the power to illuminate entirely new paths for individuals and families stricken by the ills of displacement and poverty.

By creating programs that identify the vulnerable individual through their capabilities as socially conscious and participating citizens, the organization ensures a greater sense of participation and interest in each program. The desire of the organization to incorporate lessons of participatory democracy allow the displaced and other vulnerable group members to realize a space in which they can come together without fear of reprisals, or judgment. This structure also allows the organization to reinstall a sense of community within a highly marginalized population which is beneficial to their future growth.

The work of the SERCOLDES organization and its various programs have been met with great approval from governmental and non governmental institutions alike, with various programs having effectively reached over 120

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. p.3

municipalities around Colombia and the capital district of Bogotá¹⁵⁷. As a result of their expansive reach throughout the country, it has been observed that the organization through its various programs has reached over 100, 000 people.¹⁵⁸ These achievements underscore the necessity for nongovernmental programs working with at risk populations in Bogotá, specifically the internally displaced community population.

Of particular interest when focusing on specific work being done by the organization in Bogotá, is that of the ecumenical school for peace. These schools for peace are similar to those of the UNICEF initiative, although they are not affiliated. They effectively serve as areas in which individuals and families representing the entire body of Christian church denominations, as well as those with no religious affiliation can come together in coexistence. The vision of the program is to “support the development of a culture of peace through training on alternative conflict resolution and facilitating education that promotes a different approach to conflict.”¹⁵⁹

This form of alternative conflict resolution mirrors the work of conflict professionals in the field of peace building, and provides an outlet for individuals and families to voice concerns and find resolutions to social issues. The work of the organization is transformative as a result of the ways that these schools for peace “provide training for children and adults on non violent communication and critical

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. p.3

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. p.3

¹⁵⁹ Torres, Uribe Lucia María. Peace education in Colombia. March 2012. P.1

thinking.” It is clear that displaced youth and adults alike are arriving to the city having undergone unfathomable physical and psychological pain.

By providing this form of training, SERCOLDES and its schools for peace offer an amazing way in which to confront past experiences head on, but also through non violence. Individuals are empowered to find peaceful resolutions to their conflicts, which will aid their future social development. Participants are also allowed to learn from others who have undergone similar experiences, which undoubtedly will aid the process of minimizing isolation.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Recommendations for the educational advancement and community development of the internally displaced population of Bogotá, Colombia

Of the most important factors that will lead the Colombian society toward the pacification of violence is the prioritization of social progress for the internally displaced population of the country. It is imperative that the Colombian society nurture the IDP population through education as well as the creation and support of successful and progressive social programs. Educators must be protected at all costs to ensure their security and ability to properly function in their roles.

Further, it is necessary that the Colombian government provide an accurate and comprehensive analysis of the individuals and groups most readily being affected by a forced displacement, and which regions of the country are subsequently receiving the greatest proportion of displaced. It is also critical that programs be implemented in the community that will serve to bring established periphery communities and newly displaced persons together. The opportunity for these groups to dialogue with one another could create cohesion and mutual understanding. The following are a set of five recommendations for the educational

advancement and community development of the internally displaced population of Bogotá. I have chosen to underline these points as most pertinent based upon a reflection of the research undertaken for this thesis.

RECOMMENDATION: Increase prioritization of long term education for the internally displaced of Bogotá.

The Colombian government must respond to a lack of access in education for IDPs by continually implementing binding agreements that will hold judicial mechanisms responsible for identifying and correcting present deficiencies in the educational system. IDP children cannot be made to suffer the costs of education regardless of how nominal they may be, as the children and families are often not able or capable to absorb any costs whatsoever. Further, the city of Bogotá must make education among its displaced in the poorest suburbs and districts a top priority if sincere and long lasting change is to occur.

RECOMMENDATION: Promote mechanisms to protect school teachers, officials and school infrastructure.

The Government must also protect its teachers and school infrastructure. In Colombia, becoming a teacher must not create a personal hazard and a danger to one's own life. To this end, the Colombian government must continue in its objective to combat armed groups operating in both rural and urban centers throughout the country. It is imperative that the government not be deterred from this struggle for peace within its borders. It is equally important that IDP populations, both urban and rural, be afforded the opportunity to become affiliated with groups and

organizations that seek their social, educational, and economic successes without fear of reprisals from the groups that would seek to silence them.

RECOMMENDATION: Combat structural violence through institutional reforms and transparency in data reporting of IDP figures and statistics.

It is clear that as a result of internal and international pressure, the Colombian government is seeking to create mechanisms for progressive change within the IDP educational crisis. Also evident is the fact that they will continue to be aided by powerful non state actors dedicated to very similar objectives. Essential for continued progress is the highest level of transparency within the government structure of reporting. The Colombian government must continually provide the national population and international audience the clearest depiction of how the problem can be examined, as well as exactly who is being affected, and where.

The structural violence perpetrated by the Colombian state toward internally displaced populations must be continually examined and addressed in order for a climate of accountability to become evident. It is clear that reforms must be enacted that will work to transform the way in which IDP populations are screened and assisted within a community. For these reforms to become a reality, it is necessary that the most influential governmental bodies continue to implement a system of balances that will allow for an objective analysis of what is occurring within these populations, and what can be done to further promote social equality.

RECOMMENDATION: Promote government and nongovernmental organizational cooperation through national rollout of successful educational empowerment and community development programs.

The work of the New School and its learning circles initiative is as innovative as it is inspiring. The foundation has effectively begun to remedy the immense educational inequality that exists between the internally displaced of Bogotá, and the general population. By acquiring governmental support, the program ensures its continued positive effect on the displaced in the capital and in other regions of the country. Through continued adaptation and expansion, the program will further succeed in the process of meeting its underlined objectives.

As the program evolves to include former child combatants, the sense of inclusion within the initiative becomes ever clearer. By implementing a structure of learning that incorporates professional psychological social support in the form of counseling for the displaced, the organization effectively acknowledges the immense physical, emotional and psychological strain effected upon individuals by displacement and war. This visionary program will transform education for the displaced in Bogotá, within the country, and quite possibly throughout the developing world. It is the standard and benchmark by which education for displaced populations should be measured.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide state funded counseling to promote cohesion between established periphery communities and the newly internally displaced.

Though there are extraordinary differences that separate established periphery communities and the IDP populations newly integrated, there are also commonalities that when taken into account can serve to build a positive rapport among the groups. Periphery communities must be educated under the belief that the two groups coming together and seeking positive social change within their communities is the best way forward. Social counseling sessions within these communities could also serve to expose the real fears of the periphery communities with regard to resources that may be lost due to presence of IDP's in a community, and allow the opportunity to have candid dialogue that may help resolve pressing concerns.

The strides taken thus far should not be understated. The reality that intense work will have to be undertaken over the course the following decades can never be underrepresented. Of absolute critical importance is the ability to sustain an inclusive and nurturing society, if these people are to have any opportunity to survive and progress.

6.2 Limitations of the research

The work of this thesis is based on the analysis of the most relevant data and research available underlining the prevalence and success of methods employed by the Colombian government and non state sponsored actors to empower the internally displaced of Bogotá through education and community development. Having not been able to complete field research in the city, it is not possible to

create a firsthand narrative account of how these methods work in practice. It also was not possible to speak with representatives of governmental organizations or of non state sponsored organizations in order to more profoundly comprehend issues in the present day, what is being done to address them, and what may be planned for the future.

Without the strategy of participant observation and the use of interviews, questionnaires, focus groups and other methods of data collection, the work relies on empirical research data and case study analysis. Apparent within the available research are significant discrepancies in the reporting of figures concerned with quantifying the issue of displacement within the country and in the city of Bogotá.

These varying figures provide competing data sets, which can skew perception. Examples were found in the number of displaced persons identified by the Colombian government and the autonomous body of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC). Figures were also competing with regard to the number of internally displaced in Bogotá itself. The number of displaced is viewed as fluid, and ever changing throughout the course of a year. Every effort was made to ensure that most accurate portrayal of these figures is presented.

6.3 Suggestions for further research

The focus on education in relation to specific groups is insufficient. There must be a concentration on the lack of education and progress made for internally displaced women, both in Bogotá and throughout the country. The educational

difficulties encountered by women specifically as a result of gender parity are underscored and should be a primary area of focus. It is also recommended that researchers continue to focus on the education of men over the age of 18 and boys, from ages 5-17. These sectors of the internally displaced population are the primary area of focus.

The educational attainment and progress of internally displaced youth who have been demobilized from combat must move into the purview of researchers concerned with both educational empowerment and community development for the displaced. The unique psycho-social dynamic of this sector of displaced persons creates distinct challenges in identifying their progress in light of the effect that combat experiences may have had on their emotional and psychological development.

Researchers in the field must also concern themselves with the disproportionate amount of Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations being displaced to Bogotá and throughout the country. This group of displaced persons represents a vast majority of the displaced in Colombia in relation to their total population and should become a focus for inquiry and investigation. The relationship between the Afro-Colombian, indigenous subsets and other displaced populations is also of particular research interest. Of great importance is the effect that differences in race of skin color or origin of displacement may have on social difficulties faced by these groups upon arrival to major urban conglomerations, specifically that of Bogotá.

6.4 Moving Forward

The work of educational empowerment and community development for the internally displaced in the city of Bogotá, Colombia, is an ever transforming process. The methods employed must adapt to current trends within the city and remain relevant as the crisis evolves. Mechanisms used by the government and nongovernmental entities must take into account the physical, emotional and psychological strains that displacement causes on those affected. It is imperative that a holistic approach be utilized, and one that readily takes into account the many variables involved.

The Colombian government cannot provide the complete educational empowerment and community development for these displaced communities. It is only through institutional cooperation between the formal governmental structure and nongovernmental organizations that the vast and varying needs of these individuals and families can be addressed. This cooperation must begin with a realistic analysis of the crisis and an acknowledgement of the devastating effect that displacement has, both on displaced citizens and the country as a whole.

It is clear through an examination of the work of the constitutional court of Colombia, that the government has traditionally been less capable than non state actors and organizations of ensuring the social and educational progress of IDPs. It is also evident that the most far reaching and successful programs enacted to empower the displaced through education and community participation have also been those created by non state actors. As such, it is important that the Colombian

government identify the most beneficial of these programs and roll them out throughout the city and the country without hesitation.

To ensure the success of these programs for IDPs, it is necessary that the government allocate the proper funding for the follow through and completions of these initiatives. Further, the national budget must reflect an acknowledgement of the internal displacement crisis. These budgets must be augmented to take into account populations of displaced throughout the country, and specifically the largest group of IDPs present in the capital district.

Providing long term education and community development strategies that support inclusion and understanding between the displaced and the established periphery communities, as well as between the displaced and the government resolves conflict and creates a more peaceful and amicable society. The Colombian government, along with NGO operations is charged with providing the basis for this understanding, and in part responsible for the future of these people. Only through cooperative methods will the needs of these people be adequately met.

I am a first generation Colombian-American, whose parents were forced to leave their country as a result of a civil conflict that had begun before they were born. To this day, violent clashes soak the streets of their hometown with the blood of innocent people who remain pawns in a deadly game. Survivors throughout the country are made to abandon their lives, their homes and their families forever. Without alternative, they become yet another casualty of displacement. Their voices must be heard, and their pain must be recognized, if there is to be any hope.

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