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CONFLICT PREVENTION AND  
POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

# Urban Poor Perceptions of Violence and Exclusion in Colombia

**20747**  
July 2000

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FOREWORD BY ANDRES SOLIMANO





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Washington, D.C.*

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and Development / THE WORLD BANK  
1818 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20433

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Manufactured in the United States of America  
First printing July 2000  
1 2 3 4 04 03 02 01 00

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Cover photo: Teen gang members "converted" to militias with 7.65 pistols, Medellin, Colombia 1991. Timothy Ross/Imageworks.

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ISBN 0-8213-4731-4

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Moser, Caroline O.N.

Urban poor perceptions of violence and exclusion in Colombia / Caroline Moser, Cathy McIlwaine.

p. cm. — (Conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction)

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-8213-4731-4

1. Violence — Colombia — Public opinion. 2. Urban Poor — Colombia — Attitudes. 3. Public opinion — Colombia. 4. Violence — Colombia. 5. Marginality, Social — Colombia. I. McIlwaine, Cathy, 1965- II. Title. III. Series.

HN310.Z9 V5526 2000

303.6'09861—dc21

00-04632

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# Foreword

## Societies in Crisis, Globalization and Violence

*Andres Solimano*

### **Societies in crisis: Concept and scope**

A society in crisis presents both a challenge and an opportunity. This is certainly the case in the context of Colombia, now in the fifth decade of its bitter civil war. The crisis in which Colombia finds itself today represents an integral challenge to the economy, the institutions, and the values of its society. At the same time, it provides an opportunity for changing structures that no longer work. Although this may vary according to different interests in society, the needs of the most excluded and poorest are often marginalised. Yet, as this study shows, they have very clear perceptions of those structures that they consider important to change

The elusive concept of crisis that underpins this study has long been an important concern. The German philosopher Jurgen Habermas for instance, provides a useful taxonomy of systemic crisis comprising a fourfold classification of (a) economic crisis, (b) rationality crisis, (c) legitimation crisis, and (iv) motivation crisis (Habermas 1972). An *economic* crisis, termed a "realization crisis" by Habermas, may be a recession, an economic depression, or an inflationary phenomena; a *rationality* crisis, in Habermas's words, is a breakdown of the "rational administrative" practices necessary to maintain the economy in due course. This can be interpreted as the inability of the government in a crisis situation, to properly manage and regulate the economic system. A *legitimation* crisis, in turn, is characterized by a breakdown in the level of public support, credibility, and trust on existing institutions. A *motivation* crisis is a crisis in the realm of values, traditions, and norms in society. Both economic and rationality crises belong to the economic sphere, legitimation crises are political in essence and motivational crises

belong to the sociocultural realm. The boundaries may shift, in turn, depending on the specific nature of a crisis in a country during a given historical period.

Thus, a societal crisis is a comprehensive phenomena occurring simultaneously at an economic; political, socio-cultural (value-system) level. It is a systemic, rather than a partial or local, phenomena in which institutions become dysfunctional in terms of their ability to process internal societal conflicts, as both the formal and informal rules that mediate social interaction collapse. Such a breakdown often has far-reaching, mostly negative, effects. At the economic level, the investment climate deteriorates in an environment without well-defined rules (e.g., property rights may not be enforced), with ensuing adverse effects in terms of economic growth and employment creation. Countries in crisis rarely experience economic growth and development is postponed. At the social level conflict erodes trust and social cohesion-the social capital so important in development processes.

Another manifestation of crisis is the emergence of violence, a phenomena linked to a breakdown in rules of behavior (see below). High levels of violence and insecurity not only deteriorate the investment climate, but have economic as well as human, social, and political costs which exacerbate the crisis. In a crisis situation, public objectives may start to be replaced by private interests. Accountability and monitoring of the "agent" (e.g. governments or public officials) by "principals" (parliament, judiciary system, the people) weaken substantially. Often the result is corruption, a phenomenon that has received substantial attention in the 1990s, particularly in the development community. Corruption has a demoralizing effect on the public (and on honest officials in the public sector institutions), eroding social creditability in institutions. In Habermas's framework, corruption, and, to an extent, violence, can be understood from several angles. At one level, corruption is a manifestation of a "rationality crisis". In this sense common administrative practices of sound governments weaken to such an extent that conditions prevail for the acquisition of public assets for private benefit. In turn, when corruption reaches significant proportions a legitimation crisis may develop, eroding trust and confidence in government and other public institutions. Finally, if corruption became an ingrained social practice, affecting the norms and values of society, this then contains the typical features of a motivational crisis. Thus Colombia is experiencing a dirty war, economic recession and high levels of corruption, all of which are affected by and in turn affect the current crisis.



## **Crisis and Violence: Global and national causes**

Since the theme of this book is violence, it may be useful to put the issue into historical perspective. Marx, as well as other 19th century political theorists highlighted the fact that the most important political changes in history were surrounded by violence, sometimes acute and dramatic. Such was the case of the French, Russian and American revolutions- to name a few important examples of radical social change. In a more contemporary context, the post-cold war period of the 1990s has also been characterized by violence and internal armed conflict. Examples of this include the following: the disintegration of the Soviet Union, followed by violence in former soviet states such as the Chechnya war; the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia, leading to the more recent armed conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo. The degree of violence and armed conflict in Africa in the 1990s, such as in Rwanda and Somalia to name but two of the conflicts affecting the region, have frightened the international community. In Latin America, violence and armed conflict have also been present, such as in Chiapas, Mexico. The long lasting Colombian conflict is probably the most intractable, armed conflict in South-America, given the complex interplay of guerrilla, narco traffics, paramilitary, and the army. On the positive side, the 1990s in Central America witnessed the signing of peace agreements, and the end of civil wars in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. These coincided with the end of the cold war. Yet these countries continue to experience high levels of violence in terms of street violence, social violence and violent crime which pervade all sectors of their societies, thus hampering their post-conflict recovery.

Looking ahead in the early 21st century it seems that political and ethnic violence will, unfortunately, be prevalent phenomena in several regions of the world. The historian Eric Hobsbawm (1999) has recently pointed out that a decade after the dissolution of the Soviet block, the process of state-building in the former soviet republics and former Yugoslavia is still an unfolding process. Needless to say, those processes are far from being peaceful and orderly events. The Andean region of Latin America also turned very volatile in the late 20th century, a trend that is bound to pervade into the early 21st century. Beside war-torn Colombia, traditionally peaceful Ecuador shows the first signs of unrest that could lead to political violence-as a consequence of the tensions accumulating from deep economic crisis, increased regional division, political fragmentation, and the eruption of an active and powerful indigenous movement with a radical economic and political agenda. In addition, Peru is experiencing complex reactions to its current presidential elec-

tions, and Venezuela is engaged in an attempt at internal political and institutional change the final outcomes of which still remain uncertain.

Therefore, the end of the cold war and the onset of globalization in the 1990s, contrary to initial expectations, have not been followed by widespread growth and social and political cohesion. Rather the last decade has seen an increase in inequality, exclusion, and violence around the globe. However, the nature of violence has changed when compared to that of the cold-war years. Wars between countries have become less important (almost disappearing), while internal armed conflicts within countries have become a more important source of violence. In addition, internal conflict in countries such as Colombia, have changed their nature from a conflict with a relatively important ideological component to a conflict tied to (and financed by) the large economic rents generated by the drug-industry and kidnapping. It would be interesting to know more about the effects of a globalized (probably illegal) arms market that provides the weapons that sustain such conflicts. Furthermore, as this study shows, Colombia is affected by many different types of violence at different levels that rise from problems not likely to be resolved by any peace process.

Summing-up, several factors can be highlighted as 'new' determinants of violence in the post-cold war, globalized world of the late 20th and early 21st century. These include the reconfiguration of new national states after the collapse of the soviet block, the eruption of underlying ethnic conflicts in several countries, the emergence of an apparently important global arms market, the competition for increasing shares of the large economic rents generated by narco-trafficking, internal social conflict generated by deep economic crisis and the loss of legitimation (Habermas's 'legitimation' crisis) of existing political regimes because of corruption and poor management. In the Latin American context, increasing inequality and social exclusion are leading to higher levels of tension and frustration throughout the region, often resulting in increased levels of violence as countries such as Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Peru fail to move away from the cultures of violence they lived in the 1980s. These will be some of the main challenges facing Colombia in a post-conflict context, a country which has lived through a simmering civil war for half a century, in which unemployment, unequal income distribution, and social exclusion are some of the main determinants of violence, a situation only worsened by its recent unanticipated economic crisis.

## **Reforms to rebuild societies in crisis and reduce violence**

We have seen that crises are a multidimensional phenomena with several manifestations: sluggish economic growth, dysfunctional institutions, corruption, and violence. Interestingly enough, societal crises often accompany and/or trigger important historical transformations. The most recent examples of important political and economic events at a global scale are the end of the cold war in the late 1980s and the process of economic globalization in the 1990s. Overcoming societal crisis require comprehensive economic, institutional, and political reform.

Measured in a historical-time scale, economic reforms can proceed at a faster pace than institutional reforms. In turn, institutional reforms that alter formal rules can take place more rapidly than changes oriented to modify informal rules of human behavior, based on cultural norms, values, traditions, and other historical factors. These considerations are valid when addressing the problem of violence. Its determinants are multiple, and linked to such factors as the occurrence of legitimation and motivational crises, broad historical transformations, and economic crisis. Therefore, a comprehensive strategy to reduce violence must include broad economic and institutional reforms, specific interventions to address factors that propagate violence, and, ultimately, a change in values and cultural norms that certainly underlay the phenomena of violence. In addressing such issues the perceptions of poor communities themselves are essential. Through the participatory research methodology employed in this study the inter-linkages between different types of problems and their relation to different types of violence can be explored from the voices of the poor themselves. In this way the findings from this study complement more widely known economic and statistical data on violence, to show the complex reality of violence and exclusion in poor urban communities. This study follows on from a sector study on violence in Colombia also published in this series (Solimano 2000, World Bank 1999). It provides the next stages of the critical work necessary to better understand the forces involved in violence reduction and the transition to peace in Colombian society in the coming years.



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# Acknowledgments

This study is based on research conducted during January and February of 1999, using a participatory urban appraisal methodology. The study is part of a larger initiative within the Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Department, Latin America and Caribbean Region, World Bank—the Urban Peace Program—directed by Caroline Moser (Lead Specialist Social Development).

The Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) has provided funding for this program, which also includes a similar study on Guatemala. For her vision in supporting this very new initiative, particular acknowledgment is owed to Eivor Halkjaer.

In Colombia Donny Meertens, of Universidad Nacional de Colombia, was the adviser for the project, and Daniel Selener of the Instituto Internacional de Reconstrucción Rural in Quito was the participatory urban appraisal trainer. The study was carried out by the authors, in collaboration with four teams of researchers from the Universidad Nacional, CEMILLA (Centro Microempresarial del Llano), Fundación Mujer y Futuro, and a group of consultants. They included the following members:

**Universidad Nacional**

Julián Arturo  
Haidí Hernández Córdoba  
Lya Yeneth Fuentes Carlos  
Maria Eugenia Vásquez

**CEMILLA**

Santiago Parra Roman  
Claudia Zulima Jiménez  
Margarita Molina M.  
Rafael Roman  
Alba Rocío Rosas G.  
Titus Moser

**Fundación Mujer y Futuro**

Isabel Ortiz  
Christiane Lelièvre  
Carlos Arnulfo Mendoza  
José Luis Muñoz  
Cathy McIlwaine

**Independent consultants**

Ana Daza  
Angelica Acosta  
Juan Pablo Fayad  
Francisco Hurtado G.  
William Rodriguez

In the World Bank's Colombia Country Management Unit in Washington, D.C., Andres Solimano (Director), Jonathan Parker (Sector Leader), and Connie Luff (Country Officer) provided important commitment and advice to the project. In Bogotá at the World Bank Mission, Felipe Saez (Resident Representative), Jairo Arboleda (Civil Society and Social Development Representative), and Maria Teresa de Henao (Sr. Operations Assistant) all provided invaluable assistance and support. The authors are particularly grateful to the entire mission staff for their interest and help to the project throughout the research process.

World Bank peer reviewers for this study were Norman Hicks (LCSPR), Markus Kostner (SDVPC), Joel Reyes (LCSHE), Lavinia Gasperini (LCSHE), and Anthony Bebbington (SDV). As a member of the Urban Peace Program Team, Carolina Ladino, with assistance from Fiona Clark, made important contributions to the data analysis of this study. Thanks are also due to Barbara Karni, Daphne Levitas, and Carole-Sue Castronuovo of Communications Development for the editing and production of this document.

Cathy McIlwaine would like to thank the Department of Geography, Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, for granting her a year's leave of absence to pursue this research.

Above all, the authors thank the many people in the nine communities in Colombia who participated in the research. They not only welcomed us into their lives, shared their time and perceptions, but in some cases took risks in order to contribute to the study. For safety reasons, they must remain anonymous.

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# Executive Summary

Despite sustained improvements in its social and economic indicators over the past several decades and its rich stock of natural and human resources, Colombia remains plagued by violence. The very high level of violence reflects a variety of factors, including the country's simmering 50-year-old civil war, the increase in armed conflict, the rise in urban and rural crime, and drug cartel-linked violence.

As the government struggles to reach peace agreements with guerrilla and paramilitary groups, political violence and armed conflict have been the primary focuses of political analysts and civil society groups alike. The perceptions of violence by people living in poor communities have received much less attention. This report addresses this issue by providing the results of a participatory study of violence conducted in low-income urban communities in Colombia.

## Objectives of the Study

The study documents how people living in poor urban communities in Colombia perceive violence. Specifically, it identifies the categories of violence affecting poor communities, the costs of different types of violence, the effect of violence on social capital, and the causes and effects of social exclusion.

To describe the relationships that produce and sustain this cycle of violence and to begin to identify interventions to break it, the study develops a violence-capital-exclusion nexus—an analytical framework that links different types of violence both to society's capital and to the exclusion of its poor population. To incorporate the rarely heard voices of the poor, the study uses the participatory urban appraisal methodology, which emphasizes local knowledge and enables locals to make their own analysis of the problems they face and identify their own solutions.

Fieldwork was undertaken in nine predominantly low-income communities located in seven cities or towns that are representative of Colombia's urban areas. These communities, identified by pseudonyms, included three *barrios* in Bogotá (Embudo, 14 de Febrero, and Jericó); two *barrios* in cities long connected with the drug cartel (Pórtico, Medellín,

and El Arca, Cali); two *barrios* in cities or towns with large numbers of displaced people (Amanecer, Bucaramanga, and Rosario, Girón); and two *barrios* in frontier towns located in areas rich in natural resources (Cachicamo, Yopal, and Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul).

### **Types of Violence**

Violence-related problems emerged as the single most important type of problem facing the urban poor. Within this category, drug use was identified as a major issue in many communities. Lack of physical capital was the second most important type of problem, with unemployment the most frequently cited specific problem. Lack of social capital was identified as a problem more often than lack of human capital. Lack of natural capital was cited as a problem only in recently established settlements.

Focus groups in the nine communities listed an average of 25 different types of violence, with one community distinguishing 60 different types of violence. The various types of violence were grouped into three inter-related categories: political, economic, and social. Economic violence was cited most often (54 percent of all types of violence), followed by social violence (32 percent) and political violence (14 percent).

Perceptions of violence varied across cities and demographic groups. Intrafamily violence emerged as especially important in Bogotá, gang violence as very important in Cali and Medellín, and political violence as important in frontier towns and towns with large numbers of displaced people.

Elderly people were most concerned with insecurity and drugs. Adult women focused on violence against children, whereas adult men were most concerned with political and youth violence. Young people were especially troubled by the drug problem. Young men were also concerned with gang and militia violence, and young women were worried about rape outside the home. Children's perceptions, elicited from drawings, revealed the association between fear and guns.

### **Costs, Causes, and Consequences of Violence**

Different types of violence are interrelated in a highly complex and dynamic manner. Social violence within households and families, for example, may lead young people to take drugs and join gangs, which may in turn lead to economic violence—including robbery and killing—or political violence associated with guerilla or paramilitary groups. Understanding each type of violence is thus critical to understanding the nature of the problems affecting people living in poor communities.



### *Families, Households, and Social Violence*

Intrafamily violence is a daily occurrence in Colombia, and it is closely linked to other types of violence. Study participants identified some 20 different types of violence perpetrated within the home, including incest, sexual abuse, and murder. People in the communities associated the level of intrafamily violence with various factors, including changes in the economy and the rate of unemployment, alcohol (and to a lesser extent drug) use, and *machismo* among men and submissiveness among women.

Intrafamily violence was perceived as undermining how households functioned internally in terms of constructing norms, values, and trust. It also eroded social capital networks between households and reduced the human capital endowments of children and young people. Violence within the home was perceived as leading to violence outside the home.

Violence was perceived as permeating the spectrum of social relations within poor urban communities, with the critical nexus being households and families. With trust in the home severely eroded by violence, children spend long periods of time in the street with their friends. Young men often join gangs or military groups associated with political violence. Young women engage in sexual relations at an early age, often becoming pregnant.

### *Drug Consumption and Economic Violence*

Drug consumption, particularly among young men, was perceived as the leading cause of economic violence in most of the communities studied. Children were reported to begin consuming marijuana at age 8, moving on to petrol and glue by age 12. Teenagers began using *bazuco* (a type of cocaine) at 14, later moving on to *perico* (another type of cocaine), the most expensive of the drugs used.

The most frequently cited causes of drug consumption were intrafamily violence and conflict, peer pressure, and parental example. Other causes included the lack of organized recreational opportunities, especially sports and leisure facilities, and unemployment, which made it difficult for young people to fill their days.

Drug consumption eroded the human capital of young people, who often dropped out of school after getting involved with drugs. School dropouts were rarely able to secure employment, leading them to engage in illegal activities, such as drug dealing and robbery. Drug consumption also increased fear in communities, with drug addicts perceived as the perpetrators of assaults and robbery. Many people responded to the perception of danger by remaining indoors in the evenings. The result was an erosion of community-level social capital.

### *Unemployment, Exclusion, and Economic Violence*

Economic violence was also found to be tied to the level of unemployment, which was very high in the communities studied as a result of both the nationwide recession and the large number of people fleeing political violence in the countryside. Employment prospects were also perceived as being reduced by the stigma of coming from the *barrio*, which many people outside the community associate with criminal activity.

High levels of unemployment were closely linked to various types of violence. In some cases violent crime was a last-resort survival response to unemployment. In other cases it reflected desperation and frustration created by lack of economic opportunities. Many people reported that using drugs was a way of dealing with lack of work and that robbing was a way of paying for drugs.

Another factor tied to economic violence (and violence in general) was exclusion of young people, which many young people dealt with by using drugs or becoming involved in violent or criminal activities. A major cause of exclusion was high levels of intergenerational conflict, often the result of intrafamily violence.

### **Community Level Social Institutions, Perverse Social Capital, and Political Violence**

Violence not only affects individuals and households, but communities themselves. Study participants identified 371 social institutions across the nine research communities. These institutions included both institutions that benefited the community (that is, created positive social capital) and institutions that benefited their members while hurting the community as a whole (that is, created perverse social capital).

Women's and childcare groups and state-run social service delivery organizations (primarily schools and health centers) were trusted by most members of the community. Institutions connected with the perpetration or prevention of violence, such as gangs or state security and justice institutions, were the least trusted.

Perverse organizations were the most prevalent membership organizations, with 16 types of illegal groups functioning in the nine communities. Guerrilla and paramilitary groups perpetrating political violence were universally feared in areas where their presence was dominant. Underlying this fear was the lack of trust among community members, who were afraid to talk openly about the problem. The fear of reprisals eroded solidarity, replacing it with the belief that people must look after themselves to survive.

## Community Perceptions of Solutions to the Problem of Violence

Study participants identified four types of strategies for dealing with violence: avoidance, confrontation, conciliation, and other strategies. Most people responded to violence by keeping silent about it out of powerlessness or fear of retribution. Many changed their mobility patterns, avoiding taking certain routes or simply staying home in the evening.

People in the communities recognized that the continuum of violence requires that a variety of solutions be implemented simultaneously. Almost half of the interventions proposed involved creating social capital. Within this category, the promotion of family values and dialogue between families and communities was the most frequently mentioned proposal. Other proposed interventions included improving education, establishing more drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, improving employment opportunities, and integrating young people into society. Many community members also endorsed increasing the resources of community organizations and obtaining external assistance to establish new organizations. Some endorsed social cleansing and harsh police actions to crack down on violence.

### Public Policy Recommendations

Local communities identified three national-level binding constraints that policymakers need to address. These include:

- *The pervasive nature of political violence.* Negotiation of peace with the guerrillas, paramilitary organizations, and other groups is an important precondition for the success of other violence reduction interventions.
- *The serious problem of displaced people,* which affects the daily lives of people in all communities.
- *The lack of employment,* which leads to drug use, crime, and violence.

To address these problems, people in the communities suggested the following interventions:

- Create job opportunities in the formal, informal, and self-employment sectors.
- Attack the problem of drug use.
- Reduce society's tolerance for intrahousehold violence.

- Rebuild trust in the police and the judicial system.
- Strengthen the capacity of community-based membership organizations, particularly those run by women.
- Target interventions at young people.

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## Chapter One

# Introduction

Colombia has long been plagued by violence. Despite being one of the most enduring democracies in South America and sustained improvements in its social and economic indicators over the past several decades, the country has one of the highest homicide rates in the world. The very high level of violence reflects the country's 50-year-old simmering civil war, the rise in armed conflict, urban and rural crime, and the presence of drug cartels.

Until the late 1980s, economic development continued unabated in Colombia. Armed conflict affected primarily those involved in the political conflict and marginal populations in remote rural areas. Urban crime and violence affected mainly low-income *barrio* dwellers.

In the past decade the scale and intensity of violence has changed, with violence now dominating the daily lives of most Colombians. Remote guerrilla conflict has turned into a countrywide war that involves other actors, such as paramilitary groups and drug cartels. The causes of violence have also changed. These include external events such as the collapse of the Cold War, which has affected funding sources for guerrilla activity. It also includes internal changes relating to economic liberalization, which have had implications for the demand for labor (and levels of unemployment), and the growing levels of inequality, which are associated with areas of the country in which coal and oil developments have occurred. Since 1982 successive governments have tried to find both military and political solutions for reaching peace with different guerrilla groups. State agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and private foundations have spent vast resources attempting to reduce levels of urban crime, while military and police forces have endeavored to break the drug cartels.

The World Bank's 1997 Colombian Country Assistance Strategy (World Bank 1997), which adopted a participatory approach that included consultations with civil society, identified violence as the country's key development constraint. That constraint is now affecting macro- and microeconomic growth and productivity in Colombia, as well as reducing the government's capacity to alleviate the poverty, inequality, and

exclusion that affect the majority of its residents in both urban and rural areas. The Country Assistance Strategy recommended a comprehensive intersector policy, with violence reduction—and its counterpart, peace and development—identified as one of six key areas of strategic importance in which the World Bank could assist Colombia in its development process.

In 1999 the Bank completed a sector study on violence based on background papers commissioned from the foremost experts in their fields, most of them Colombians (World Bank 1999). The study included three critical components: a conceptual framework, which identified a continuum of violence, including political, economic, and social violence; an assessment of the costs of violence in terms of its erosion of the country's capital and associated assets (especially its social capital); and a brief framework for a National Strategy for Peace and Development, comprising a national-level peace program, sector-level initiatives to integrate violence reduction into priority sectors, and municipal-level social capital projects.

### Objectives and Research Framework of the Study

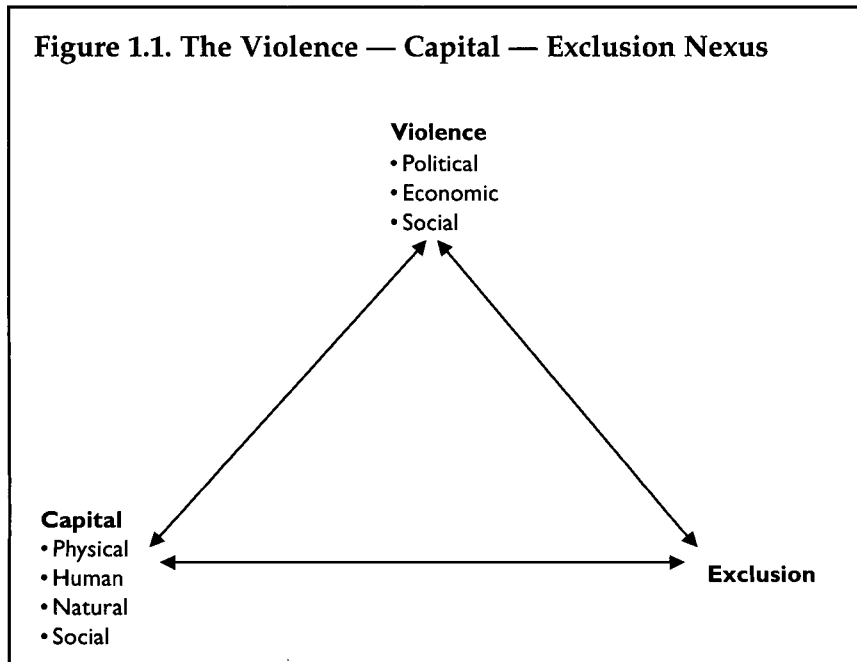
In studying violence, most journalists and research *violentólogos* (violence experts, a uniquely Colombian discipline) focus on political violence and armed conflict. The perceptions of violence by poor communities have received much less attention. To address this issue, this report provides the results of a recently completed study conducted in poor urban communities in Colombia. The study was undertaken as part of the third stage in the Bank's contribution to developing operational interventions for peace and development.

The objective of the study is to document violence in Colombia as perceived by poor urban communities in terms of the following four questions:

- *What categories of violence affect poor communities?* Is the political violence that dominates the newspapers and preoccupies politicians the only important source of concern for poor people, or are other types of violence also important? Building on the work of violence experts in Colombia and the World Bank Colombia Sector Study (World Bank 1998), the study distinguishes among political, economic, and social violence, identifying each in terms of a particular type of power that consciously or unconsciously uses violence to gain or maintain itself.
- *What are the costs of different types of violence?* What is the financial or psychological cost of violence to poor communities, households, and individuals in terms of the erosion of physical, human, natural, and social capital and their associated assets?

- *Does violence erode or foster the creation of social capital?* Does “social capital for some imply social exclusion for others” (Harriss and De Renzio 1997; p. 926)? In fact social capital may lead to negative outcomes, and social capital itself may be created by activities that do not serve the public good. In examining this issue the study distinguishes between productive, or positive, social capital and unproductive, or perverse, social capital (Rubio 1997).
- *Is violence the cause or consequence of exclusion?* The complex relationship between violence and poverty has been widely debated. Social exclusion (the process through which individuals or groups are excluded from full participation in the society in which they live) may be a more useful concept than poverty for understanding violence, because it involves a more dynamic and multidimensional conceptualization of deprivation. The study thus seeks to identify the causal linkages between violence and exclusion.

In order to identify the relationships that produce and sustain violence in poor urban communities in Colombia and to begin to identify interventions to break this cycle, the study develops a violence–capital–exclusion nexus (figure 1.1). This analytical framework links different types of violence to both society’s capital and the exclusion of its poor population.



## **The Participatory Methodology and Its Implications for Policy Recommendations**

Like poverty, violence can be measured in different ways (see Baulch 1996 and Moser 1998). Both phenomena can be measured objectively using large, random sample household surveys that use measures of income or consumption as proxies for the variable being measured (Ravaillon 1992). Both can also be understood subjectively using participatory assessments that collect data on multiple indicators that emerge out of the complex and diverse local realities in which the poor live (Chambers 1992, 1995). The same is true of violence.

Extensive statistical and political analyses of Colombia violence exist (World Bank 1999). To complement those findings with the rarely heard voices of the poor, this study uses a participatory urban appraisal methodology. This approach emphasizes local knowledge and enables local people to make their own appraisals, analyses, and plans.<sup>1</sup> Its iterative approach to research is suitable for the investigation of the complex causal relationships that affect violence (Moser and McIlwaine 1999). The reliability of the findings is increased through triangulation—the use of a variety of techniques and sources to investigate the same issues and verify results. Qualitative research such as this study, which relies on in-depth investigation of a small number of communities, also uses purposive rather than random sampling. This means selecting communities that are considered representative of the issue under investigation and conducting a participatory urban appraisal with sufficient groups to be representative of each community. (See annex A for a summary of participatory urban appraisal techniques.)

Participatory urban appraisal involves an extensive number of different tools (see annex A). The most important ones used in the current study are listings that provided the basis for the quantitative data analysis, causal impact diagrams that analyze the causes and effects of particular issues, and the institutional mapping diagrams that allow the identification of social institutions perceived as important within communities. All participatory urban appraisal tools are implemented in focus groups facilitated by two researchers and comprising between 2 and 20 people (occasionally they are conducted with one person).

The primary aim of participatory urban appraisal is to allow the people to express their own ideas and perceptions. Therefore, in the focus groups people are encouraged to design the diagrams and provide the associated text themselves. This process often is referred to as “handing over the stick” (in the urban Colombian context it usually involves pens and pencils). The rationale behind this methodology is the transfer of power from the researcher to the researched. Consequently, all the dia-



grams reproduced in this document were drawn by people in the communities themselves and use their language.<sup>2</sup>

The study describes community perceptions of the causes, costs, and consequences of violence and identifies local perceptions of potential solutions to the problems described. Whether perceptual data can legitimately be used to influence or define violence reduction policies or strategies is currently an issue of debate. The Bank's recently completed report "Global Synthesis: Consultations with the Poor" (Narayan and others 1999) and its endorsement by President James Wolfensohn in his 1999 annual meeting address has certainly given a measure of legitimacy to this approach in international agencies.

During the past decade several innovative interventions have been proposed to reduce violence (table 1.1). All of the approaches reflect different solutions, although in general there has been a shift away from the control of violence toward violence prevention and most recently to rebuilding social capital.

By presenting bottom-up solutions to violence, this study aims to contribute to the search for sustainable solutions. The solutions recommended are those that local communities themselves perceive as appropriate. The approach adopted here, therefore, is one of a number of approaches that can guide policymakers concerned with reducing violence.

### *Problems Associated with Using a Participatory Urban Appraisal to Study Violence*

Determining perceptions of violence in communities deeply affected by violence is difficult for several reasons. First, the law of silence makes many people reluctant to discuss violence directly or indirectly. This unwillingness to speak out was most evident in communities affected by guerrilla and paramilitary activity that had experienced killings or threats to community members. To deal with the problem, the researchers made appointments to talk at safe times, when people were sure that the paramilitaries or guerrillas were not present, and conducted focus groups in back rooms of houses rather than in the street.

Second, intrafamily violence is a highly sensitive issue. Young people were often more willing to discuss the issue than older people, and women were more likely to raise the issue than men. The problem of alcohol abuse, a major cause of domestic violence, was often used as a conduit to discuss violence in the home.

To ensure the safety of the people who participated in the study and to prevent retribution, the researchers changed the names of all study participants and communities.<sup>3</sup> To ensure the researchers' safety and help negotiate with gatekeepers, the research teams included people with guaranteed access to the communities.

Table 1.1. Policy Approaches to Violence Intervention

<i>Approach</i>	<i>Objective</i>	<i>Type of violence addressed</i>	<i>Policy/planning intervention</i>	<i>Limitations</i>
<b>Criminal justice</b>	Violence deterrence and control through increased arrest and conviction rates and harsher punishment	Economic	Top-down strengthening of judicial, penal, and police systems and associated institutions	Limited applicability to political and social violence; success highly dependent on enforcement
<b>Public health</b>	Violence prevention through the reduction of individual risk factors	Economic, social	Top-down surveillance; risk factor identification; resultant behavior modification; scaling up of successful interventions	Almost exclusive focus on individual; often imposed top down; highly sensitive to quality of surveillance data; limitations in indicators
<b>Conflict transformation</b>	Nonviolent resolution of conflict through negotiated terms between conflicting parties	Political, social	Negotiations to ensure conflict reduction between different social actors, often using third-party mediation. May be top down or bottom up.	Often long term in its impact; often faces challenges in bringing parties to the table and in mediating conflict
<b>Human rights</b>	Legal enforcement of human rights and documentation of abuses by states and other social actors	Political, social	Top-down legal enforcement reinforced by bottom-up popular participation and NGO lobbying	Legalistic framework often difficult to enforce in a context of lawlessness, corruption, and impunity; documentation of abuse sometimes dangerous
<b>Social capital</b>	Creation of social capital to reduce violence in both informal and formal social institutions, such as families, community organizations, and the judiciary	Political, economic, social	Bottom-up participatory appraisal of violence; institutional mapping to address problems; community participation in violence reduction measures	Less well-articulated than other approaches; fewer indicators developed

### *Description and Categorization of Communities Studied*

Fieldwork was undertaken in nine predominantly low-income settlements or communities, located in seven cities and towns that are broadly representative of Colombia's urban areas (table 1.2). The communities reflect coverage of different geographical areas of the country as well as different types of violence.

The nine communities studied can be categorized into four main urban area types: the capital, large metropolitan areas with a long ties to the drug cartel, medium-size cities or small towns with large numbers of displaced people, and frontier towns located in areas rich in natural resources. In the capital, fieldwork was conducted in three communities: Embudo, Jericó, and 14 de Febrero. Embudo, a colonial settlement, is located in the central area of Santa Fe. Jericó and 14 de Febrero, both established in the 1970s and 1980s, are located in the southern part of Bogotá. Jericó was founded by three families who invaded a large hacienda and then illegally sold off subplots. The community of 14 de Febrero was established following land invasions by the Central Nacional Provienda, a left-wing party linked to the Colombian Communist Party.

Two communities, Pórtico and El Arca, were selected in cities with ties to the drug cartel. Pórtico is located in Medellín, Columbia's second largest city. El Arca is located in Cali, the third largest city in Colombia. Both cities continue to be dominated by the drug cartel, despite the arrest and later assassination of Pablo Escobar of the Medellín cartel in 1993 and the capture of the Rodríguez Orejuela brothers and other leaders of the main Cali cartel in 1995.

Communities in medium-size cities or small towns included Amanecer and Rosario, both located in Bucaramanga. Amanecer is located within the city limits of the Santander departmental capital. Rosario is located within the jurisdiction of the town of Girón. Metropolitan Bucaramanga has a large number of displaced people, many of them from the Magdalena Medio region. In Rosario, a relatively new, unconsolidated settlement with high levels of squatting and cheap rental housing, displaced people represent more than half of the population.

Two frontier town communities were included in the study. Cachicamo is located in Yopal, the capital of the Department of Casanare. Colombia Chiquita is located in Aguazul. Both towns are located in the oil-producing region of the *Llanos*, which has been affected by the booms and busts associated with oil development. During the mid-1980s the oil boom brought significant economic activity to both communities, as international oil companies constructed facilities. Once the facilities were completed, the economies of both communities collapsed, as demand for labor fell dramatically.



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## Chapter Two

# Summary Findings: Perceptions of General Problems and Violence

Rather than ask respondents specifically about violence, the participatory urban appraisal first focused on people's perceptions of the main problems affecting them and their community. Thus it did not assume that violence would necessarily be an important issue in people's daily lives.

### Perceptions of Problems in Poor Urban Communities

Violence was the single most frequently cited problem facing the urban poor (table 2.1). Respondents identified 14 types of violence-related problems, with drugs leading the list. Drug consumption and its associated problems represented 21 percent of all violence problems (annex B, table 1).

Important differences exist in perceptions of violence across communities. In Pórtico, Medellín, the Peace and Conciliation Process of the

**Table 2.1. Frequency Listings of Types of Problems Identified in Nine Urban Communities**

<i>Type of problem</i>	<i>Percentage of total problems cited</i>
Violence-related	43
Lack of physical capital	28
Lack of social capital	14
Lack of human capital	12
Lack of natural capital	3
Total	100

*Source:* 159 focus group listings of general problems.

Metropolitan Area of Aburrá, initiated in 1994, reduced the perception of violence. In contrast, in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, where 14 people have been assassinated since 1998, the relatively low levels of reported perceptions of violence probably reflect community fear of retaliation.

The perception of drugs as a community problem reflected both the existence of drugs and differences in levels of tolerance of drug consumption. In Rosario, Girón, where tolerance of drug consumption is low, one-third of all violence problems were identified as drug related. In contrast, in Pórtico, Medellín, where drug consumption was widespread but tolerance levels were very high, only 5 percent problems identified were related to drug consumption.

### *Ranking of Perceived Problems in Poor Communities*

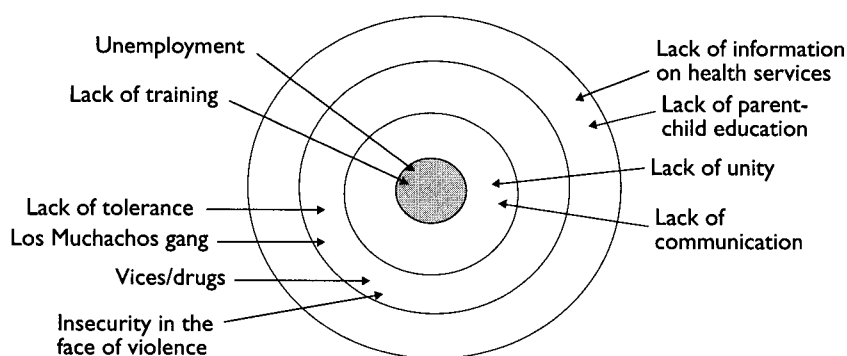
Focus groups ranked problems according to their importance (box 2.1). These findings reinforced the frequency findings and revealed the inter-relationship among different types of problems. In three communities (Embudo and 14 de Febrero, Bogotá; and Rosario, Girón), drug-related problems were perceived as most important. In another three communities (Pórtico, Medellín; Cachicamo, Yopal; and Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul), unemployment was the most significant problem. In El Arca, Cali, and Jericó, Bogotá, the most important problem cited was insecurity, a catchall term widely used. In Amanecer, Bucaramanga, the leading problem cited was robbery. Problems related to violence were thus identified as the most serious problem facing three of the nine communities. In communities identifying unemployment as the most significant problem, it was invariably linked with violence and insecurity.

### *Lack of Physical Capital*

Lack of physical capital was the second most frequently cited general problem (see table 2.1). Within this category, unemployment problems were mentioned most frequently (annex C, table 1). Aggravated by the recent decline in national economic performance, the lack of employment opportunities was severely undermining the productive capacity of many communities. In El Arca, Cali, the decline in the drug cartel-linked construction industry following the recent capture of key drug traffickers increased unemployment to about 80 percent. In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, about 90 percent of the community were reportedly unemployed. The high rate of unemployment was associated with the completion of the exploration phase of the region's oil boom and the resulting decline in demand for construction workers. Recent legislation prohibiting the sale of goods from stalls on the streets was also perceived to have increased unemployment (see chapter 5).

### Box 2.1. Ranking of Problems in Pórtico, Medellín, Prepared by Mixed Group of Six Adults

The focus group listed 11 community problems and then prioritized them using an onion diagram. The most serious problems were placed in the center ring of the diagram, with those of lesser importance placed in the outer rings. The most serious problems identified were unemployment and lack of training; the least important problems were lack of parent-child education and lack of information about health services. Problems related to violence were placed in the third ring, although the group indicated that these problems were interrelated with unemployment and lack of unity.



*Note:* "Vices" refers primarily to drug use. It can also refer to alcohol and cigarette use. Throughout the document "mixed group" refers to a group mixed by sex.

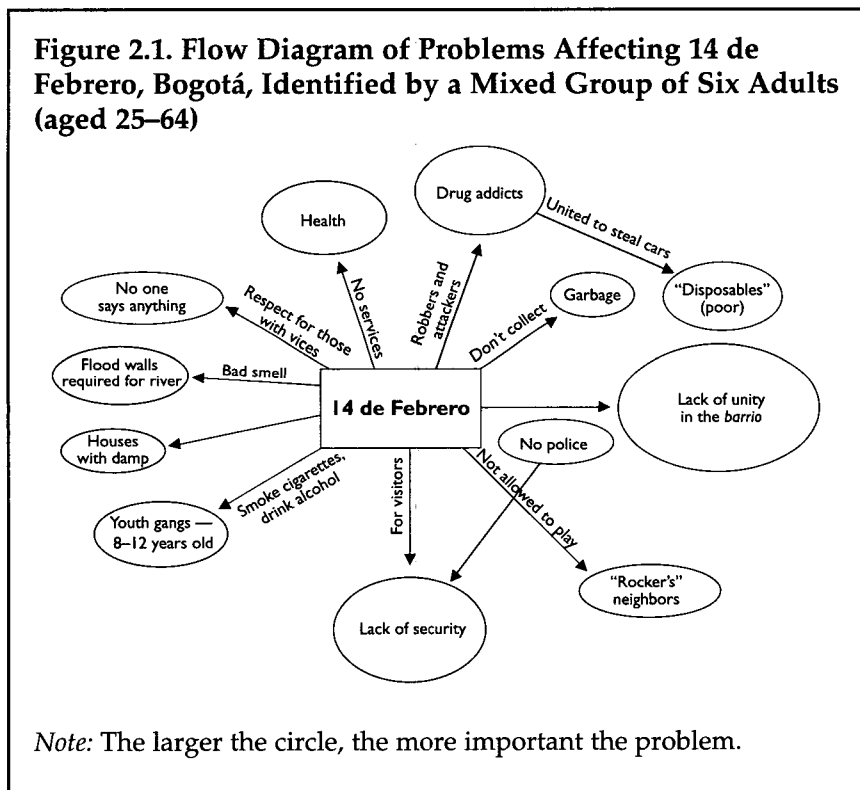
*Source:* Five women and one man, ages 20–45 years.

Even when job opportunities existed, people felt shunned by employers, who stereotyped urban poor communities as seedbeds of guerrilla activity, delinquency, prostitution, and drug consumption. Residents with academic qualifications found the stigma of living in a poor urban area difficult to overcome.

Lack of adequate public service provision, including water, electricity, sanitation, and garbage collection, was also a major preoccupation. While most communities had access to water and electricity, the cost and quality of service were problematic, with a number of households pirating electricity. Housing concerns often related to issues such as overcrowding and high rents charged by landlords.

### *Lack of Social Capital*

Overall lack of social capital was identified as a slightly greater problem than lack of human capital (see table 2.1). Specific problems included lack of unity within the community; lack of trust in social institutions, particularly the police; and a sense of exclusion or discrimination by the *barrio* as a whole or by particular demographic groups. Young men, for example, often mentioned that the rest of the community dismissed their views (“no one takes us into account”). Middle-age and elderly people tended to complain about an increasing sense of isolation in their communities and a lack of communication. In figure 2.1, for instance, social





capital—identified as “lack of unity”—was perceived as the most important problem in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá.

### *Lack of Human Capital*

Concerns over lack of human capital emerged frequently in all communities. Lack of sufficient primary-school places was seen as a particularly serious problem. Because of the current economic crisis, some middle class people are no longer able to afford to send their children to private school, something that was once the norm among the middle class. This increased pressure on the state system means that children from the poorest families often have fewer opportunities. In addition, many people complained about the lack of money to pay matriculation fees. In the case of health care services, complaints related to lack of services, increasing costs, and distances to health posts.

### *Lack of Natural Capital*

The lack of natural capital was cited frequently only in the recently established settlements: Rosario, Girón and Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul. In both communities, the most commonly cited problem was that residents felt threatened by the adjacent river’s lack of flood barriers.

### *Perceptions of Problems by Demographic Group*

Perceptions of problems differed across different age and gender groups. Elderly women, for example, cited declining state public services provision, especially health care, as well as the decline in social capital, recalling with nostalgia the days when everyone knew one another and worked together for the good of the community.

Adult women focused on community problems rather than individual concerns. Community mothers (childcare providers employed by the Colombian Family Welfare Institute) frequently cited mistreatment of children, lack of adequate recreation for young people, and lack of community unity.

Teenage girls viewed community problems more from an individual perspective and were more likely than other groups to cite problems such as rape and harassment by men in the street. Teenage girls also cited intrafamily violence regularly. Girls under the age of 12 mentioned intrafamily violence, rape, and fear in the streets as well as problems in school, especially teacher violence and harassment from boys.

In contrast, elderly and adult men focused on employment and taxation. Less directly affected by violence in the community than other groups, they blamed community violence on young people, often describing young men as “full of vices” and young women as “street girls” (*ninas callajeras*).

Young men cited exclusion, unemployment, lack of educational and recreational opportunities, police harassment, and drugs as major issues. Teenage boys cited family discord, drugs, and violence at school. Children and young people were more likely than other groups to raise taboo subjects, including rape, intrafamily violence, and guerilla activity.

Significant differences emerged across socioeconomic lines. Although all the participatory urban appraisals were conducted in low-income communities, a number of the older settlements comprised sections with people of higher socioeconomic status. In Cachicamo, Yopal, for example, several focus groups were conducted with professionals and businesspeople. These groups tended to emphasize the effects of corruption, payment of bribes, and political violence on their businesses.

### **Perceptions of Violence in Poor Communities**

Focus groups in the nine communities listed an average of 25 different types of violence, with one community (Embudo, Bogotá) distinguishing 60 different types of violence. Types of violence ranged from intrafamily violence to fights between rival gangs and local militias to robbery and assassination (table 2.2).

#### *Types of Violence*

Listings of violence were grouped together under three rubrics: political, economic, and social violence (World Bank 1999; table 2.3). Social violence was disaggregated into violence within the home, violence outside the home, and either (to categorize rape when it was not clear where it occurred). The types of violence represent a continuum of categories that overlap rather than being mutually exclusive. Drugs, for example, are categorized as economic violence, because drug consumers were perceived mainly as a problem linked to robbery to feed their habit. For drug consumers themselves, taking drugs was linked primarily with seeking an identity, conforming to youth culture, and succumbing to peer pressure, therefore making it a social violence issue.

Together economic and social violence were mentioned more frequently than political violence in all nine communities. Economic violence was most dominant, representing over half of all types of violence. Social violence accounted for about one-third of all violence, with political violence constituting 14 percent (tables 2.3 and 2.4).

Types of violence varied across communities. In Embudo, Bogotá, almost 60 percent of violence was identified as social, despite the fact that drugs (a form of economic violence) dominated the community. In Jericó, Bogotá, intrafamily violence was mentioned more often than in any other

**Table 2.2. Types of Violence and Insecurity in El Arca, Cali, Identified by Mixed Group of Six Adults**

<i>Sphere of influence</i>	<i>Violence</i>	<i>Insecurity</i>
<b>Individual</b>	Physical and verbal aggression	Fear
<b>Household</b>	Fights between husbands and wives Fights between grown-ups Killing wife and burying her in the yard	Bad neighbors Drug addicts Leaving children alone in the house Deficient housing construction
<b>Interpersonal</b>	Disharmony Armed fights among friends	Hypocrisy Lack of confidence or knowledge to talk to friends
<b>Neighbor</b>	Armed robbery Lack of conscience	Lack of telephone to call in case of emergency Bringing strangers to the <i>barrio</i> Dangerous friends Lack of unity
<b>Community</b>	Guerilla confrontations with civilian victims Army accusations of civilians being guerilla members	Naming people from outside the <i>barrio</i> as representatives Unknown neighbors Politicians
<b>City</b>	Youth gangs Satanic sects	Policies of Pastrana Government coup

*Source:* Three women and three men, ages 24–40.

community; in Amanecer, Bucaramanga, and Rosario, Girón, economic violence represented 70–80 percent of all references to violence.

In communities with a history of drug cartels, economic violence predominated, although political violence was also important. El Arca, Cali, for example, was established after members of the now demobilized guerilla group the Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19) invaded the area. In both Cali and Medellín, levels of violence have escalated as guerilla groups (mainly the National Liberation Army, or ELN), militias, and informal protection forces and gangs have fought with one another within communities (see chapter 6).

Political violence was an important source of violence in Cachicamo, Yopal, and Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul. This violence was tied to the

**Table 2.3. Types of Economic, Social, and Political Violence as Percentage of Total Violence in Each Community**

Type of violence	14 de														Total
	Embudo, Bogotá	Febrero, Bogotá	Jericó, Bogotá	Amanecer, Bucaramanga	Rosario, Girón	El Arca, Cali	Pórtico, Medellín	Cachicamo, Yopal	Chiquitín, Aguazul	Colombia					
<b>Economic</b>	31	57	54	71	83	60	51	52	28	54					
Drugs	18	22	12	15	33	12	11	9	0	15					
Insecurity	4	13	14	15	9	16	11	18	15	13					
Robbery	9	17	15	28	15	25	7	16	8	15					
Loitering	0	3	3	9	25	0	2	2	3	5					
Gangs <sup>a</sup>	0	2	10	3	0	7	18	2	2	5					
Prostitution	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	5	0	1					
<b>Social</b>	58	40	42	27	16	23	40	18	25	32					
<i>Inside the home</i>	11	10	16	6	11	13	5	7	8	10					
Intrafamily violence	11	10	16	6	11	13	5	7	8	10					
<i>Outside the home</i>	32	28	22	15	1	10	33	11	10	18					
Fights	23	20	10	8	1	4	13	4	5	10					
Deaths	8	2	2	3	0	0	20	5	0	4					
Alcoholism	0	6	4	3	0	5	0	2	2	2					
<i>Encapuchados</i> (hooded men)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1					
Other <sup>b</sup>	1	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	3	1					

Table 2.3. cont.

Type of violence	Colombia													
	Embudo, Bogotá	14 de Febrero, Bogotá	Jericó, Bogotá	Amanecer, Bucaramanga	Rosario, Girón	El Arca, Cali	Pórtico, Medellín	Cachicamo Yopal	Chiquita, Aguazul	Total				
<i>Outside or inside the home</i>														
Rape	15	2	4	6	4	0	2	0	7	4				
Political	15	2	4	6	4	0	2	0	7	4				
Police abuses	11	3	4	2	1	17	9	30	47	14				
Guerrilla activity	11	3	2	1	0	8	7	0	2	4				
War	20	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	1				
Paramilitary activity	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	26	0	3				
Assassination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	22	2				
Activity by private security forces	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	18	2				
Extortion	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	1				
Threats	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0				
Violence by displaced people	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100				

a. Gangs were classified as an economic form of violence because of the close nexus with theft.

b. Includes *machismo*, discrimination, and mistreatment of children in the street.

Source: 104 focus group listings of types of violence.

**Table 2.4. Types of Violence Identified in Nine Urban Communities**

<i>Type of violence</i>	<i>Percentage of types of violence identified</i>
Economic	54
Drugs	14
Insecurity	13
Robbery	15
Other	12
Social	32
Inside the home	10
Outside the home	18
Inside/outside the home	4
Political	14
Police abuse	4
War	3
Paramilitary activities	2
Assassination	2
Other	3
Total	100

large guerilla and paramilitary presence associated with the oil boom. Initially, these organizations competed for territory and power; with the collapse of the oil sector they turned to economic extortion and corruption, terrorizing the local population. In Colombia Chiquita, residents were assassinated by paramilitary groups. In Cachicamo the main concern was "war" in general.

#### *Ranking Types of Violence*

Focus groups identified the most serious types of violence in their communities. In the seven communities where violence was prioritized, drug-related violence was most important in Embudo and 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, and in Rosario, Girón. In Jericó, Bogotá, intrafamily violence was considered most significant (box 2.2), while in Pórtico, Medellín, killing was viewed as the most serious problem. In El Arca, Cali, mistreatment of children and robbery were identified as particularly severe.

Perceptions of violence also varied by gender and age. Elderly women and men tended to be concerned mainly with insecurity and drugs. Elderly men discussed how young women were involved in violence and drug use, something that represented a new phenomenon for them.

### Box 2.2. Types of Violence in Jericó, Bogotá, Ranked by a Group of Four 11-Year-Old Girls

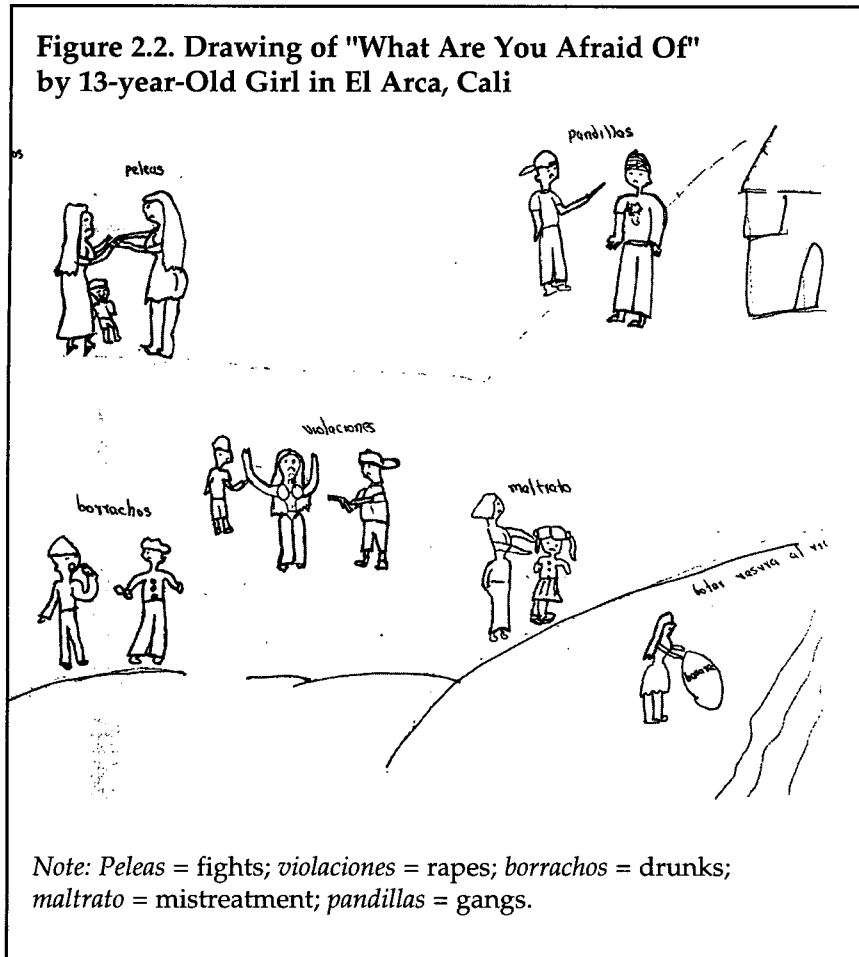
A group of 11-year-old school girls listed the main types of violence affecting their community and ranked each (4 = most serious problem, 3 = next most serious, 2 = third most serious problem). They unanimously identified drug-related violence as the most serious problem, with marijuana, *bazuco* (a form of cocaine), cocaine, and Boxer (a type of glue) the most common drugs used. Three of the four girls had experienced pressure from their friends to take drugs, with one girl noting that a girlfriend said sniffing Boxer was "like being on the moon." Trying drugs was a sign of bravery; refusal meant being called *pollo* (chicken) or *bobo* (fool). The girls were also concerned about rape. They felt most threatened by men they knew (friends, boyfriends, and male relatives).

<i>Listing of type of violence</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Prioritization</i>
Rape	13	Drugs
Robbery	4	Rape
Fights among gangs	4	Robbery
Verbal aggression	2	Fights among gangs
Drugs	16	Verbal aggression
Family arguments	—	

Adult women (especially among the community mothers) focused on violence against children and insecurity. In contrast, adult men discussed political violence, as well as violence among young people, especially drug-related violence and delinquency.

Young people were especially concerned with the drug problem. Young men also mentioned gang and militia violence, with most being aware of the illegal and informal organizations operating in their *barrios*. Young women also discussed these themes, but they tended to be more concerned about rape outside the home.

Children's perceptions were elicited not only from group discussions but also from drawings (figure 2.2). Of a total of 244 drawings created in response to the question "What are you afraid of?" almost half (115) dealt with violence with two-thirds of the drawings associating fear with guns. In 80 percent of the drawings, men were depicted as perpetrators of violence. Most of the violence depicted took place outside the home, usually in the streets (82 percent of cases). Several children also depicted



intrafamily violence, although many were reluctant to do so. In 14 de Febrero, for example, two young boys (ages 7 and 8) refused to draw what they were afraid of. Eventually they admitted that they were afraid of their fathers, who beat them regularly. Drawings of both types of violence invariably showed victims, usually women or children, in tears. Drawings of drugs usually depicted men inhaling cocaine or *bazuco* or smoking marijuana on street corners in the evenings.

#### *Perceptions of the Spatial Nature of Violence*

The incidence of violence varied across types of communities (table 2.5). Drug-related violence, insecurity, and robbery were important in all areas. Intrafamily violence was especially important in Bogotá. In the



**Table 2.5. Variations in Types of Violence**

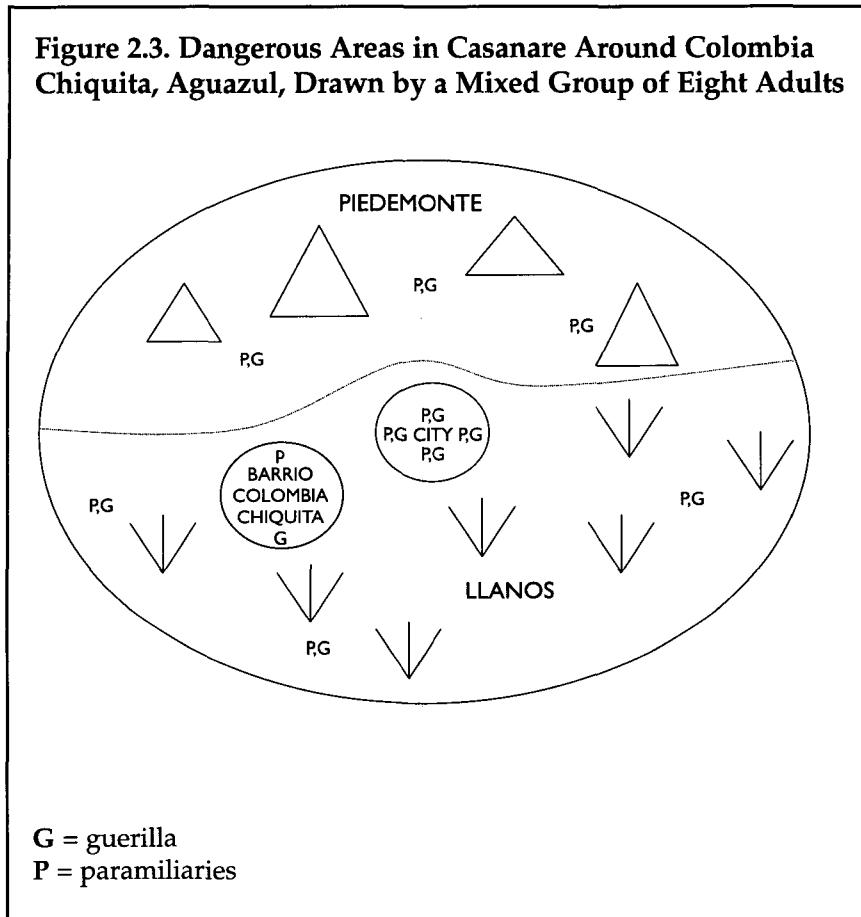
<i>Urban category/community</i>	<i>Predominant types of violence</i>
Large metropolitan area/ capital city Embudo, Bogotá 14 de Febrero, Bogotá Jericó, Bogotá	Economic and social (drug-related violence, insecurity and robbery, intrafamily violence)
Large metropolitan area with drug cartel history El Arca, Cali Pórtico, Medellín	Economic, social, and political (drug-related violence, insecurity and robbery, gang violence)
Intermediate cities and small towns with high levels of displaced populations Amanecer, Bucaramanga Rosario, Girón	Economic and social (drug-related violence, insecurity and robbery, loitering)
Frontier towns in natural resource rich areas Cachicamo, Yopal Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul	Economic and political (insecurity and robbery, war, paramilitary violence, assassinations)

large metropolitan areas with histories of drug cartel activity, gang violence was especially marked. The effects of political violence in the countryside were experienced in the intermediate towns and cities through displaced populations. Loitering among young people was also perceived as an important problem. In frontier towns rich in natural resources, political violence—including war, paramilitary violence, and assassinations—was most marked.

Political violence by guerilla and paramilitary organizations dominated the area around Aguazul, (shown in figure 2.3 as the city) and the outlying *barrio* of Colombia Chiquita itself. The community was surrounded by guerilla and paramilitary groups, both in the highland area (known as the Piedemonte) and the lowlands (known as the Llanos).

People living in peri-urban communities located on the outskirts of large urban areas often felt ostracized by the city itself due to the “area stigma” associated with perceptions of high concentrations of violence (see chapter 5). In Bucaramanga the city center is located on a plateau, while the community of Amanecer is situated in a lowland area around the city. A 19-year-old woman from Amanecer who had also lived in the city center noted that Amanecer was primarily associated with crime and

**Figure 2.3. Dangerous Areas in Casanare Around Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, Drawn by a Mixed Group of Eight Adults**

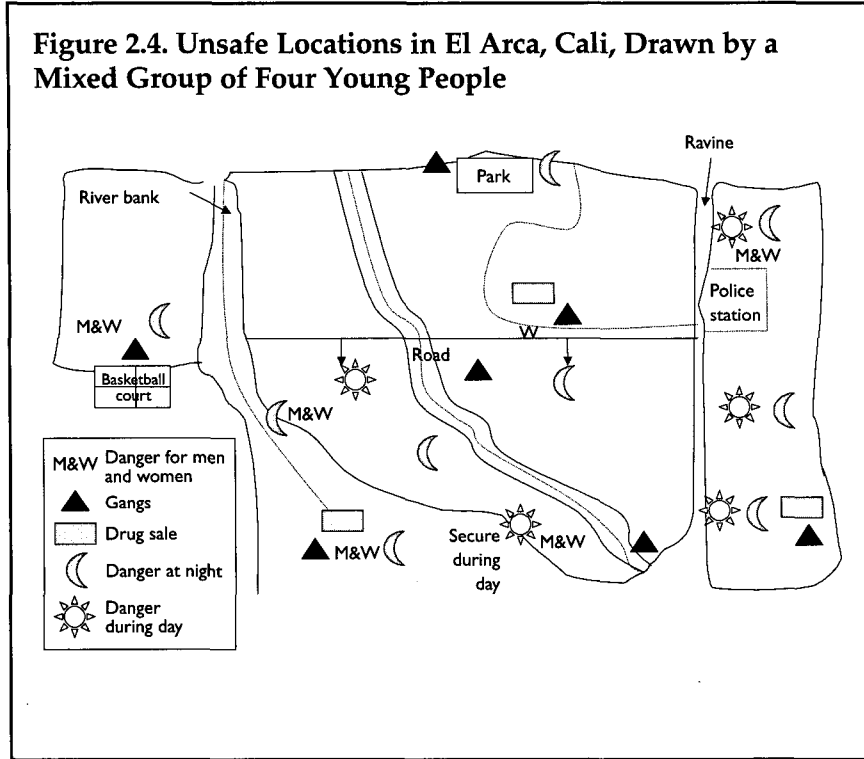


“people who make you afraid.” She assumed that it was better to live in the city center.

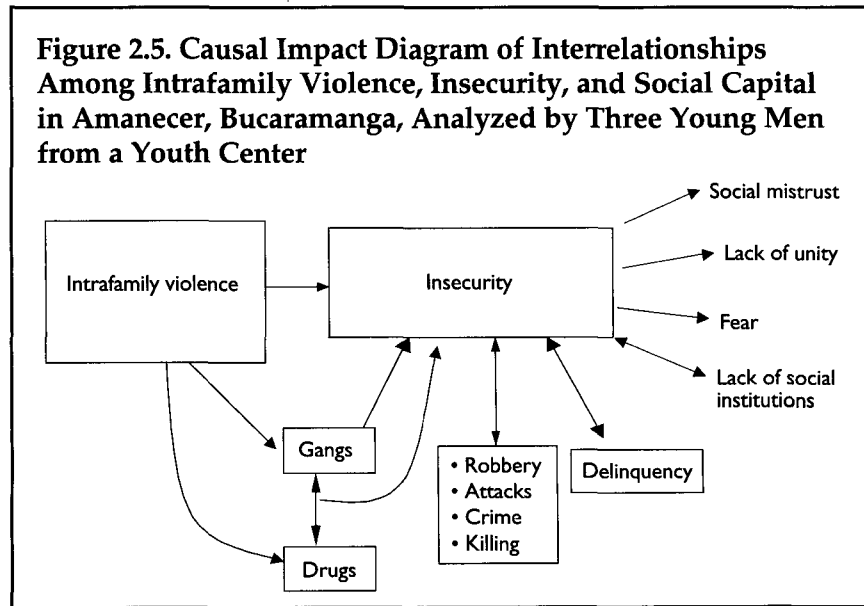
At the community level, the dangerous areas most commonly cited included street corners, basketball courts, parks, and river banks—all places where drug addicts, sellers, or gangs congregated. In most communities, girls and women feared river banks because of the danger of rape in these secluded locations (see chapter 4).

In El Arca, Cali, residents felt unsafe in most of the *barrio* (figure 2.4). While some areas were dangerous only at night, most were also dangerous during the day. Most places, such as the basketball court, were dangerous for both men and women. Places where drugs were sold and gangs met were perceived as unsafe only for women. Ironically, the police

**Figure 2.4. Unsafe Locations in El Arca, Cali, Drawn by a Mixed Group of Four Young People**



**Figure 2.5. Causal Impact Diagram of Interrelationships Among Intrafamily Violence, Insecurity, and Social Capital in Amanecer, Bucaramanga, Analyzed by Three Young Men from a Youth Center**





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## Chapter Three

# Social Violence in the Family and Household

Throughout the communities studied, young and old alike agreed that violence begins in the home. A young boy in 14 De Febrero, Bogotá, noted, "Violence begins in the home. It is one of the most important factors in the [lack of] harmony of the community. It brings about lack of respect in everyone." All communities identified intrafamily violence as a daily occurrence, and all perceived it to be linked to violence in the community.

Because of the "law of silence," however, the frequency with which intrahousehold violence was reported was low (10 percent for the sample as a whole).<sup>4</sup> The topic emerged much more forcefully in focus group, discussions with children, adolescents, and adult women (adult men rarely raised the issue). In El Arca, Cali, a group of community mothers estimated that at least one in three children in the community was mistreated at home. In Cachicamo, Yopal, teachers estimated that intrafamily violence affected 70 percent of the community.

### **The Nature and Scope of Intrahousehold or Intrafamily Violence**

Urban residents identified some 20 different types of intrahousehold violence (box 3.1). Three types of intrafamily violence emerged as most important: violence between spouses, violence against children, and sexual abuse of children.

#### *Violence between Spouses*

Violence between spouses was widespread, with husbands more likely than wives to be the perpetrators. Violence, ranging from verbal and physical aggression to murder, occurs on a daily basis in most communities. As a 25-year-old woman from Amanecer, Bucaramanga, noted, "Here it is an everyday thing that husbands beat their wives. Some have been wounded with knives and bottles."

### **Box 3.1. Types of Intrafamily Violence Identified by Urban Residents in Nine Communities**

- Mistreatment of children
- Physical violence between spouses
- Verbal violence between spouses
- Husband killing wife and burying her in the yard
- Hitting children hard and making them bleed
- Aggression against children by parents
- Children hitting parents
- Mistreatment of the elderly
- Fighting
- Violence of husbands towards mothers-in-law
- Rape of girls by fathers
- Rape of girls by renters
- Rape of girls by stepfathers
- Rape of girls by fathers under the influence of *bazuco*
- Children having sexual relations with their mothers when they take *bazuco*
- Mothers raping sons under the influence of drugs
- Fights between siblings
- Abandonment of children
- Physical and emotional trauma

*Source:* 159 focus group listings of general problems and 104 listings of violence.

### *Violence against Children*

Violence against children includes beating, usually by fathers but also by mothers. Miguel, a 10-year-old boy from 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, acknowledged that he was afraid to go home because his father beat him with wooden sticks and a leather cattle whip, particularly when inebriated. Although his mother did not hit him, she did nothing to stop the father's abuse. "I think my mother loves me, but not my father," said the boy, capturing a frequently repeated theme.

### *Sexual Abuse of Children*

Sexual abuse of children, including incest within the home, was cited frequently in focus groups. The most severe abuse was identified in

**Box 3.2. Perpetrators of Rape in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, Identified by a Group of Six Community Mothers**

A group of community mothers in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, identified rape by tenants as the most important problem affecting the children they looked after. According to them, tenants were more likely than relatives, stepfathers, or others to rape children.

<i>Listing</i>	<i>Ranking by votes</i>
Family (father, uncle, relative)	18
Step-father	12
Renter	21
Delinquent	8

Embudo, Bogotá, where it was associated with high levels of drug consumption. Fathers and mothers were identified as raping daughters and sons when under the influence of *bazuco*. Rape of girls by male relatives was mentioned in most communities. A community mother in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, noted, "One hears a lot about the rights of children, but there is one rape a day of children."

Sexual abuse of children by tenants or lodgers was especially acute in communities with high levels of renting (box 3.2). Thus while housing can be used as a productive asset with which to generate income, the effect on children can be harmful.

**Factors Affecting the Level of Intrafamily Violence**

Intrafamily violence is considered a permanent feature of life in the communities studied. As a local leader from 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, noted, "Mistreatment within the family has existed since Adam and Eve, and still we have this illness." The level of intrafamily violence appears to be affected by various factors, including changes in the economy and the rate of unemployment, alcohol (and to a lesser extent drug) use, *machismo* among men and submissiveness among women, and the intergenerational transfer of abuse within the home.

*Changes in the Economy and the Rate of Unemployment*

Residents of all nine communities perceived that intrafamily violence had intensified since the mid-1980s, partly as a result of a decline in the economy and an increase in unemployment. In 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, for

example, intrafamily violence has risen since 1985, when unemployment became a problem (figure 3.1). In El Arca, Cali, where male unemployment has increased since 1991, men have spent more time at home and taken out their frustration by abusing their children. Yet in Cachicamo, Yopal, the boom in employment opportunities that began in 1985 also increased intrahousehold violence. People migrated to Yopal to work for the oil companies, often earning good salaries. The combination of money, drugs, prostitutes, and fighting resulted in increases in intrahousehold violence.

#### *Alcohol and Drug Consumption*

Alcohol—and to a lesser extent drug use—was identified as a critically important determinant of intrafamily violence. Celebrations and festivals at which large amounts of alcohol are consumed often resulted in violence. A focus group in Amanecer, Bucaramanga, identified the worst periods of the year as Mother's Day in May, the festival of the "Day of Love and Friendship" in September, and Christmas—all occasions of family gatherings. Violence within the home also tended to increase on weekends, when alcohol consumption was greatest.

#### *Machismo among Men and Submissiveness among Women*

Gender-based violence was caused both by *machismo* among men and submissiveness among women—referring to the manner in which women put up with continual violence or abuse from husbands. Three community mothers from El Arca, Cali, linked *machismo* and female submissiveness to the role of stepfathers, who often created discord within the home and committed both physical and sexual abuse. With the arrival of new father figures in the home, new rules were laid down for children, which mothers rarely opposed. As a consequence, children invariably felt rejected.

#### *Intergenerational Transfer of Abuse*

A common perception was that adults who were abused as children abused their own children. In Embudo, Bogotá, a 43-year-old male community leader referred to sexual abuse or rape as "hereditary rape," stating, "He who was raped gets converted into a rapist." Rape was also closely associated with drug use.

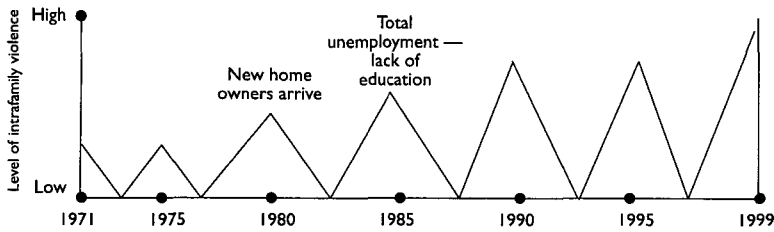
#### *Other Types of Violence*

In communities affected by high levels of political violence, assassination of family members can lead to family disintegration and conflict. In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, a focus group identified how political violence undermines the institution of the family. Family members of two

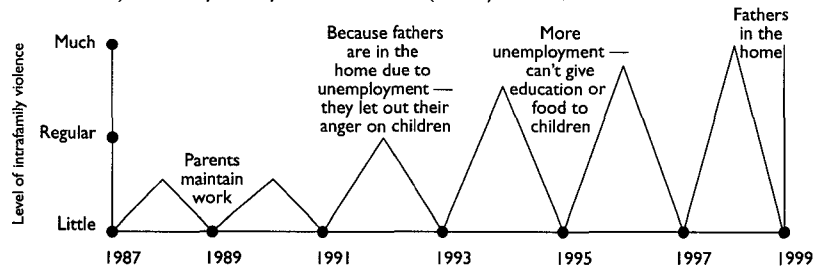


**Figure 3.1. Time Lines Showing Changes in Intrafamily Violence, 1970–1999, Prepared by Three Groups of Adults in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá , El Arca, Cali, and Cachicamo, Yopal**

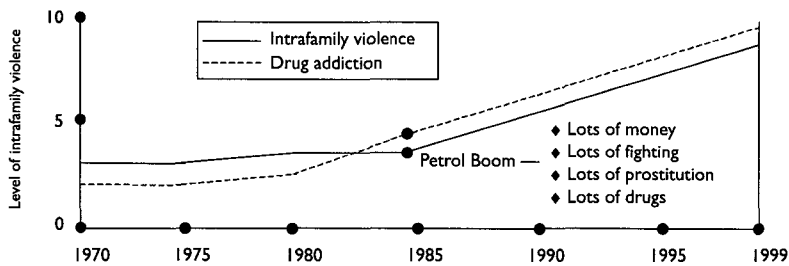
1) Drawn by: Mixed Sex Group of Seven Adults (35–60), 14 de Febrero, Bogotá

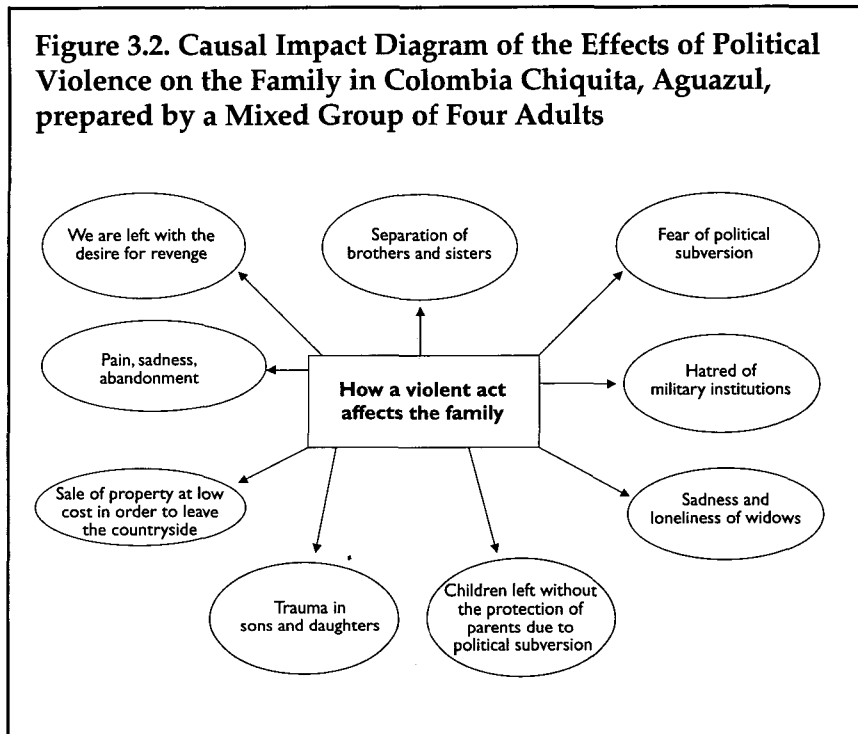


2) Drawn by: Group of Four Women (35–50), El Arca, Cali



3) Drawn by: Mixed Sex Group of Four Adults, Cachicamo, Yopal





women whose brother had been killed by the guerillas or paramilitary had joined the army and the paramilitaries in search of revenge. The two women noted that their families were torn apart by the assassinations in their families. Both women felt hate and fear of all armed groups and worried about their own safety and that of their children. Their emotions caused intense conflict within their households, sometimes erupting in violence (figure 3.2).

### Consequences of Intrafamily Violence

Intrafamily violence has several serious consequences. It erodes the social capital endowments of households, increases the level of violence outside the home, and erodes the human capital of young people.

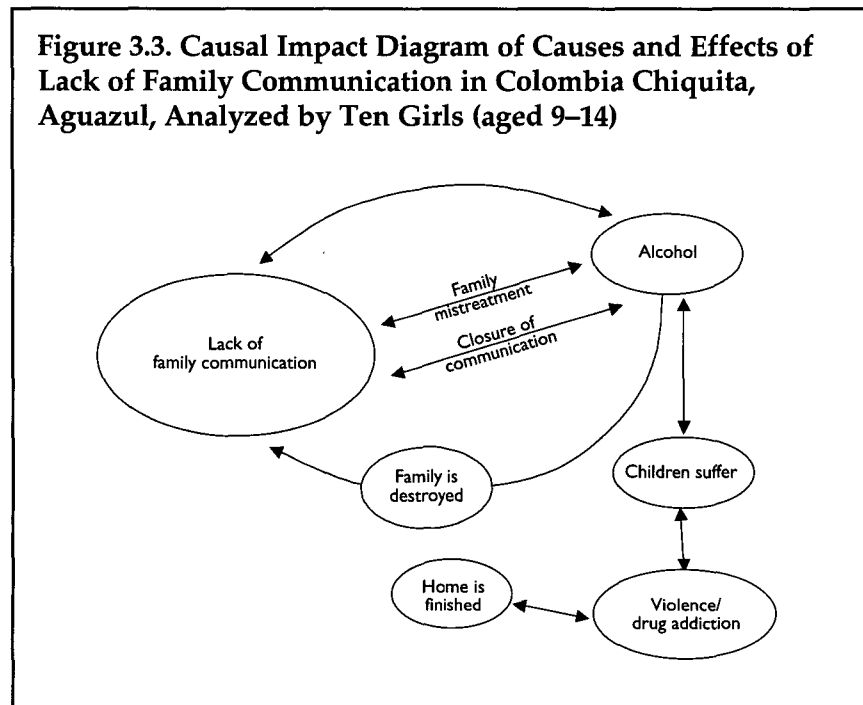
#### *Erosion of Social Capital Endowments within Households*

Intrafamily violence undermines the way households function internally in terms of creating norms, values, and trust (social capital). Family disintegration, in turn, increases the level of violence within the home.

Family relations provide a primary source of cognitive social capital (that is, values, norms, attitudes, and beliefs). Family disintegration thus severely erodes social capital endowments. In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, for instance, one group identified “lack of family communication” as the key problem in their community and showed how lack of family communication appears to both generate violence and exacerbate disintegration of the home (figure 3.3).

### *Erosion of Social Capital*

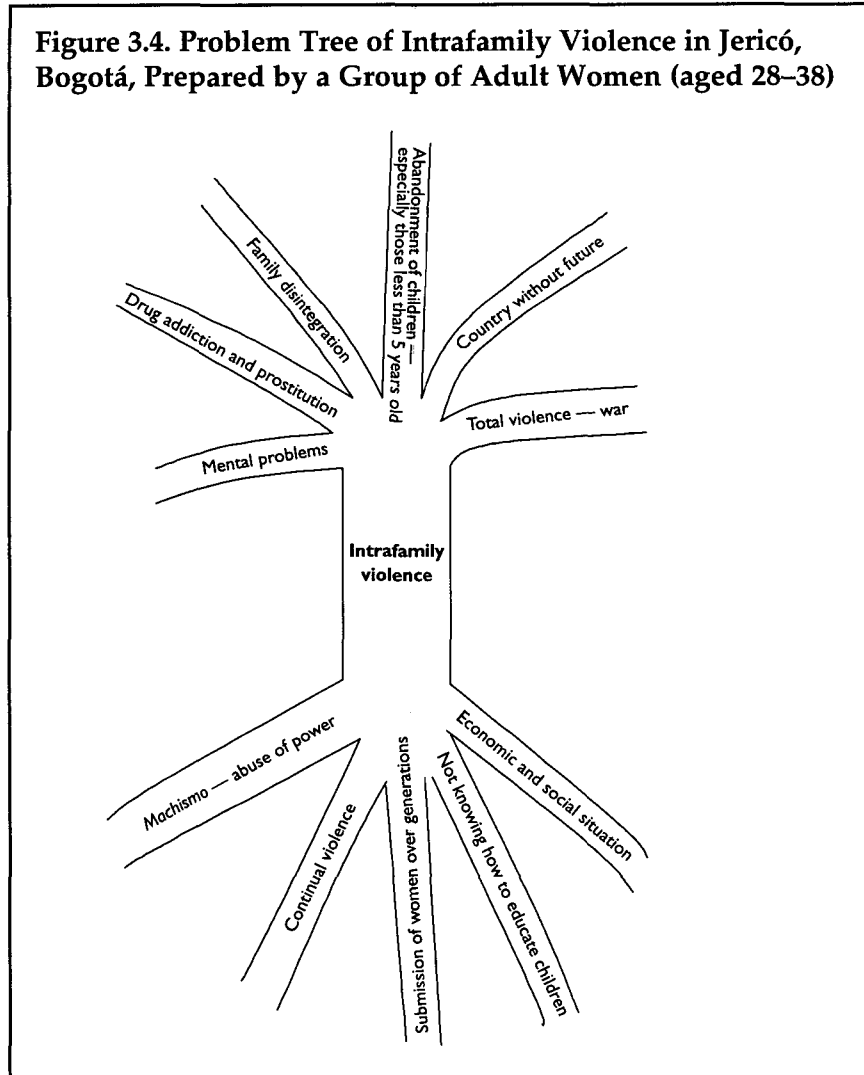
In discussing strategies to cope with intrafamily violence, people noted that their response was often to remain silent or not get involved because of the problems that result when people try to help. Two women from 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, noted that intervening in domestic arguments generated fights among neighbors: “Fights between neighbors arise because one gets involved so that the mother is not hit, or so that the mother doesn’t massacre her children. Then one is treated like someone who interferes.” They reported that they were actively excluded and stigmatized by neighbors when they tried to stop the abuse.



### *Increase in Intrafamily Violence outside the Home*

Violence that occurs within the home can lead to violence in the public sphere. According to the urban poor, violence permeates the entire spectrum of social relations within their communities, the critical nexus being households and families. In Jericó, Bogotá, a group of women drew a problem tree through which they noted that a major consequence of intrafamily violence was “total violence—war,” which would create a “country without future.” According to them, violence would lead to

**Figure 3.4. Problem Tree of Intrafamily Violence in Jericó, Bogotá, Prepared by a Group of Adult Women (aged 28–38)**



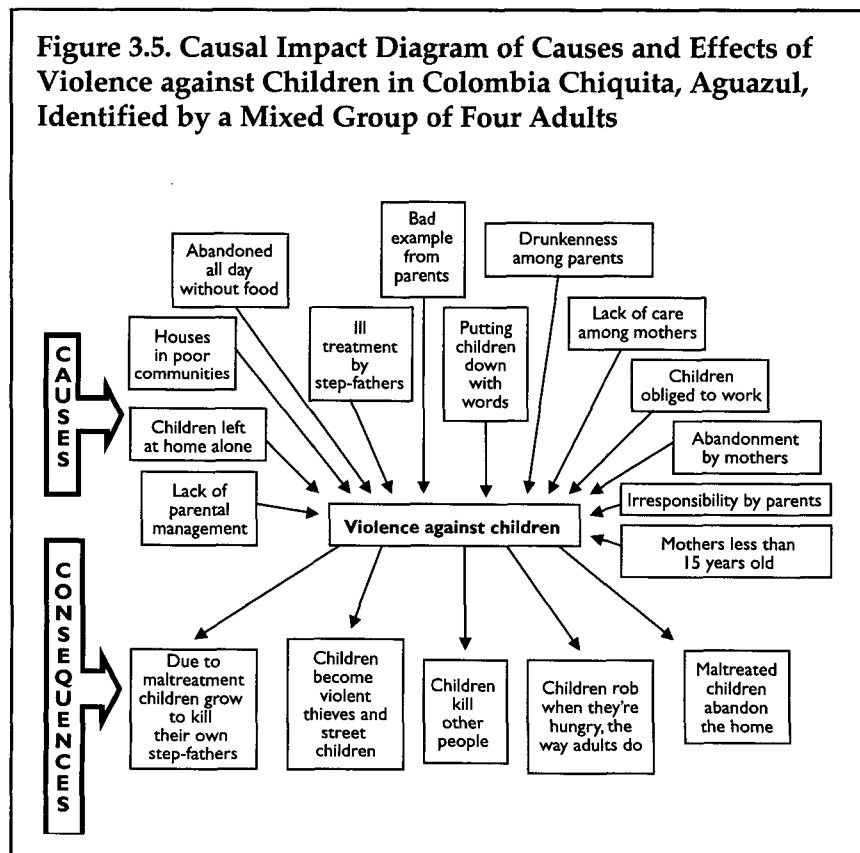
further family disintegration, drug addiction, prostitution, mental problems, and the abandonment of children (figure 3.4).

Children and young people experiencing violence in the home—either as victims or as witnesses to violence between their parents—often join gangs and become involved in drug-related crime and violence. With trust in the home environment severely eroded, children spend long periods of time with their friends in the street.

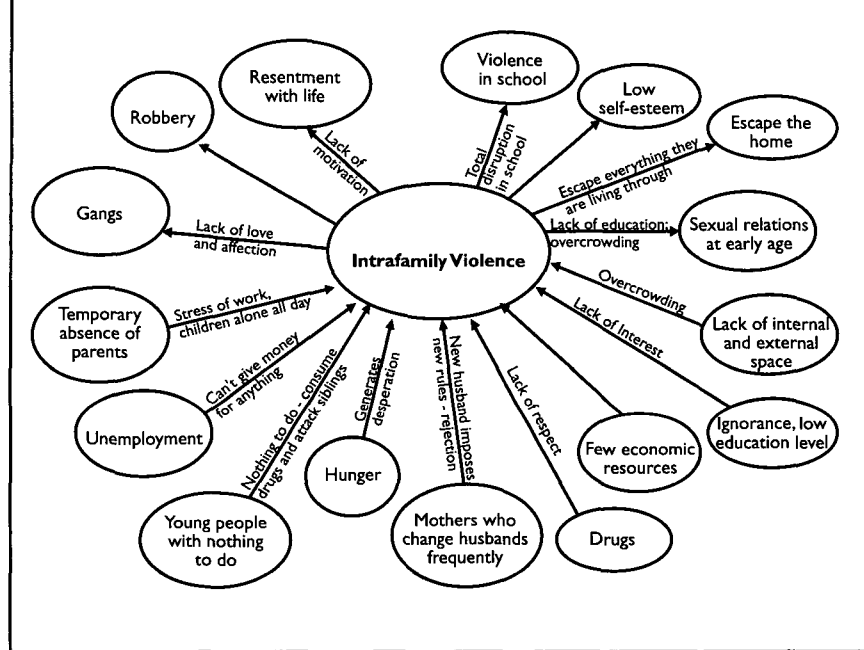
A focus group in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, revealed how violence against children, coupled with parental abandonment, had far-reaching effects on children in later life. According to the group, violence toward children can lead to such extreme responses as children killing their step-fathers, children becoming thieves and living on the streets, and children killing people outside the family (figure 3.5).

Several focus groups discussed how violence within the home also leads young women “to the streets.” While some young women joined

**Figure 3.5. Causal Impact Diagram of Causes and Effects of Violence against Children in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, Identified by a Mixed Group of Four Adults**



**Figure 3.6. Causal Impact Diagram of the Causes and Effects of Intrafamily Violence in Pórtico, Medellín, Prepared by a Mixed Group of Six Primary School Teachers**



gangs and used drugs, the more usual pattern was for them to engage in sexual relations at an early age, often resulting in pregnancy. In all of the communities it was common for 14- to 15-year-old women to be mothers.

In Rosario, Girón, a focus group of young women noted how some "street girls" (*muchachas vagas*) took drugs and participated in male-dominated gangs as a result of violent experiences or parental conflict. Drug use and gang membership were seen as having led these girls into early sexual activity, often resulting in pregnancy. In some cases, it was noted that they became prostitutes as well.

#### *Erosion of Human Capital of Children and Young People*

Violence in the home influences the behavior of children and young people, which in turn affects their educational attainment and acquisition of skills. Intrafamily violence thus erodes human capital of future generations, something teachers in the community emphasized. A group of 37

**Box 3.3. The Effects of Intrafamily Violence Identified by Primary School Teachers**

**Seven primary school teachers in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá**

- Lack of discipline
- Bad vocabulary
- Aggression with other pupils
- Introverted children
- Low academic achievement
- Sexual abuse of girls
- Unhelpful attitude
- School desertion

**30 primary school teachers in Pórtico, Medellín**

- Low self-esteem
- Emotional instability
- Verbal and physical aggression
- Lack of respect
- Aggressive games
- Antisocial behavior
- Loneliness
- Absenteeism
- Low academic achievement
- Lack of conflict resolution
- Abandonment of the home
- Disarticulation within the community

teachers from 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, and Pórtico, Medellín, identified 13 problems affecting the community, including aggression in the class room, low educational attainment, antisocial behavior, and absenteeism or dropping out of school altogether (box 3.3). According to these teachers, sexual abuse and rape are the most important factors affecting young people's human capital. Dropping out of school was a common outcome of intrafamily violence among children. Low educational attainments and limited employment opportunities meant that many young people turned to gangs, drugs, or, in the case of young women, to early sexual activity (figure 3.6).





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## Chapter Four

# Economic Violence and Drug Consumption

Drug-related problems were a major concern in most of the communities studied, with drugs linked to 21 percent of all violence-related problems. The importance of drugs varied across communities. In Rosario, Girón, for example, drugs were perceived to be related to one-third of violence problems. In contrast, in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, drugs were not perceived to affect the community at all (table 4.1). Alcohol-related problems were perceived as significant in only five of the nine communities, representing an average of 2 percent of all violence-related problems (see annex B, table B-1). Although alcohol was a causal factor in other types of violence, especially of intrafamily violence, community members did not perceive it as significant in itself.

**Table 4.1. Drug-Related Violence as Proportion of All Violence-Related Problems (percent)**

<i>Community</i>	<i>Violence-related problems as a percent of all problems</i>	<i>Drug-related violence as a percent of all violence-related problems</i>
Embudo, Bogotá	58	27
14 de Febrero, Bogotá	63	28
Jericó, Bogotá	49	13
Amanecer, Bucaramanga	52	20
Rosario, Girón	35	33
El Arca, Cali	41	22
Pórtico, Medellín	21	23
Cachicamo, Yopal	34	10
Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul	23	0
Total	43	23

*Source:* 159 focus group listings of general problems.

Drugs represented 15 percent of all types of violence across the nine communities, with Rosario, Girón, and 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, the most affected. The figure understates the actual extent of drug-related violence, however. In Embudo, Bogotá, for example, where drug use is widespread, fights made up 5 percent of the violence-related incidents cited. Many of these fights were related to drug consumption and sale.

### Types of Drug-Related Problems

People in the communities identified 24 types of problems related to drugs (box 4.1). These problems ranged from the presence of drug

#### Box 4.1. Types of Drug-Related Problems Identified in Nine Communities

- Presence of drug addicts, including female addicts
- Presence of *viciosos* (people with vices, usually referring to drugs)
- Robbing for drugs
- Killing for drugs
- Drug use among children
- Parents forcing their children to obtain drugs
- Fathers under the influence of *bazuco* raping their daughters
- Children under the influence of *bazuco* having sexual relations with their mothers
- Mothers under the influence of drugs raping their sons
- Violence by women anxious to get drugs
- Drug addicts making others leave the basketball court
- Drug addicts mistreating people in the community
- Sex offered in exchange for drugs
- Husbands killing wives who don't give them money for drugs
- Police belief that everyone is a drug addict and/or *desechable* (disposable)
- Young women forced to smoke drugs against their will
- Smoking and sale of drugs
- Drug trafficking
- Youth under the influence of marijuana
- Many people using marijuana
- Easy access to drugs
- Death from drugs

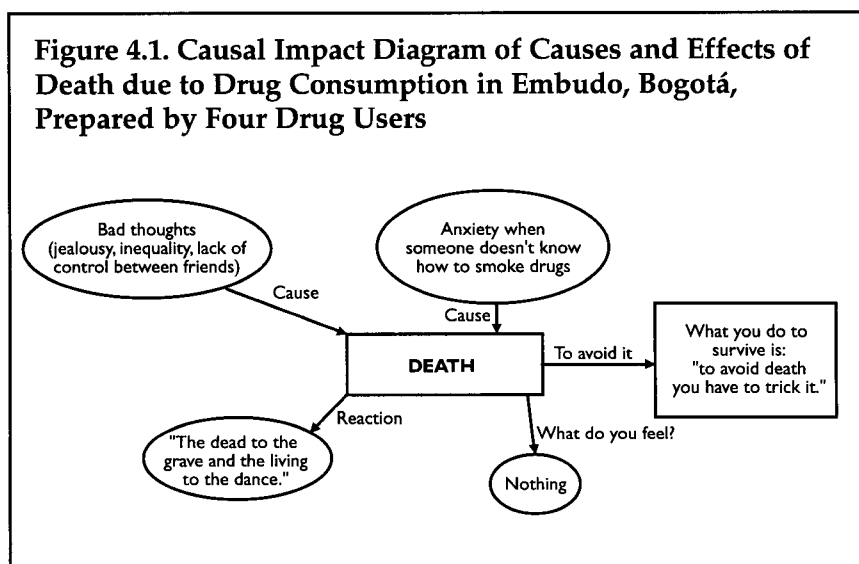
Source: 159 focus group listings of general problems.

addicts to murder. The most common problem identified was “there are lots of drug addicts” or “lots of people with vices,” a term in Colombia that refers to drugs. In all communities with high levels of drug use the most commonly cited consequence was robbery. In Rosario, Girón, a 13-year-old girl noted, “The people who take marijuana rob, they rob from houses.” Drugs were also associated with other types of violence, including intrafamily and sexual violence. Young women frequently blamed drug addicts for rapes in their *barrio*, both in the street and at home.

Drug consumption was also linked to death. Some people killed to obtain drugs or while under the influence of drugs; others were killed by the physiological or psychological effects of drug use. In Embudo, Bogotá, a male addict noted, “We were all born to die.” A focus group of drug addicts—a man and woman who had just been released from prison and two other men who robbed to feed their drug habits—described the inevitability and acceptance of death (figure 4.1).

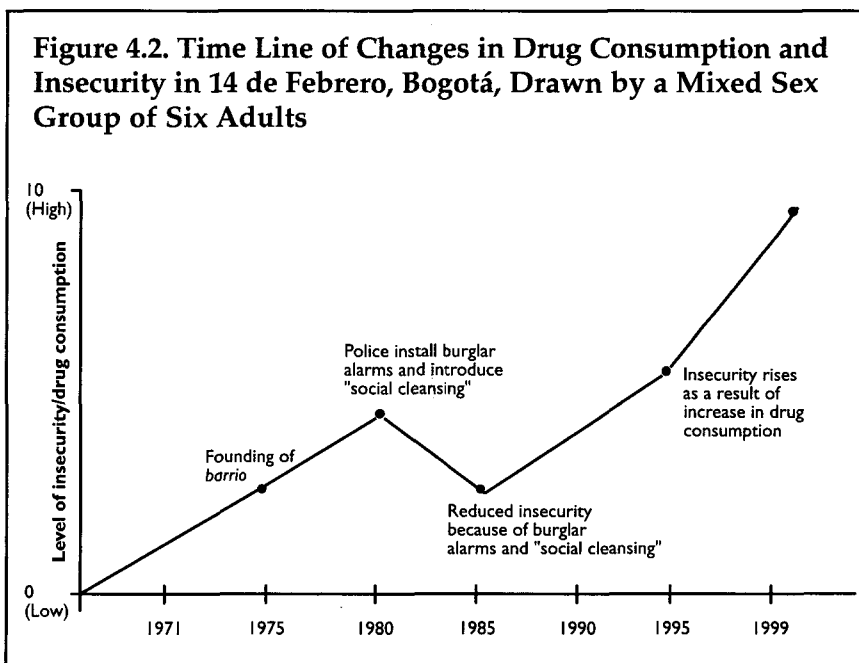
Drug consumption in most communities was a relatively new phenomenon. While community members noted that alcohol consumption had negatively affected their *barrios* for as long as they could remember, drug consumption began mainly in the 1980s, with marked increases in the 1990s. Alcohol was associated with intrafamily violence; drugs were closely linked with insecurity. Drug use had become more widespread over time. A timeline drawn in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, showed how in the past insecurity was linked with police harassment in the neighborhood

**Figure 4.1. Causal Impact Diagram of Causes and Effects of Death due to Drug Consumption in Embudo, Bogotá, Prepared by Four Drug Users**



and a policy of "social cleansing." But since 1990 there has been an increase in the perception of insecurity as a result of the increased levels of drug consumption (figure 4.2). Before 1990 drugs tended to be consumed in the home or "hidden from view," while in the past few years the number of "open" drug users (using drugs in public view), has increased considerably.

Attitudes toward drug traffickers were mixed. In Embudo, Bogotá, it was noted that the sale of drugs decreased following the death of Pablo Escobar. In both Medellín and Cali, however, the drug cartels were often seen in a very positive light. Pórtico, Medellín, for example, benefited from a basketball court built with money donated by Pablo Escobar. The period during which the Medellín cartel was most active (the early 1980s) was viewed favorably because of its economic benefits. As one man in the community pointed out, "When the drug traffickers left, the situation became very difficult. Everyone was left worse off." In Cali the economic fortunes of the El Arca community declined with the capture of Los Rodríguez of the Cali cartel. As one community leader stated, "The drug traffickers helped us to a certain extent. They produced an increase in employment and allowed the people to build their own homes."



## Types of Drugs Available and Tolerance Levels

A variety of drugs was available in low-income communities (box 4.2). Marijuana was most commonly mentioned, followed by *bazuco* and *perico/a*, both forms of crack cocaine that are usually smoked rather than injected.

Drug consumption is so common in poor urban communities in Colombia that many young people immediately identified themselves in terms of whether or not they consumed drugs. Those who did not consume drugs called themselves *sanos* (healthy) or *zanahórios* (healthy). Drug users were referred to by nonusers as *drogadictos* (drug addicts), *viciosos* (people with vices), *marihuaneros* (marijuana smokers), *colinos*, or *sopladores* (drug addicts). Estimates of drug use varied widely across communities (table 4.2).

In 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, where tolerance of drug use is moderate, residents were resigned to the fact that 40–50 percent of their community used drugs. A group of seven community leaders (six women and one

### Box 4.2. Types of Drugs Available

- Cocaine
- Marijuana
- *Marimba* (type of marijuana)
- *Perico/a* (type of cocaine)
- *Bazuco* (type of cocaine sometimes mixed with ground brick or broken glass)
- Crack
- *Pepas* (generic name for tablets, usually uppers)
- *Piola* (tablets, usually uppers)
- *Ruedas* (tablets for epilepsy)
- *Roche* (tablets for epilepsy)
- *Exstasis* (Ecstasy)
- Boxer (type of glue)
- Antiseptic alcohol (mixed with Coca-Cola-or other soft drink—known as *chamberlai*)
- Gasoline
- *Tiner* (paint thinner)
- *Escama de pezcardo* (cocaine-based fish flakes)
- *Bicha* (joint of marijuana)

Source: Focus groups in nine communities.

man) estimated that there were 500 users of whom only 50 used drugs openly. The remaining users, known as “closed” users, were usually adults, who consumed drugs in their homes. The “open” users were often also drug distributors for the “closed” users. Drug addicts from the community estimated that there were 30–40 hard-core users and 100 young people who took drugs on a less regular basis, getting the regular users to buy drugs for them.

In Pórtico, Medellín, where the level of tolerance and visibility of drug use was highest, 60 percent of the population was estimated to smoke marijuana. This marijuana use was viewed as a hobby, and a way to “relax, sleep, pass the time, and keep your mind elsewhere.” One young man stated that everyone took drugs—children as young as 8 or 10, boyfriends and girlfriends, and parents and relatives. Although consumption of marijuana was high, *bazuco* was rarely consumed, because it was associated with the “war” from which the city is just emerging.

**Table 4.2. Tolerance and Visibility of Drug Consumption in Four Communities, Identified by Focus Groups**

<i>Community</i>	<i>Level of tolerance</i>	<i>Percentage of population consuming drugs/ age range of users</i>	<i>Visibility</i>	<i>Main type of drug</i>
14 de Febrero, Bogotá	Moderate	40–50 percent/ young people	Visible among young people, hidden among adults	Marijuana and <i>bazuco</i> among young people, marijuana and cocaine among adults
Pórtico, Medellín	High	60 percent/ young people and adults	Visible	Cocaine, marijuana and <i>roches</i>
Cachicamo, Yopal	Very low	Floating population of 3–4/ young people	Visible	Marijuana and <i>bazuco</i>
Rosario, Girón	Very low	5 percent/ young people	Visible	Marijuana and <i>bazuco</i>

*Source:* Various focus groups in nine communities.

## Characteristics of Drug Consumers

Young people, primarily young men, were reported to make up the bulk of drug consumers, with women representing about a third of consumers in those communities in which estimates were obtained (see table 4.2). Most users were identified as young, with the majority between 15 and 30 (table 4.3). All communities noted that parents often used drugs. Children as young as 8 also reportedly used drugs, with different drugs taken at different ages. Children began with marijuana at the age of 8, moving on to gasoline and glue at the age of 12. The use of *bazuco* came at the age of 14, with *perico*, the most expensive drug, used later.

There were marked generational differences between drug and alcohol consumers. According to a group of young women from Amanecer, Bucaramanga, drug use was associated primarily with the young, while alcohol use was linked with middle-age and elderly people (box 4.3). Alcoholics were also more likely than drug users to be male. Drug users were perceived as more dangerous to society than alcoholics because of their loss of control when under the influence of drugs as well as their stealing to feed their habits. At least in the public sphere, alcoholics were better able to control themselves and were not associated with acts of delinquency.

## The Cost of Drugs

Drugs were noted to be considerably less expensive than alcohol (table 4.4). One joint of marijuana, for example, cost 300–500 pesos (\$.19–\$.30)—much less than a small bottle of beer (800 pesos, or \$.50). A bottle of brandy cost more than a gram of the most expensive hard drugs (cocaine and *perico*). A gram of *bazuco* was not much more expensive than a bottle of beer.

**Table 4.3. Distribution of Drug Consumers by Age in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, Identified by Seven Community Leaders**

<i>Age range</i>	<i>Estimated number of consumers</i>	<i>Percentage of total</i>
10–20 years	100	20
21–30 years	250	50
31–40 years	100	20
Over 40	50	10
Total	500	100

### Box 4.3. Characteristics of Drug Addicts and Alcoholics Reported by Five Young Women

#### Drug addicts

- Act without thinking
- Think only about doing bad things
- Act without conscience
- Rob from houses
- Are dangerous
- Are mainly adolescents
- 7 out of 10 are male

#### Alcoholics

- Despite everything, they know what they're doing
- Mainly fall asleep under the effects of alcohol
- Fall over
- Mainly middle-age and elderly
- 9 out of 10 are male

*Source:* Five women ages 12–16, in Amanecer, Bucaramanga.

Several focus group members also estimated how much they spent a day on drugs (box 4.4). In 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, a young male addict reported spending 10,000–20,000 pesos (\$6.20–\$12.50) a day on drugs. Three other users reported spending an average of 15,000 pesos (\$9.40) a day, with a low of 5,000 (\$3.10) when their daily earnings were low. In Pórtico, Medellín, nine young men from the Los Muchachos gang estimated that they each smoked 10 marijuana joints a day, at a cost of 3,000–5,000 pesos (\$1.90–\$3.10).

**Table 4.4. Costs of Drugs and Alcohol in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, and Pórtico, Medellín (pesos)**

<i>Type of drug or alcohol</i>	<i>14 de Febrero</i>	<i>Pórtico</i>
Marijuana	300–1,000 per joint	300–500 per joint
Bazuco	1,000–2,000 per gram	
Perico	5,000 per gram	4,000–8,000 per gram
Pepas		1,500 per tablet
Cocaine		4,000–8,000 per gram
Antiseptic alcohol	800 per half bottle	
Beer		800 per small bottle
Spirits		6,000 per bottle of rum 9,000 per bottle of brandy

*Note:* Exchange rate: US\$1 = 1,604 pesos.

*Source:* Six focus groups in both communities.



#### Box 4.4. Household Drug Expenditures in Pórtico, Medellín, Reported by Two Adult Groups

The household expenditures shown below were provided by Elvira, a mother from Pórtico, Medellín, in a focus group discussion. Her household comprises nine people, including Alfonso, a painter, who earns 350,000 pesos (\$218) a month and spends 540,000 pesos a month on alcohol, drugs, and gambling. The household's monthly shortfall of 744,300 pesos (\$464) is made up by Alfonso working extra hours or asking for salary advances.

<i>Expenditure item</i>	<i>Cost per month (pesos)</i>	<i>Cost per month (\$)</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>
Alcohol, drugs, gambling	540,000	336.7	49.3
Food	400,000	249.3	36.6
Transport	95,800	59.7	8.8
Services	50,000	31.2	4.6
Education	8,500	5.3	0.8
Total	1,094,300	682.2	100.0

The household expenditure patterns shown below are aggregated estimates from a focus group of four women (19–40) and two young men (17 and 23). Expenditures on drugs—74,000 pesos a month (\$46)—exceeded expenditures on education. Drugs and alcohol combined were the second largest expenditure item after food.

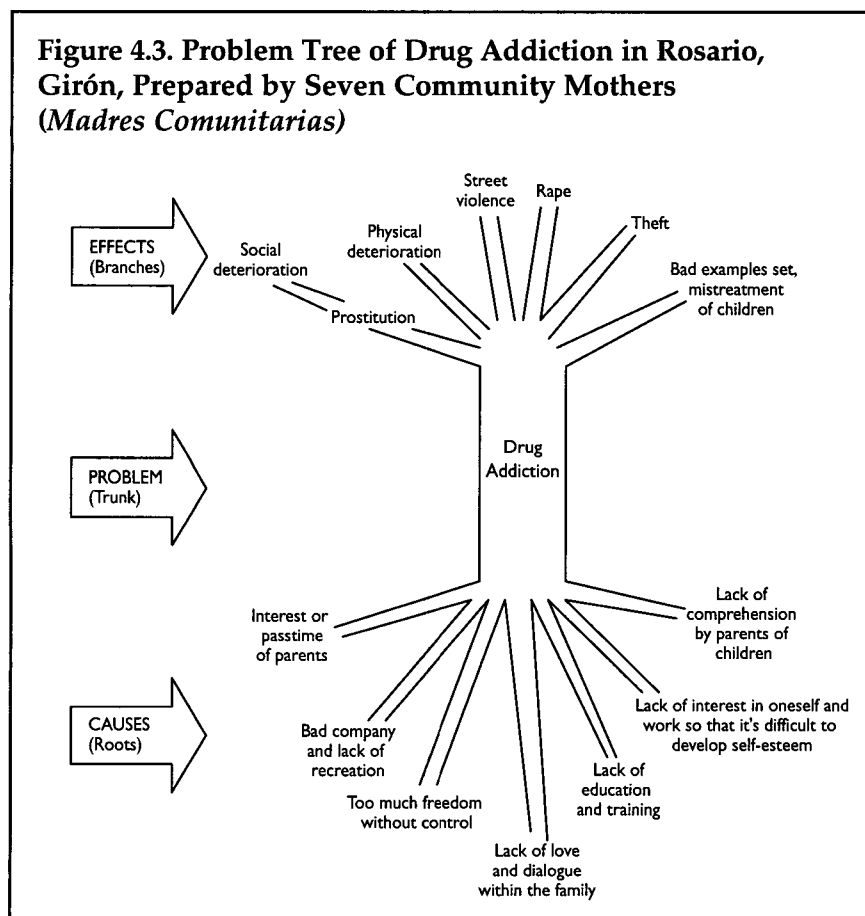
<i>Expenditure item</i>	<i>Cost per month (pesos)</i>	<i>Cost per month (\$)</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>
Food	200,000	124.7	30.7
Services	100,000	62.3	15.3
Rent and credit	85,000	53.0	13.0
Transport	60,000	37.4	9.2
Education	50,000	31.2	7.7
<i>Bazuco</i>	40,000	24.9	6.1
Parties	40,000	24.9	6.1
Alcohol	30,000	18.7	4.6
Cocaine/ <i>perico</i>	20,000	12.5	3.1
Gambling	12,000	7.5	1.8
Marijuana	8,000	5.0	1.2
<i>Pepas</i>	6,000	3.7	0.9
Total	651,000	405.9	100.0

*Source:* Group of four women ages 25–40 and a mixed group of adults ages 17–40.

## Causes of Drug Consumption

Drug consumption among young people, the primary users, was closely linked with intrafamily violence and conflict (see chapter 3). The problem tree drawn by community mothers from Rosario, Girón, focused on nonviolent conflict within the home that could cause young people to turn to drugs (figure 4.3). Key factors they cited included “lack of comprehension of parents toward children,” “lack of interest” on the part of parents, and “lack of love and dialogue within the family.” Young men were more likely than young women to turn to drugs and gangs when family life becomes untenable. Young women tended to get involved in early sexual relationships, often becoming pregnant or turning to prostitution.<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 4.3. Problem Tree of Drug Addiction in Rosario, Girón, Prepared by Seven Community Mothers (Madres Comunitarias)**



Another important cause of drug consumption was peer pressure, which was noted by children as young as 10. In Jericó, Bogotá, for instance, a group of four 11-year-old girls said that they had been pressured to smoke cigarettes and then use drugs (starting with Boxer glue).

Often, gangs of drug pushers stood outside the school gates trying to entice students into trying drugs by offering the first consignment free of charge. Pressure also came from friends. In all communities *malas amistades* (bad friendships) or *malas companias* (bad company) was cited as a cause of drug use.

Finally, some parents not only provided bad examples but actually taught their children to smoke marijuana. A group of three adults in El Arca, Cali, noted that with so many parents using drugs, children learn to accept drug consumption as normal.

### Consequences of Drug Consumption

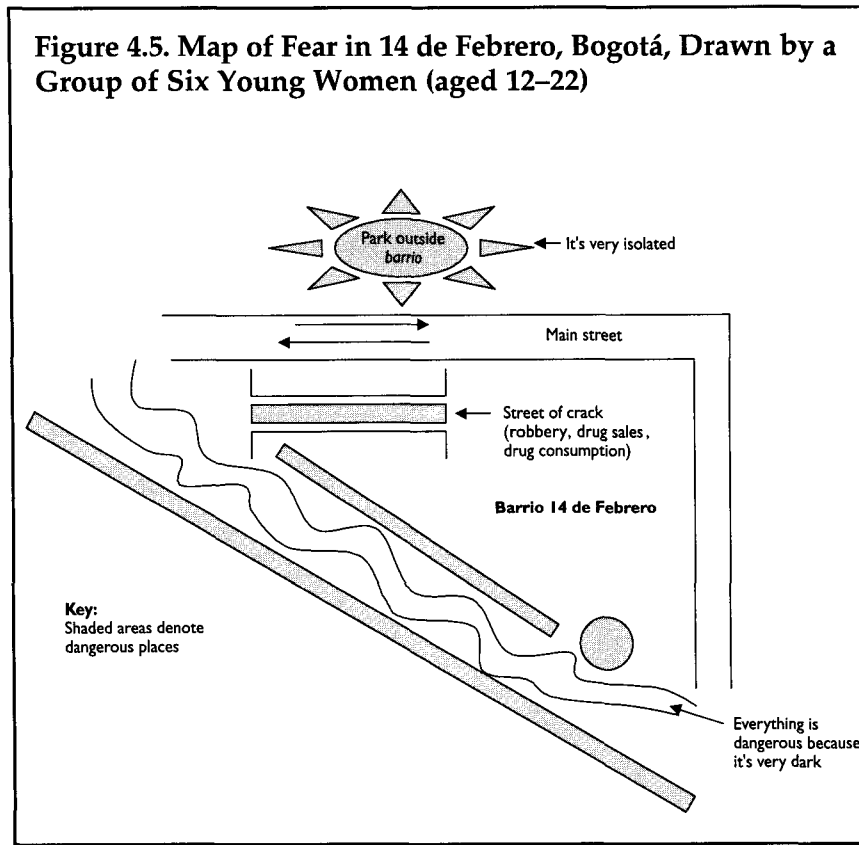
Lack of physical and human capital was both a cause and an effect of drug use. Community members often blamed the drug problem on lack of recreational opportunities, especially sports and leisure facilities. It is important to note, however, that both basketball courts and football fields were among the most popular sites for consuming drugs. Some people suggested that it was the lack of organized sports clubs or youth clubs that generated boredom and discontent among young people, leading them to take drugs.

With unemployment one of the major problems in all of the communities, people become desperate and turn to drugs as a way to fill their time or soften the edge of their despair. As figure 4.4, drawn by three Communist Party members who founded 14 de Febrero, illustrates, stress related to having nothing to do can lead people to take drugs. In their highly politicized view, lack of employment was also linked with lack of workers' conscience, lack of professional training, and unfair labor laws. Lack of education was also cited as both a cause and effect of drug consumption.

Drug consumption tends to erode physical and human capital. When young people become involved in drugs, they usually leave school, according to the focus groups. Once they become involved in drugs, they are rarely able to secure employment other than drug dealing and robbery. Young people claimed that they were increasingly succumbing to drugs because of lack of alternatives. The combination of deteriorating physical and human capital meant that the quality of the labor force within these communities was extremely low.

In all communities, it was mainly teachers who linked drug consumption among students with gang membership. One teacher complained





drug addicts; a street on which crack was sold; and a house from which drugs were sold (figure 4.5). These patterns were found in other communities as well.

The reduced mobility as a result of fear eroded trust and collaboration—cognitive social capital—within the community. A woman from 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, noted that “before,” people were more united and “one didn’t see young people smoking [marijuana] because there was more communication.” In contrast, “now,” there was no collaboration, people no longer respected one another, and members of the community were afraid to confront others about the problems facing the *barrio*.

There was also a strong gender dimension to fear. While men of all ages were afraid of robbery and mugging, levels of fear among women of all ages were higher and related to fear of attack, especially rape, by drug addicts.



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## Chapter Five

# Unemployment, Displacement, Area Stigma, and Economic Violence

Colombia's current economic crisis has increased unemployment, which community members perceived as a major cause of violence and insecurity. As a man in Cali pointed out, "In a poor country with hunger and without work, there's no peace." Unemployment was a major contributing factor in many types of violence, and it was closely linked to the large-scale displacement of people fleeing political violence in rural areas. This displacement exacerbated unemployment in urban areas. "Area stigma"—sometimes referred to as "bad reputation"—attached to low-income communities was also perceived as a major obstacle to securing employment.

### **Nature and Scope of Unemployment**

In five of the nine communities studied, unemployment was the leading problem cited under the rubric of lack of physical capital. Unemployment constituted 13 percent of all problems in Pórtico, Medellín, and 11 percent in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá; Cachicamo, Yopal; and Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul. Unemployment represented about a third of all problems related to the lack of physical capital (table 5.1).

Estimates of the rate of unemployment in the sample communities were very high. In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, a group of three women and one man estimated that 90 percent of the *barrio* was unemployed. In Pórtico, Medellín, a group of two men and six women estimated that 70 percent of the population had no work. Similar figures were estimated in El Arca, Cali, where a group of three men estimated that unemployment stood at 80 percent. Estimates of unemployment by age reveal that younger people have higher rates of employment than older people (table 5.2). Unemployment among all age groups is very high, however, with two of three 15- to 25-year-olds unemployed.

**Table 5.1. Relative Importance of Lack of Physical Capital and Unemployment (percent)**

<i>Community</i>	<i>Lack of physical capital as a percentage of all problems</i>	<i>Unemployment as a percentage of problems related to lack of physical capital</i>
Embudo, Bogotá	15	33
14 de Febrero, Bogotá	23	46
Jericó, Bogotá	33	19
Amanecer, Bucaramanga	21	30
Rosario, Girón	27	24
El Arca, Cali	28	32
Pórtico, Medellín	37	34
Cachicamo, Yopal	34	33
Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul	36	30
Total	28	31

Unemployment also varies by gender, with unemployment higher among men than among women. It is easier for women to find informal sector work, and in many communities women were the primary income earners. As one man from El Arca, Cali, pointed out, "Today there are more women working and they are maintaining us." Another man explained that he was now taking care of the home, cooking, cleaning, and caring for his children.

#### *Types of Employment Available*

Employment opportunities lacked stability in all nine communities. Men tended to work in construction, either as laborers or in skilled trades; as guards; as drivers; or in a host of informal sector activities, particularly

**Table 5.2. Unemployment by age range, El Arca, Cali**

<i>Age range</i>	<i>Percentage unemployed</i>
15–25	66
26–35	77
36–45	78
46–60	82
Over 60	50–100

*Source:* Six focus groups in El Arca, Cali.



street vending. Women were employed as community mothers, as domestic servants, or in a range of informal activities, such as selling cooked food and dressmaking.

Many people made ends meet through *rebusque* (literally, careful searching), engaging in different work activities every day. One man from Jericó, Calixto, who earned his living from *rebusque* pointed out, "I'm not ashamed to say that I would sell anything, even a pregnant woman.... I have to get enough to eat every day."

Child labor was also noted in most communities. In Jericó, Bogotá, one community leader estimated that 20 percent of all children worked, selling newspapers and lottery or bus tickets. Even higher proportions were noted in Pórtico, Medellín, where a group of four women and two men estimated that 60 percent of 10- and 14-year-olds worked, usually engaging in some form of selling activity (table 5.3).

### *Types of Violence Caused by Unemployment*

High levels of unemployment and economic hardship are closely linked with various types of violence. In some cases, violence is a survival response to unemployment; in other cases, it is the outcome of desperation and frustration created by lack of economic opportunities. As suggested by a group of adolescents in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, violent crime is often a last-resort survival strategy and often an integral element of *rebusque*. The most common type of crime committed was theft, especially street robbery and robbery of trucks delivering soft drinks.

One man from Jericó, Bogotá, noted: "If they don't let us work, we are pushed into robbing. You can't let yourself die from hunger, and less so your children." Other survival strategies include prostitution (mainly among women but also among men) and small-scale drug dealing (figure 5.1).

The frustration of being unemployed also led to violence. Drug use was frequently cited as a way of dealing with the lack of work. To purchase drugs, unemployed people often robbed. Unemployed men tended to feel inadequate when they could not fulfil their role of breadwinner, often turning to alcohol and intrafamily abuse to vent their feelings.

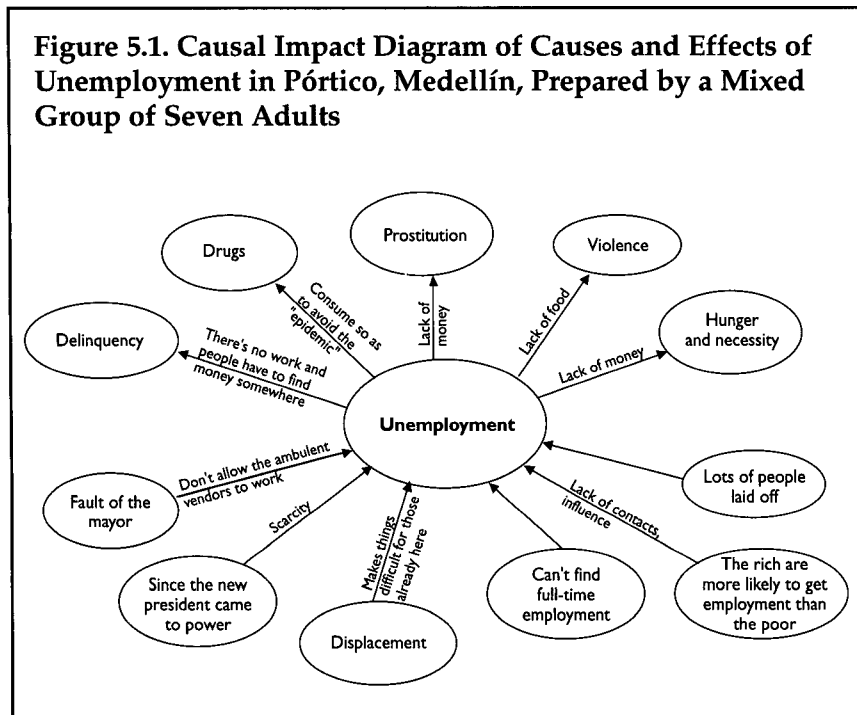
The national recession has forced more and more workers to become casual workers. The resulting instability has increased insecurity and violence. In 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, a group of young men who had worked intermittently over the year in construction activities noted that they usually worked four months a year (June-July and November-December). During the slack periods, they hung about making money from illegal means, usually by robbery.

Table 5.3. Economic Activity Matrix by Age Group, Pórtico, Medellín

Item	0-10	11-14	15-25	26-35	36-45	45-55	Over 55
Number in group	396	500	700	500	300	400	300
Number of people who work	100 (all boys)	300 (all boys)	200 (50% male, 50% female)	150 (50% male, 50% female)	150 (60% male, 40% female)	100 (60% male, 40% female)	50 (60% male, 40% female)
Type of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selling sweets</li> <li>• Street vending</li> <li>• Recycling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selling</li> <li>• From age 13, stealing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stealing</li> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Street vending</li> <li>• Domestic servant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Dressmaking</li> <li>• Domestic servant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Street vending</li> <li>• Domestic servants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Street vending</li> <li>• Domestic servants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction</li> <li>• Street vending</li> <li>• Domestic servants</li> <li>• Begging</li> </ul>
Estimated monthly earnings in pesos (in dollars)	30,000 (\$18.7)	40,000 (\$25)	180,000 (\$112)	240,000 (\$150)	240,000 (\$150)	240,000 (\$150)	200,000 (\$125)

Note: \$1 = 1,600 pesos.

Source: Focus group of women (ages 19-56) and men (ages 27-34).



### Causes of Economic Violence

Unemployment in the communities studied was tied to a variety of factors, including the national recession, local constraints, legislation regulating the informal sector, political violence in the countryside, area stigma, and the collapse of the oil industry. Economic violence was tied to all of these factors.

#### *Changing Economic Circumstances*

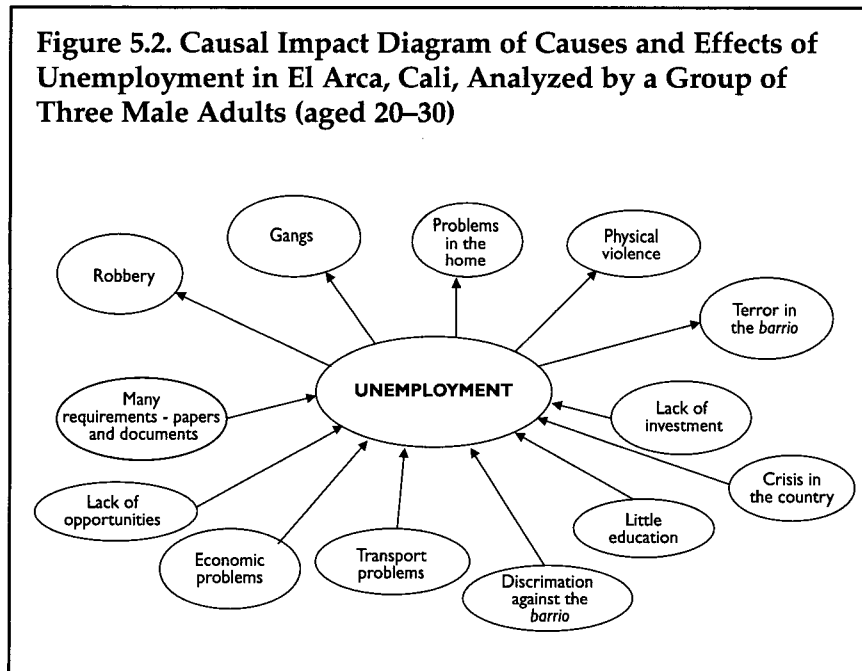
Colombia's economy is in recession. In the first quarter of 1999 (when the study was conducted), GDP was projected to contract by 4–7 percent. The worst-affected sectors include manufacturing, construction, and retailing, all concentrated in urban areas. Urban unemployment in the seven largest cities reached 19.5 percent in March 1999, up from 14.4 percent the previous year, according to the national statistics department. Urban unemployment was highest in Medellín, where 22.6 percent of the economically active population had no work (Oxford Analytica 1999).

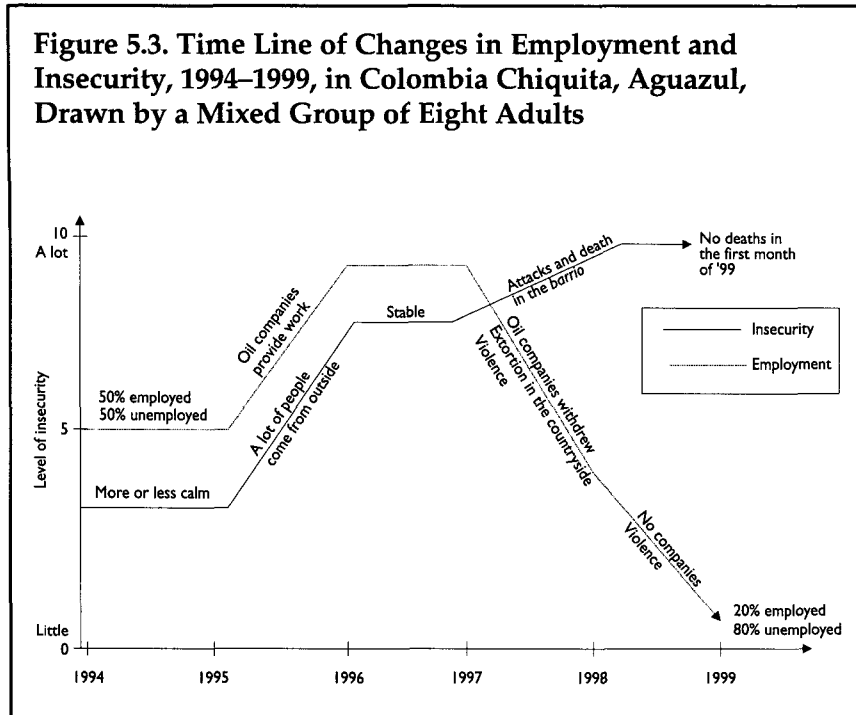
In all of the communities the national economic recession as well as changing political circumstances were viewed as causes of violence and insecurity. An 18-year-old construction worker from Rosario, Girón, explained that because of the economic crisis, there was no work and therefore no money. With no money, there was little food, especially in urban areas. In addition, people, especially young people, had nothing to do and got involved with bad company, which led to drug use and robbery. These sentiments were repeated throughout the nine communities (figure 5.2).

### *Constraints Faced by Local Economies*

Local urban economies experienced the economic crisis in different ways. In Bogotá, especially in 14 de Febrero and Jericó, both located close to large industrial zones, residents complained about factory closures and layoffs. Discussing the bankruptcy of the local factories in 14 de Febrero, Maritza, the treasurer at a communal action group, predicted that the future held only further economic crisis, war, and violence if nothing was done to deal with unemployment. In her words, "A member of the family who has no work and has to respond to their obligations often has to turn to robbery."

**Figure 5.2. Causal Impact Diagram of Causes and Effects of Unemployment in El Arca, Cali, Analyzed by a Group of Three Male Adults (aged 20–30)**





A timeline from Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul (figure 5.3), illustrates the complex relationship between insecurity and employment in oil-rich areas. Between 1995 and 1997, the level of insecurity increased as people arrived from outside the area in search of work in the oil industry. Although employment was high, increased guerilla and paramilitary activity linked to corruption and extortion meant that insecurity rose. After 1997, as demand for labor in the companies declined, people lost jobs that paid two and a half times what they could earn elsewhere (\$312 a month in the oil industry versus \$125 in farming). The loss of employment created resentment among the population and increased the level of crime. With fewer sources of extortion among the oil companies, the paramilitaries and guerillas turned on the local residents instead.

In Cali and Medellín unemployment was associated with the collapse of the construction industry, once associated with the drug cartels. The cartels had laundered large amounts of money through the construction industry which, in turn, employed large numbers of the urban poor. The national economic downturn and the capture of leading drug cartel figures have caused the construction industry to contract. According to a

group of middle-age men in El Arca, Cali, the employment situation would improve 100 percent if the Rodríguez brothers were released from prison. With the capture of the Rodríguez brothers, "money did not move." The main effects were an increase in armed attacks, the proliferation of gangs, a 100 percent increase in insecurity, and a rise in homicides.

### *Legislation Regulating the Informal Sector*

Municipal legislation has recently been passed restricting street vending in public areas. Although the intent of the law was to curb the sale of drugs, the effect has been to increase unemployment in some communities. Ironically, the law has led to increased insecurity, according to residents. One woman from 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, said that the main solution to reducing violence was to rescind this law and permit street vendors to work. She noted that 25 percent of the working population in the *barrio* worked as traders and that many were forced to rob and engage in illegal activities because of the restrictions imposed by the mayor.

### *Political Violence in the Countryside*

Communities perceived political violence in the countryside as a major cause of the economic crisis. Many felt that the government was allocating scarce resources to the army and the war rather than to the economy. A 13-year-old boy in Pórtico, Medellín, commented, "The only people that are paid are the soldiers, and when they are killed the mother is left rich."

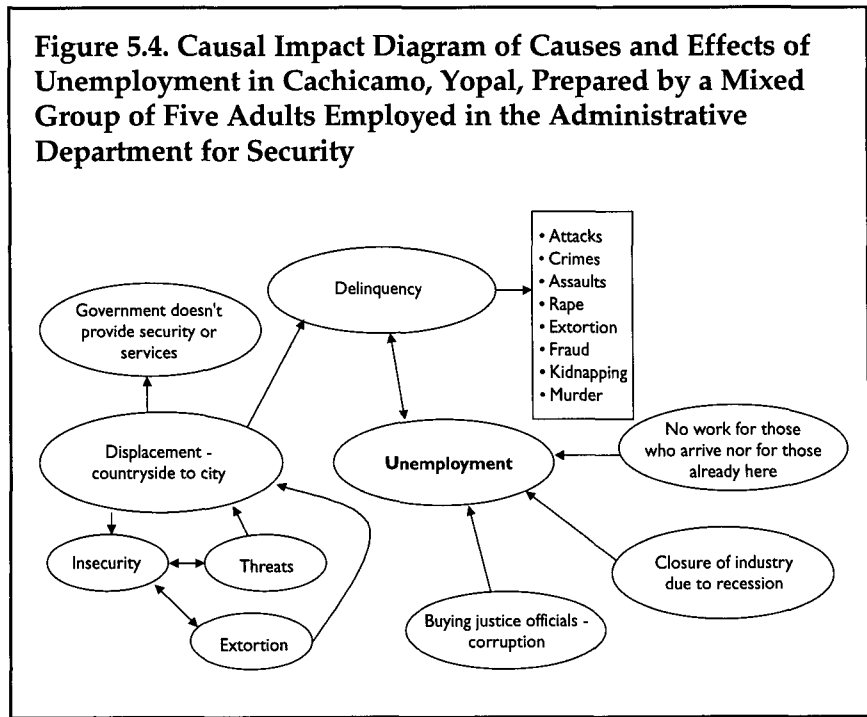
The most important effect of the civil war on poor urban areas has been the influx of people fleeing political violence in rural areas. The phenomenon is occurring throughout the country, with the highest levels of flight in Urabá, Magdalena Medio, and Ariari. Recent estimates by the World Bank suggest that 1.2 million people in Colombia had fled their home areas by 1998 (World Bank 1999). Displaced populations were identified in all of the study communities except Embudo, Bogotá. The highest proportions of displaced persons were found in Rosario, Girón, where about 50 percent of the population had fled from other areas—mainly the Magdalena Medio—and in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, where 50–60 percent of the population were displaced. A group of six men and two women in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, identified three types of displaced people in the *barrio*: people who had fled political violence in the rural areas of Casanare, people who had fled political violence in other departments, and people who sought employment with the oil companies.

Displaced people are in desperate need of employment. Two couples who had fled political violence in San Vicente Chucurá, leaving their

small farm, aspired to nothing more than “finding a fixed job that paid the minimum wage.” They survived by eating unwanted vegetables they collected from the Centro de Abastos. Most of the displaced people in Rosario, Girón, felt grateful to have escaped political violence and found the *barrio* very peaceful. One displaced woman was relieved to be able to live without constant fear because “in César they kill many people for doing nothing, only for the sake of killing.”

The influx of displaced people affects employment of the local population, who blame the newcomers for putting pressure on the labor market. In Cachicamo, Yopal, displacement was perceived as a major factor in unemployment, exacerbating an already difficult economic situation. “No work for those who arrive, nor those who are already here,” commented one resident (figure 5.4). Although displaced people were not necessarily actively excluded within their new communities, they were blamed for contributing to unemployment.

In Pórtico, Medellín, unemployment was also perceived to be tied to racial discrimination. A group of four Afro-Colombian men and one woman who had migrated from the coast to find work in the city blamed their unemployment on various forms of discrimination. These included



“not being a native,” “being a person of color—racism,” and “living in Pórtico” as well as a range of factors linked with lack of networks and the fact that jobs are secured only through contacts.

Many displaced people and migrants noted the lack of job and welfare assistance networks. In Rosario, Girón, two displaced women who had recently fled from Puerto Wilches listed potential sources of assistance. They noted that neighbors gave them food occasionally and that the communal action committee gave them money once, but they complained that shopowners and money-lenders gave credit only to those able to prove they work. The only source of assistance available to them was Centro de Abastos, where free food and merchandise were available. “It is the only thing we have to cook,” they noted.

### *Collapse of the Oil Industry*

The collapse of the oil industry in Casanare had ramifications beyond the loss of employment. With the decline in oil operations, guerilla and paramilitary groups, which extorted the oil companies for years, increasingly turned to the local population as sources of funding. According to residents of Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, and Cachicamo, Yopal, in addition to suffering directly from political violence at the hands of these groups, they suffer economically through a range of extortion and kidnapping activities (table 5.4). According to three cattle farmers, the paramilitaries are the worst perpetrators of extortion, with the guerillas targeting large organizations rather than small business people. Organized crime rings have now joined the guerillas and paramilitaries in their activities.

Extortion has had severe effects on local economies. In rural areas, violence, killings, and “taxes” imposed by paramilitary and guerilla groups have forced some farmers to abandon their land (figure 5.5). “Vaccinations” (protection money) have to be paid for harvests every six months, or annually, or in the case of cattle ranching, per head of cattle. Urban areas have not fared much better. A clothing manufacturer in Yopal reported having to pay \$60–\$125 for every suit it makes. Transport companies have to pay extortion money for every trip they make (see table 5.4). These additional business expenses have led to widespread bankruptcies, which affect both the business owners and employees, who lose their jobs.

The story of Don Pedro, a truck driver from Cachicamo, Yopal, reveals the economic hardship imposed by extortion and corruption (box 5.1). Everyone involved in the process of driving a truck has to be paid. In addition, Don Pedro has to pay bribes to the authorities because he lacks proper transportation papers (which he cannot afford). He also pays the guerillas when they stop him on the road. So extensive are the bribes and

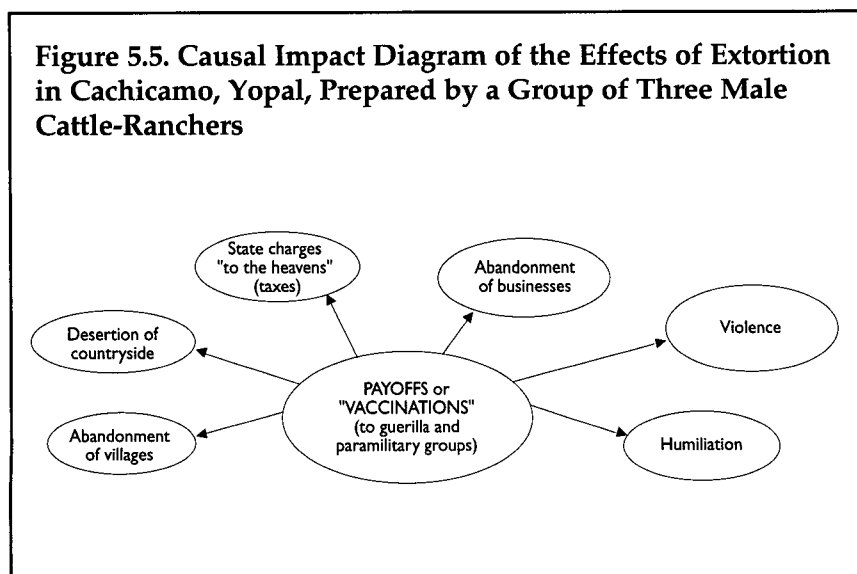


**Table 5.4. Cost of Extortion Activities in Yopal and Aguazul, in pesos (in dollars)**

<i>Target group</i>	<i>Payment</i>
Rice growers	15,000 per harvest every 6 months (\$9)
Cattle farmers	1,500–2,500 (\$1.00–\$1.60)
Butchers	100,000 (\$62) every 3–4 months
Taxi drivers	30,000 (\$19) a day
Salesperson (clothes and shoes)	100,000–200,000 (\$62–\$125) per complete outfit sold
Commercial nursery (plants)	200,000 (\$125) per produce load
Transport/haulage	50,000 (\$31) per carload per day
Banana farmer	150,000 (\$94) per hectare per year
Cattle farmers, businesspeople	5–10 million (\$3,121–\$6,242) ransom per person kidnapped
Foreigners	(\$5,000–\$10,000) ransom per person kidnapped

Source: Focus group discussions in Yopal and Aguazul.

**Figure 5.5. Causal Impact Diagram of the Effects of Extortion in Cachicamo, Yopal, Prepared by a Group of Three Male Cattle-Ranchers**



### **Box 5.1. Extortion of Truck Drivers in Cachicamo, Yopal: The Case of Don Pedro**

Don Pedro, a truck driver from Cachicamo, Yopal, complained that he paid so many "taxes," legal and illegal, to so many sources that he was beginning to feel that it was not worth his while to work. "I have a truck for working and from that I make my living. The man who gives me the cargo takes 10 percent for giving me the goods, the company that owns the cargo takes 40 percent, the cargo handlers take 30 percent, the owner of the truck takes 5 percent, and the driver takes 5 percent. Besides that I have to pay for gas, oil, tires, in other words, maintenance for the truck.

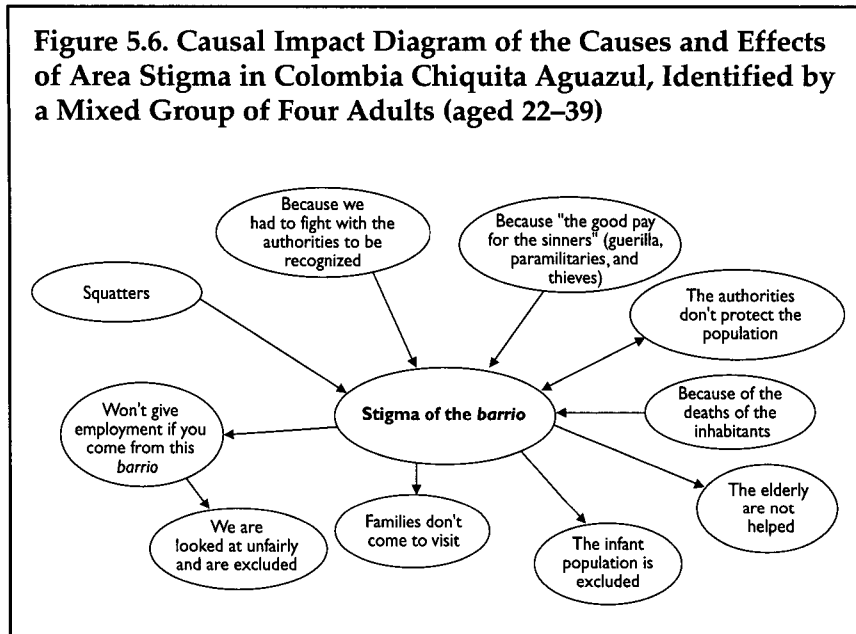
"When I'm on the road I have to bribe the authorities when I'm stopped because I don't have all the transportation papers. Sometimes I'm attacked and stopped by guerillas, to whom I have to give more contributions—more expenses. As a result, I'm working at a loss. I can't pay the taxes for the truck and I'm charged a fine of 35,000 pesos per month. I therefore don't have enough money to maintain the truck, and much less to maintain my family.

"The war between the paramilitaries and guerillas is killing everyone because of the distrust among the people who constantly accuse each other. With the extortion, everyone has to give money, and besides that, one has to remain silent. This generates mistrust among everyone. There is lots of death and confusion. I think that disarmament is for fools, because when the authorities stop me it's to confiscate my machete, as they think I'm going around armed. But for me, it's a tool that I use to chop logs, to cut branches. In contrast, when I'm attacked by the paramilitaries and guerillas, they have all the most modern weapons and nobody says anything. For that reason, for me the most important thing would be to be able to work and live in peace."

payments that Don Pedro must make that he feels it is hardly worth his while to work at all.

#### *Area Stigma*

Area stigma, or prejudice against people who live in the *barrio*, is another important constraint limiting employment opportunities, especially formal sector jobs, for people from poor urban settlements. Pablo, a young high-school graduate from Amanecer, Bucaramanga, reported that every time he applied for a job he was automatically dismissed because he came from the Ciudad Norte, which many people associate with delinquency, drug consumption, and robbery. "Just because we are from Ciudad Norte no one will give us work. They think that all of us here are



thieves." Similar situations were noted in other communities. In Pórtico, Medellín, residents cited "discrimination against people from the communities." Following gang wars and widespread killings, employers reportedly dismissed employees who came from these communities, identifying them all as gang members or murderers.

This sense of territorial exclusion was particularly marked in areas affected by political violence. In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, for example, many residents complained that they were treated like guerilla members, thieves, prostitutes, or drug addicts. Not only had this characterization made their community a target for paramilitaries, resulting in 14 assassinations, but it also undermined their ability to secure employment. In Colombia Chiquita, members reported being stigmatized as guerilla members (figure 5.6). As they noted, "The good pay for the sinners—guerillas, paramilitaries, and thieves."



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## Chapter Six

# Perverse Social Capital and Economic and Political Violence

Violence not only affects individuals and households but communities themselves, by producing particular social institutions and their associated social capital. Structural social capital, the main focus here, refers to interpersonal relationships in formal or informal organizations or networks. Cognitive social capital refers to values, norms, attitudes, and beliefs. The two kinds of capital are intricately linked, with attitudes affecting interpersonal relationships (Uphoff 1997).

### **Prevalence and Importance of Social Institutions**

Community members identified 371 social institutions in the nine communities studied (table 6.1). The number of institutions identified was used as a proxy for perceptions of the prevalence of social institutions. The number of times an institution was cited was used as a proxy for perceptions of its importance (Groothaert 1999). The study distinguished between membership groups, in which people participate, either formally or informally, in the functioning of the organization, and service delivery organizations, in which community members do not make decisions. Information on individual organizational membership was not gathered since the participatory urban appraisal methodology does not use questionnaire surveys (see, for example, Groothaert 1999; Narayan 1997). However, a particular advantage of the participatory urban appraisal is its ability to identify illegal or criminal violence-related groups in a context of anonymity. For instance, a gang member may not admit to membership in a gang in a one-to-one interview situation, yet when asked in a group context which institutions are important in a community, the gang member may find it be easier to identify the existence of the gang in which he or she is a member. In other words, participatory urban appraisal tools are often more effective in identifying violence-related or illegal institutions than conventional questionnaire-based research techniques.

Service delivery organizations (mainly education and health services) were perceived as the most prevalent institutions within the communities. The role of the state in providing services, both directly and indirectly (through funding of neighborhood or other groups) emerged as important. Gangs, guerilla groups, and paramilitary organizations were also identified as prevalent local institutions.

Prevalence patterns varied across the nine communities. In 14 de Febrero and Jericó, Bogotá, many NGOs, private institutions, and government agencies had established pilot projects and interventions. El Arca, Cali, had many neighborhood organizations and youth and recreation groups; it also boasted the highest number of drug rehabilitation centers. In contrast, many organizations had abandoned Pórtico, Medellín, because of widespread gang and militia violence in the *barrio*.

In Cachicamo, Yopal, and Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, a high number of social institutions were linked to the political situation in the area, which has attracted government institutions and NGOs. Residents in both communities noted the high number of state security and justice organizations and violence-related groups.

Similar patterns emerged in terms of the importance of organizations (table 6.2). Social service delivery organizations were perceived as the most important institutions, with neighborhood committees viewed as more important than state and government institutions. Violence-related groups were among the most important institutions cited.

Areas of intense conflict, such as Yopal and Aguazul, had few membership organizations, perhaps because of residents' reluctance to participate in organizations in which ideas are shared for fear of reprisals. In contrast, service delivery organizations involved little danger for those receiving services. Among membership organizations, violence-related groups, including gangs, militias, drug dealers and users, and guerilla and paramilitary groups, were perceived as most prevalent. In Cachicamo, Yopal, for instance, such organizations represented more than half of all membership organizations. In Jericó, Bogotá, violence-related groups represented a quarter of all membership organizations; in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, they constituted a third.

One out of five organizations cited was involved in the prevention or perpetration of violence. In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, state security and justice organizations were perceived as the most important of all service delivery institutions. Neighborhood committees were perceived as the most important type of membership organization overall, although violence-related groups were viewed as more important in Jericó, Bogotá, and Cachicamo, Yopal (see table 6.2).

**Table 6.1. Number of Social Institutions Identified by Community Members, by Type**

Type of institution	Colombia														Total	
	Embudo, Bogotá	14 de Febrero, Bogotá	Jericó, Bogotá	Amanecer, Bucaramanga	Rosario, Girón	El Arca, Cali	Pórtico, Medellín	Cachicamo, Yopal	Chiquita, Aguazul							
<b>Membership organizations</b>																
Violence-related groups	4	10	9	0	0	6	1	8	4	42 (23.7)						
Neighborhood committees	2	7	9	2	2	7	3	1	5	38 (21.5)						
Religious groups <sup>a</sup>	4	5	7	3	2	1	3	3	5	33 (18.6)						
Women's and childcare organizations	4	3	7	5	2	3	3	1	4	32 (18.6)						
Youth, sports, and recreational organizations	0	4	3	1	2	7	3	1	1	22 (12.4)						
Organizations for elderly people	0	4	1	0	0	3	1	1	0	10 (5.6)						
<b>Subtotal</b>	14	33	36	11	8	27	14	15	19	177						

Table 6.1. cont.

Type of institution	Colombia														Total
	Embudo, Bogotá	14 de Febrero, Bogotá	Jericó, Bogotá	Amanecer, Bucaramanga	Rosario, Girón	El Arca, Cali	Pórtico, Medellín	Cachicamo, Yopal	Chiquita, Aguazul	Total					
<b>Service delivery organizations</b>															
Social service organizations	3	9	3	5	1	12	4	11	6	54 (27.8)					
State/government organizations	1	4	7	5	5	0	2	12	9	45 (23.2)					
NGOs	3	2	6	1	0	9	0	10	3	34 (17.5)					
State security/justice institutions	2	3	0	2	2	2	1	5	5	22 (11.3)					
Private sector organizations	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	5	8	17 (8.8)					
Productive service organizations	1	0	0	1	4	1	1	1	3	12 (6.2)					
Drug rehabilitation centers	3	0	2	1	0	4	0	0	0	10 (5.1)					
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>194</b>					
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>371</b>					

Note: Figures in parentheses represent percent of total.

a. Religious groups refers to churches and prayer groups only. Religious organizations that provide social services are included in the appropriate service delivery category.

Source: 92 focus groups.



**Table 6.2. Perceived Importance of Social Institutions Identified by Community Members, by Type**

Type of institution	Colombia														Total	
	Embudo, Bogotá	14 de Febrero, Bogotá	Jericó, Bogotá	Amanecer, Bucaramanga	Rosario, Girón	El Arca, Cali	Pórtico, Medellín	Cachicamo, Yopal	Chiquita, Aguazul							
Social service organizations	8	20	4	7	3	17	13	21	16	109						(15.5)
Neighborhood committees	2	26	10	5	12	21	6	4	12	98						(13.9)
State/government organizations	3	4	8	6	7	0	2	33	19	82						(11.7)
Violence-related groups	5	11	13	0	0	11	6	15	10	71						(10.1)
State security/justice institutions	3	7	0	4	2	4	2	22	21	65						(9.2)
Women's and childcare organizations	7	3	8	7	7	7	5	1	12	57						(8.1)
Religious groups <sup>a</sup>	4	10	10	3	6	1	3	8	10	55						(7.8)
NGOs	4	2	7	1	0	19	0	13	3	49						(7)



*Trust in Social Institutions*

Study participants were asked to indicate whether they viewed each institution positively (interpreted as indicating a high level of trust) or negatively (interpreted as indicating a low level of trust). Among membership organizations, women’s and childcare groups received the highest percentage of positive rankings (88 percent; table 6.3). Neighborhood committees also received high ratings (75 percent). Among the service delivery organizations, drug rehabilitation centers and NGOs were the most highly trusted, followed by social service delivery organizations, a category that includes primarily schools and health centers.

The least trusted institutions were those associated with perpetrating or preventing violence. Eighty-two percent of respondents viewed violence-related groups unfavorably, and half of all respondents lacked confidence in the state security and justice institutions (the police, the army, the Administrative Security Department, and the judicial system).

**Table 6.3. Trust in Social Institutions Identified by Community Members (percent of respondents)**

<i>Type of institution</i>	<i>High level of trust</i>	<i>Low level of trust</i>
<b>Membership organizations</b>		
Women’s and childcare organizations	88	12
Youth, sports, and recreational organizations	86	14
Religious groups	79	21
Neighborhood committees	75	25
Organizations for elderly people	67	33
Violence-related groups	18	82
Total membership	64	36
<b>Service delivery organizations</b>		
Drug rehabilitation centers	100	
NGOs	91	9
Social service organizations	87	13
Private sector organizations	72	28
Productive service organizations	67	33
State/government organizations	70	30
State security/justice institutions	49	51
Total service delivery	74	26

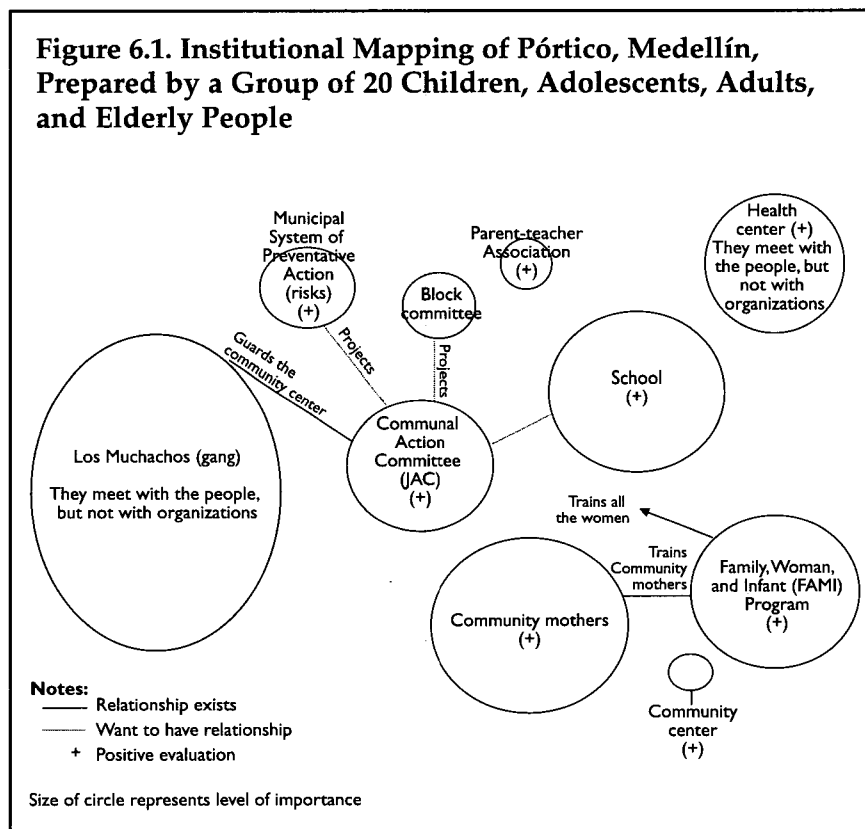
Source: 92 focus groups.

### *Characteristics of Productive and Perverse Social Institutions*

The study distinguished between productive and perverse institutions. Productive institutions aim to provide benefits in order to improve the well-being of the community. Perverse institutions benefit their members but are usually detrimental to the community or society at large (see Rubio 1997).

Most productive institutions were linked to the state. These included central government institutions, such as the Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (Colombian Institute of Family Welfare), local government organizations, and the communal action committees, which received some funding from local governments but retained autonomy in their decisionmaking.

An institutional map drawn by 20 residents of Pórtico, Medellín, reveals that the majority of the institutions identified by this group were influenced by the state (figure 6.1). Both the school and the health center



**Box 6.1. Perverse Social Institutions in the Nine Barrios by Type of Violence**

<i>Type of violence</i>	<i>Institution</i>
<b>Social</b>	<p><i>Parche</i>: A place or group of teenagers that meet to converse, drink, or consume drugs. May also involve acts of crime and violence. Usually based on flexible association and spontaneous congregation. Male-dominated but may have female members.</p> <p><i>Combo</i>: A place or group that commits acts of crime and violence. Less open and more organized than a <i>parche</i>. Male-dominated but may have female members.</p> <p><i>Gallada</i>: A gang of primarily male teenagers or adolescents that congregates in a <i>parche</i>. May commit crimes and acts of violence. May form into a <i>pandilla</i> if an identity and symbols are developed.</p> <p><i>Pandilla</i>: A gang with a strong internal organizational structure. Uses symbols and markings to denote gang identity. Comprises mainly men (usually in their early 20s) involved in delinquency, territorial disputes, and drug use.</p>
<b>Economic</b>	<p><i>Raponeros</i>: Petty thieves or snatchers who steal from people in the streets. Operate individually or in groups and mainly comprise male children and adolescents.</p> <p><i>Atracadores</i>: Thieves armed with guns or knives. Usually mug people in the streets, although some groups specialize in particular types of attacks, such as attacks on taxis. Less organized than <i>ladrones</i>.</p> <p><i>Ladrones</i>: Generic name for thieves. Some groups of <i>ladrones</i> specialize in particular types of theft or robbery.</p> <p><i>Apartamenteros</i>: Thieves who specialize in theft from apartments.</p> <p><i>Banda</i>: Group of male delinquents organized to commit crimes, primarily robbery and other acts of violence. A <i>banda</i> may offer its services to others. May specialize in a particular good, such as jewelry.</p> <p><i>Oficina</i>: Group of organized male drug dealers or businesspeople that hires others to commit acts of crime or violence.</p>

**Box 6.1. Cont.**

<i>Type of violence</i>	<i>Institution</i>
<b>Political</b>	<p><i>Encapuchados</i>: Literally, hooded people. Generic name for those who commit acts of crime and violence. May be <i>sicarios</i>, militia members, or guerillas.</p> <p><i>Sicarios</i>: Paid assassins, usually contracted to kill for revenge. Often linked to social cleansing.</p> <p><i>Milicias populares</i>: Organized militias that commit violence, mainly through use of delinquents. Usually informal protection/justice forces. Some linked to guerillas.</p> <p><i>Grupos de limpieza social</i>: Social cleansing groups. Also known as <i>paperos</i> in Cali, <i>rayas</i> in Bogotá, and <i>capuchos</i> in Medellín. Highly organized, male professional killers. Target groups are delinquents, beggars, drug addicts, petty thieves, street children, and prostitutes. Usually have links with the police, the military, or state security forces.</p> <p><i>Paramilitares/pájaros</i>: Paramilitary organizations known locally as the "birds." Usually linked with the extreme right. Includes a range of civil defense groups funded by landowners, emerald magnates, and drug traffickers and thought to be linked to the military and government. Ostensibly aim to protect civilians and eradicate the two main guerilla organizations. Highly organized, male-dominated structure.</p> <p><i>Guerilla/gatos</i>: Guerilla organizations known locally as "cats." Includes the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia), a pro-Soviet guerilla group, and the ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional—National Liberation Army), a pro-Cuban guerilla group. Highly sophisticated organizations that control large areas of the national territory.</p>

were state run. The Communal Action Committee, the community mothers, and the FAMI Program (Family, Mother, and Child Program) received funds from the municipality. Indeed, the only institution not linked with the state was the Los Muchachos gang, which was seen as an

informal protection group. Los Muchachos was perceived as the most important perverse social institution in the community as well as the most influential. However, its only formal ties with other community organizations was through guarding the community center run by the Communal Action Committee.

### *Gangs and Other Violent Organizations*

Respondents identified 15 types of organized groups that fostered perverse social capital. Most of organizations were cohesive hierarchical units headed by a leader and governed by internal rules to which their members strictly adhered. Box 6.1 lists each of these groups by type of violence.

Much of the violence committed by these groups was social in nature, involving the pursuit of power. As one community leader in Jericó, Bogotá, noted, the reasons for joining a gang are “often not economic. It’s the desire for leadership, the force of power.”

Groups involved in economic violence were involved mainly in robbery and delinquency. Some groups, such as the *apartamenteros*, who steal from apartments, specialize in certain types of crime. Others, such as the *bandas* and *oficinas*, were organized based on Mafia-style structures. The *bandas* sold their services, while the *oficinas* contracted to others to commit crimes for them. The least organized group was the *raponeros*, usually street children or adolescents involved in “snatching” in the streets.

Organizations that commit political violence often had links with guerilla groups. In El Arca, Cali, for instance, some militias were closely associated with the National Liberation Army (ELN). A community leader noted, “The militias have the same components as the guerillas. The state views them as guerillas, the *barrio* views them as militias ... the militias have more power here than the guerillas.” Such groups were widely known and identified by all members of the community, including children (figure 6.2).

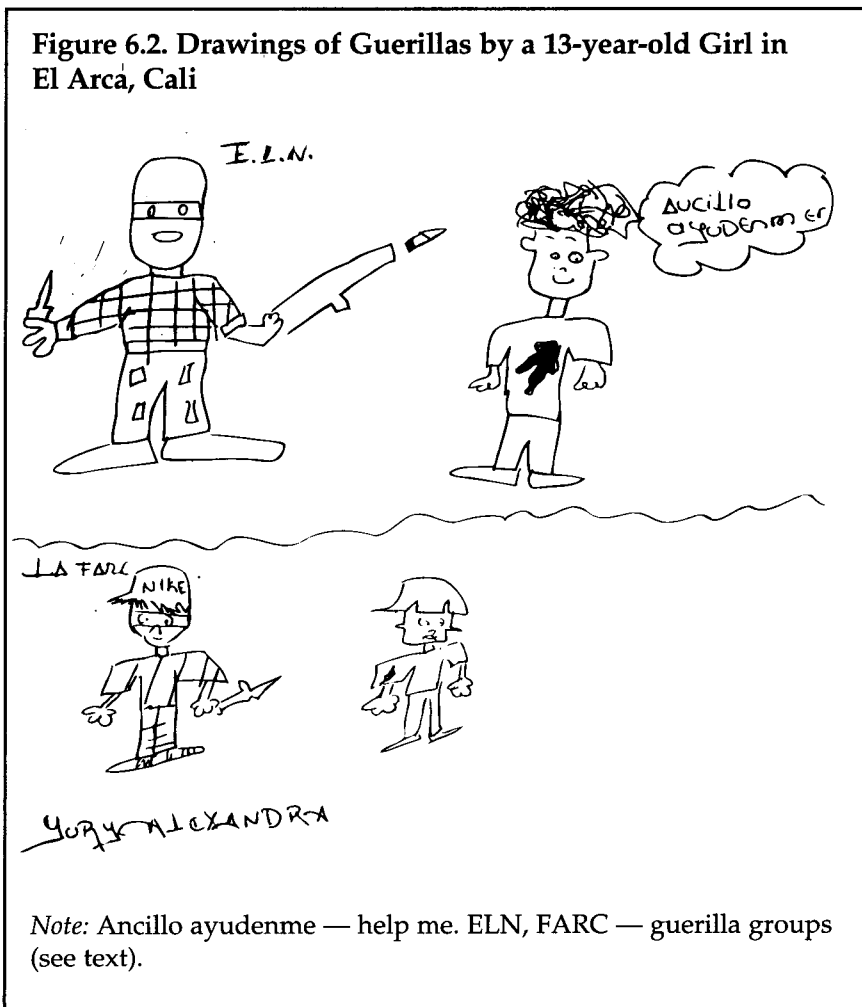
The most extreme violence-related organizations, the paramilitaries, or *pájaros*, and guerilla groups, or *gatos*, had the greatest influence on *communities*.<sup>6</sup> In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, the paramilitaries and guerillas dominated the daily lives of the population. Between 1996 and 1999, 2 community leaders and 12 other community members were killed, 2 people disappeared, and 10 families that had been threatened fled the *barrio*. One community leader noted, “The people have become accustomed to take away their dead.” By 1999 the main threat was the paramilitaries. Every Friday at 7 p.m. the *carros lujosos* (literally “luxury cars”) arrived and terrorized the population. People suspected of talking to or having links to the guerillas were threatened and sometimes assassinated. In El Arca, Cali, a variety of perverse institutions dominated the insti-

tutional landscape (figure 6.3). The militias were identified as the most influential force.

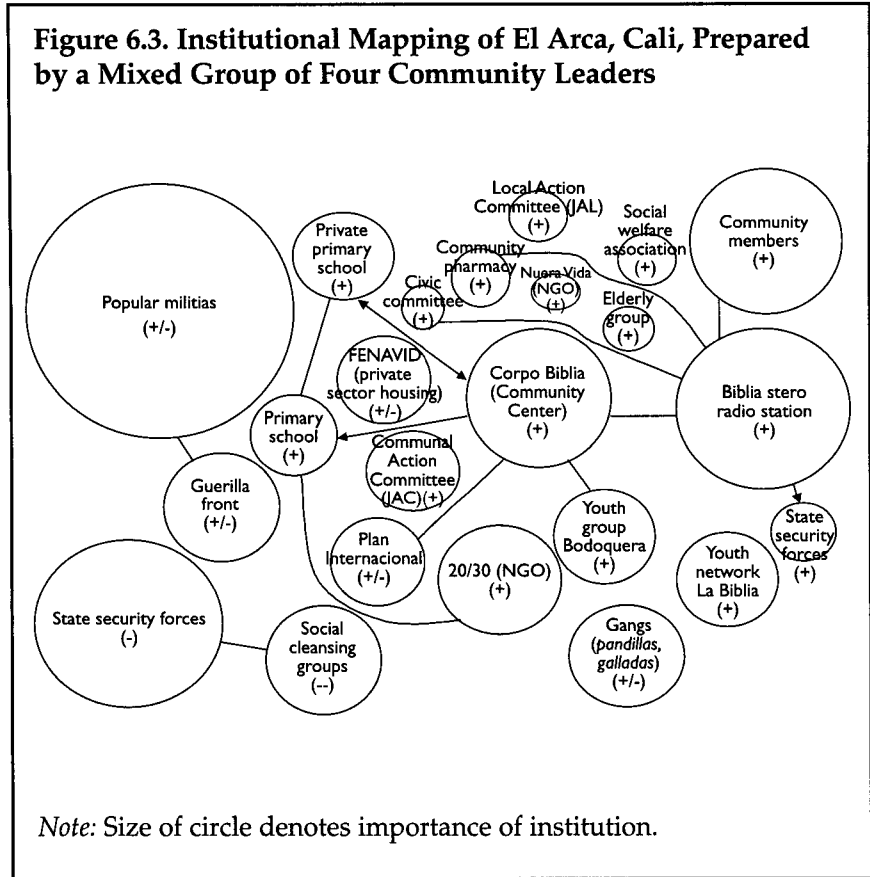
*Perverse Institutions Involved in Drug Sale*

Organizations selling or distributing drugs were critically important in the communities. These networks were extremely hierarchical, with patterns of authority rigidly and violently enforced.

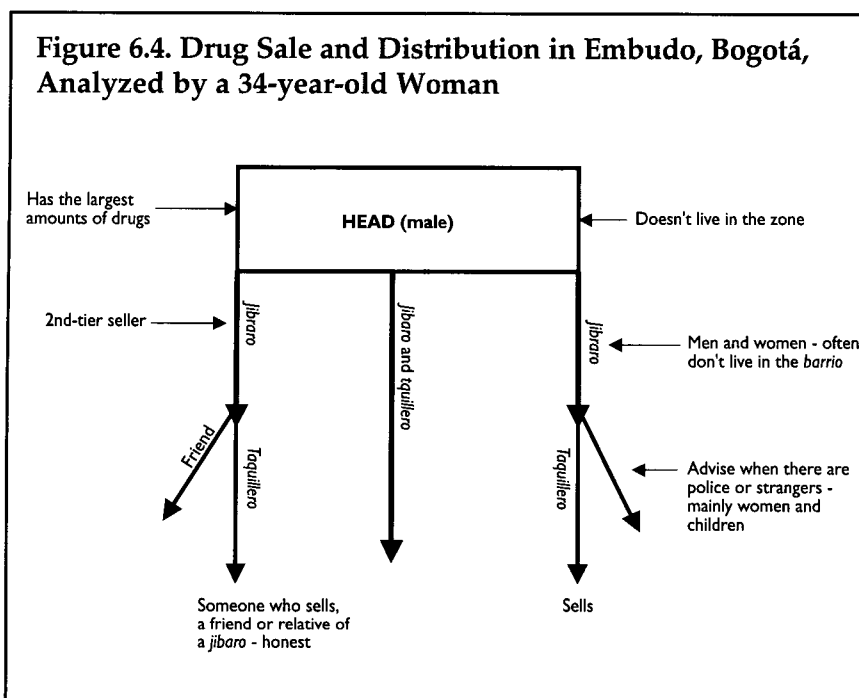
The most complex network of drug vendors and their accomplices was found in Embudo, Bogotá. According to one woman, networks were







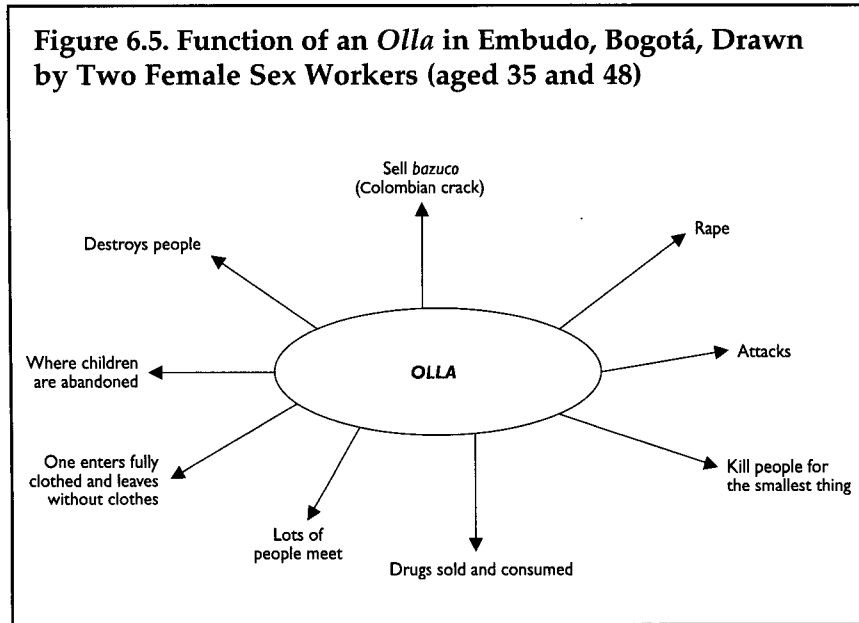
organized vertically, with authority maintained through violence (figure 6.4). Men held the positions of authority, with women usually playing supportive roles. Each street invariably had two male *cabezas* (heads), who lived outside the *barrio*. The *cabezas* distributed drugs through three male or female intermediaries known as *jibaros* (peasants), who also lived outside the community. *Jibaros* rigorously maintained their authority, killing those who broke their contracts. *Jibaros* controlled *taquilleros* (clerks), who sold the drugs to users. *Taquilleros* rarely consumed drugs or committed murder, but they did employ force—punching consumers who did not pay up on time. The *taquilleros* received 10 percent of what they sold in 24 hours (known as a turn), earning about 30,000 pesos (\$18.70) a day. *Taquilleros* employed mainly women and children as look-outs, advising them of police movements or the arrival of strangers.



Drugs were sold in certain areas referred to as *ollas* (literally, stew-pot). *Ollas* were usually rented rooms within larger dwellings where drug sale and consumption occurred. Two female sex workers from Embudo, Bogotá, noted that *ollas* were linked not only to drugs but also to attacks, murder, sexual violence, and the abandonment of children (figure 6.5). Often run by *jibaros*, *ollas* were also used to sell stolen goods, and many served as brothels for adult and child prostitutes.

### Causes of Perverse Social Institutions

The prevalence and importance of gangs, militias, and other violent organizations are an important indicator of the high level of distrust of state security and justice systems. This is closely associated with the long history of internal conflict in the country. Fifty-one percent of respondents distrusted such organizations as the police, the military, the Administrative Security Department (which includes the secret police), and judicial institutions. Members of communities noted that informal, illegal organizations filled the gap left by lack of state intervention or the inability of the state to protect poor urban communities.

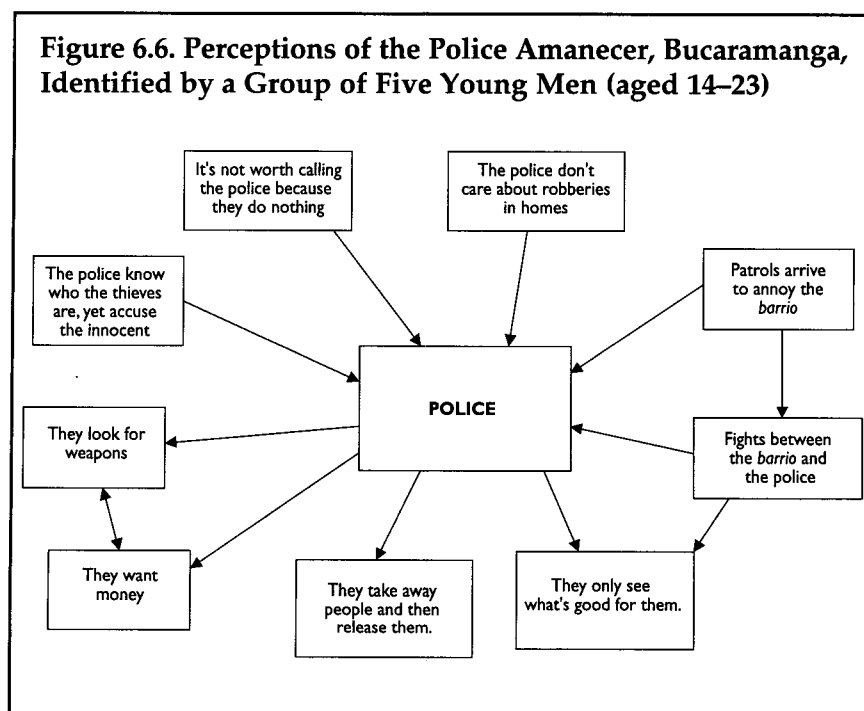


*Perceptions of the Police Force*

The least trusted institution was the police force, with people in all communities holding negative views of the police. A man in Pórtico, Medellín, thought that the police were untrustworthy and exacerbated bad situations. As a result, “If I see someone getting killed here and the police arrive and ask questions, I say nothing. Here it’s better that way.” The police were often identified as major perpetrators of violence and were held in contempt in most communities. They were also perceived as having little authority.

In Amanecer, Bucaramanga, a group of young men described the relationship between the police and the residents of the *barrio* as highly antagonistic (figure 6.6). According to these young men, the police enter the *barrio* only to harass the population. They make about 10 rounds a day, constantly asking for papers from people they know. The police were perceived as highly corrupt and interested only in obtaining money through bribery and extortion. Occasionally, they arrive and fire shots to frighten residents. As a result, many children were afraid of them.

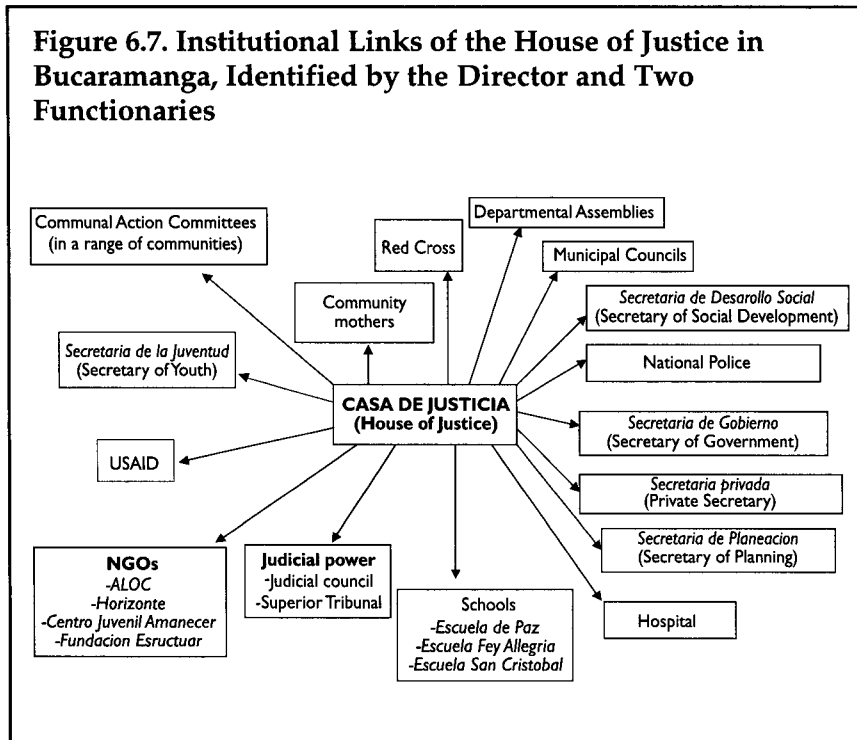
People in Embudo, Bogotá, held the most extreme views of the police and perceived them as major perpetrators of violence who promote rather than curtail the sale and consumption of drugs. According to community members, the police run a well-organized system of extortion



from drug dealers, resorting to violence when necessary. Eight-man police patrols work three shifts a day, each officer receiving 2,680 pesos (\$1.70) per shift. Drug dealers and consumers usually met the police's demands because the police threatened them with violence or death through social cleansing.

#### *Perceptions of the Judicial System and the Government*

Distrust of the judicial system was also widespread. Most people in the *barrios* believe that the police immediately release people after arrest and that even if a case gets to court, justice is not served. The local justice institution, House of Justice in Bucaramanga, Santander, located near Amanecer, is illustrative. This was located within the *barrio* in an effort to improve access to conciliation and legal services for low-income people. Figure 6.7, drawn by the institution's director and two of his functionaries, shows the functions and components of the program in terms of their institutional links with other entities. Figure 6.8, drawn by a woman from the community, reveals a lack of knowledge of the program, associating it only with the police, a banking facility, the family

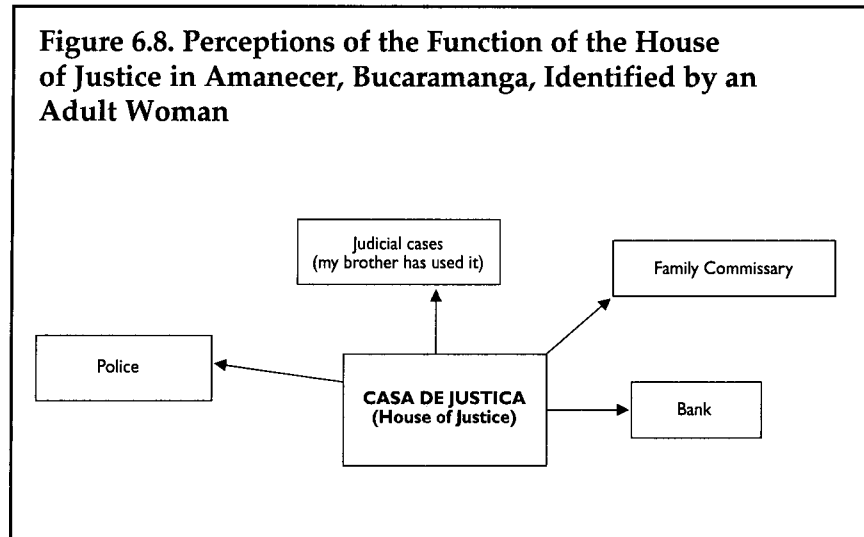


commissary (where domestic violence cases can be reported), and judicial services.

A group of young men who knew more about the institution held predominantly negative views, noting, “No one trusts the House of Justice.... It is the same as the police; it plays the same role.” The men went on to say that the only justice in the *barrio* was *ley de defensa* (law of defense), the use of arms and force. The concept of justice by force was mentioned in most of the communities, where it was referred to as the “law of the strongest” and the “law of knives.” In all cases, it related to the lack of alternatives in the absence of faith in the state judicial system and the presence of high levels of impunity.

All perverse organizations were associated with the use of arms and informal justice systems, particularly social cleansing. In El Arca, Cali, for instance, a member of the M-19 guerilla group who had been “reinserted” into the community described how justice by force had become more violent over time. In the past, organized conflict-resolution procedures based on a system of warnings and community

**Figure 6.8. Perceptions of the Function of the House of Justice in Amanecer, Bucaramanga, Identified by an Adult Woman**

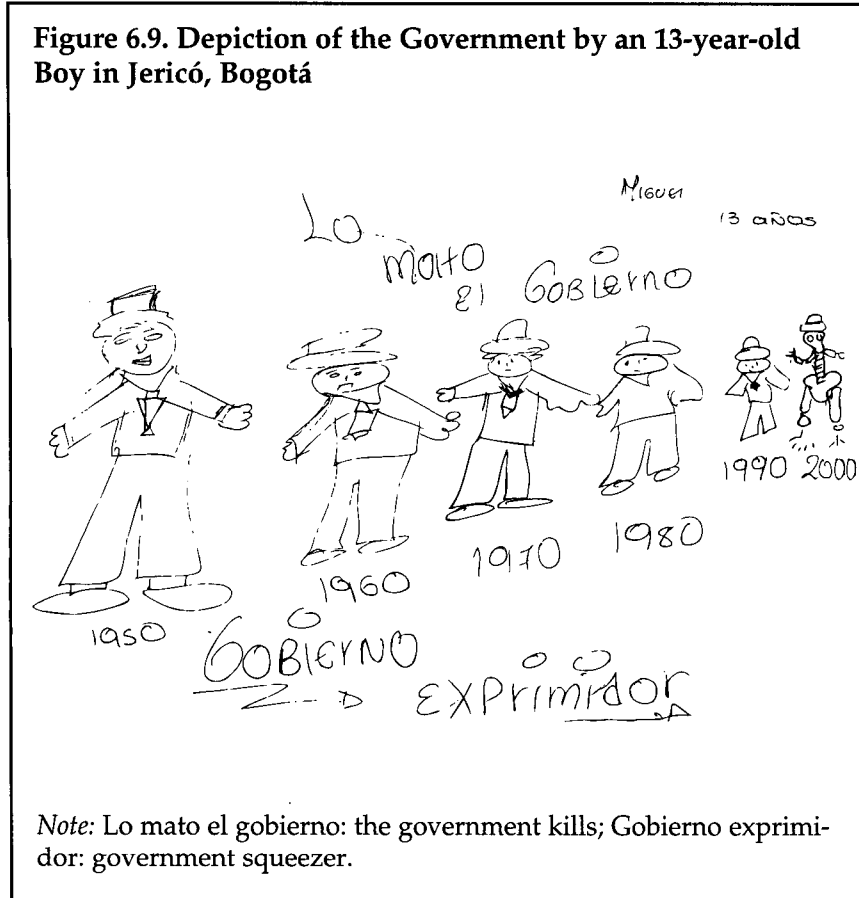


meetings were used. For the most part, only informers were killed. Now, he reported, militias and *bandas* killed as a way of sending messages to the community.

Underlying the rapid growth in perverse social institutions was the perception that the power of the government as an effective law enforcement and welfare institution was declining. This was graphically illustrated by an 11-year-old boy in Jericó, Bogotá, who identified the government as a “killer” and “squeezer,” diminishing in its importance and presence to the point of being a mere skeleton (figure 6.9).

Perverse social institutions perpetrating political violence generated greatest fear in the frontier communities of Cachicamo, Yopal, and Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul. Although a minority of community members condoned the actions of these groups, most people feared them. In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, in particular, paramilitary organizations were associated with a range of negative consequences that undermined cognitive social capital (figure 6.10). Fear of reprisals from paramilitaries or guerillas made it impossible to talk openly in the community. As a result, solidarity was eroded and distrust created. This in turn created a society in which people had to look out for themselves to survive. Perceptions of the military were mixed in this community. Although relations with the army have deteriorated, as the army was perceived to be doing little to prevent political violence, it was nevertheless looked to as a source of protection.

**Figure 6.9. Depiction of the Government by an 13-year-old Boy in Jericó, Bogotá**

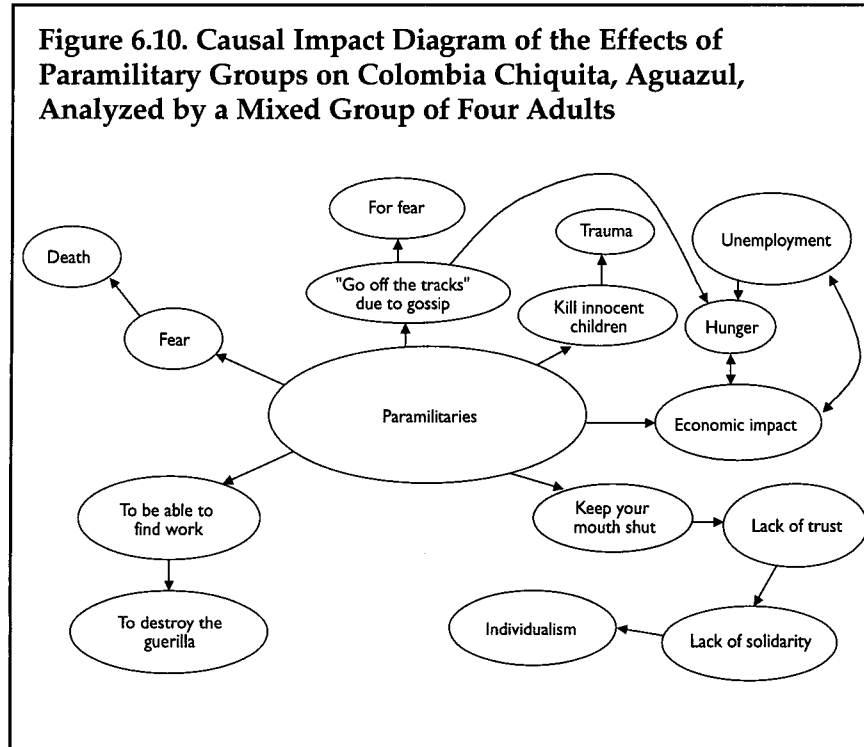


*Note:* Lo mato el gobierno: the government kills; Gobierno exprimidor: government squeezer.

### Reconstruction of Productive Social Institutions and Female-Dominated Organizations

Which community organizations are the best vehicles for rebuilding cognitive social capital? As table 6.3 shows, the most trusted institutions were women's and childcare groups. In five of the eight communities in which these organizations existed, all were evaluated positively (100 percent trust level). Childcare organizations consist largely of state-run community homes, while women's organizations include small NGOs and locally formed women's self-help groups.

**Figure 6.10. Causal Impact Diagram of the Effects of Paramilitary Groups on Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, Analyzed by a Mixed Group of Four Adults**



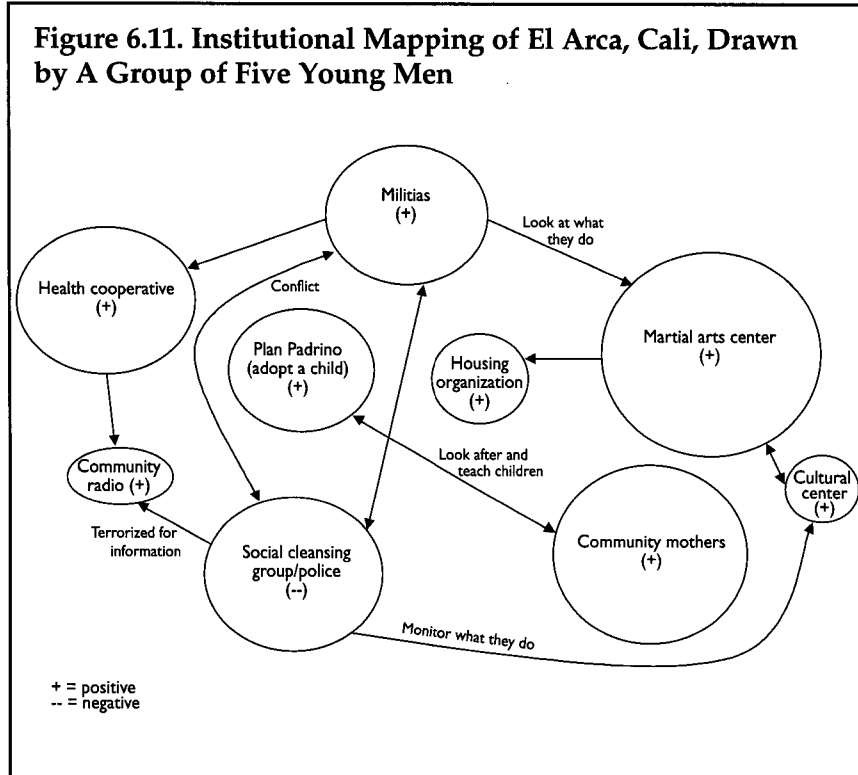
### *Community Homes*

Two main types of community homes provide care. Social Welfare Homes (*Hogares de Bienestar Social*, HOBIS) provide childcare for children up to five years. The Family, Mother, and Child Programs (*Programa Familia, Mujer, e Infancia del Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar*, FAMI) provide care for pregnant and lactating women. These organizations existed in all of the communities except Cachicamo, Yopal.

The community homes are run entirely by women known as community mothers, who operate these childcare groups from their own homes. As many as eight or nine homes function in each community. People trusted the community homes because they are operated by local women hiring inside the community. Overall levels of trust were high among all groups of people, even young men, who identified community mothers as extremely important and a positive force in the community (figure 6.11).



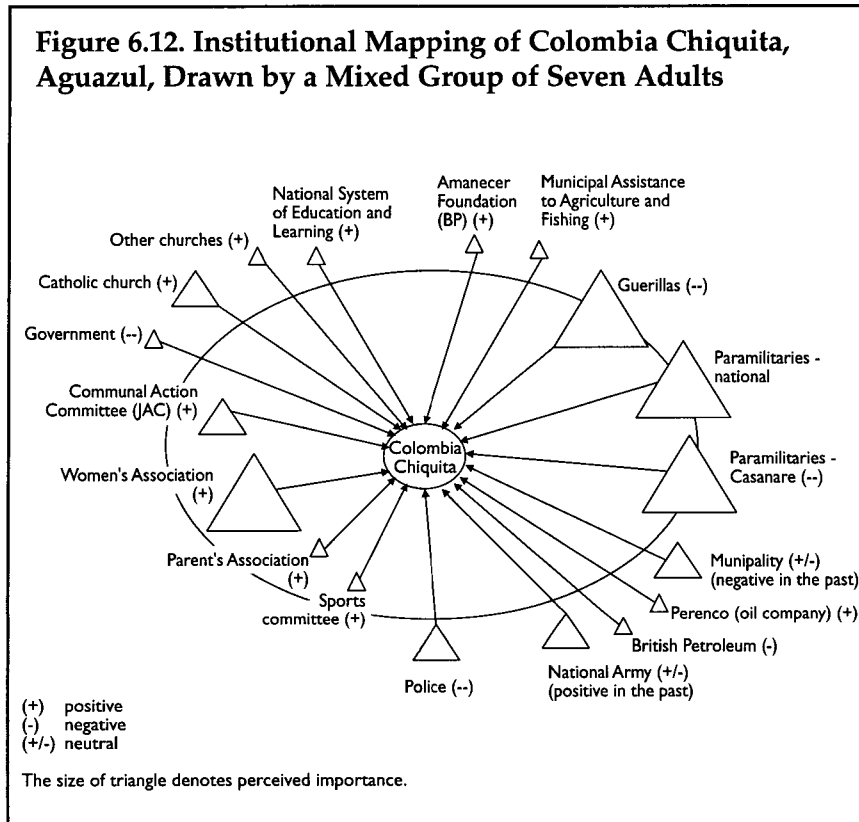
**Figure 6.11. Institutional Mapping of El Arca, Cali, Drawn by A Group of Five Young Men**



*Women’s Organizations*

Women’s organizations were found to be extremely important institutions in some communities, especially those experiencing high levels of violence. In Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, for example, a group of adult men and women identified the Women’s Association (a local women’s self-help group) as the most important positive institution in the community (figure 6.12). The only other influential organization was the Communal Action Committee, which the focus group believed had lost sight of its origins and no longer kept its promises.

Focus groups described the Women’s Association as “successful,” “trustworthy,” and “well-functioning.” One woman, who had been displaced from another department because of violence, decided to form the organization after experiencing violence at the hands of the paramilitaries and guerillas in Aguazul. The organization’s aim was to reunite a



community whose social fabric had been destroyed by violence by training women to maintain their families, mainly by setting up their own small businesses. In this woman's view, women were more likely than men to be heard by the authorities because "there is always truth and sincerity in the eyes of women." The organization also managed to change the image of the *barrio* in the eyes of the authorities, who no longer view it as "full of thieves, drug addicts, and guerilla members." Despite the obstacles that faced her, the woman felt confident about the future. "I continue to lead the association without worrying what the macho men think. Maybe that's why they call me the mad woman."

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## Chapter Seven

# Youth, Exclusion, and Violence

Young people are at the apex of the nexus of violence, social exclusion, and the creation of perverse social institutions. If interventions to reduce violence are to be sustainable in the longer term, they must address the problem of youth exclusion.

### Perceptions of Exclusion

Young people, particularly men, felt excluded, both from particular groups and organizations within their communities and from their communities themselves. Many young people complained that “no one takes us into account” and repeatedly mentioned rejection (*rechazo*). A group of young men in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, highlighted the following sources of exclusion.

- Parents, especially mothers, who they claimed tried to prevent them from having friends and going out.
- The Communal Action Committee, which never listened to them.
- The police, who harassed them daily and engaged in social cleansing (killing young people in the *barrio* on the pretense that they are drug addicts). “They look at you as the worst. They don’t come in peace but to fight.”
- The community in general, who blamed them for the drug problem in the *barrio*. As one man noted: “When the people begin to talk badly of you ... they invent that you are involved with vices [drugs].”

Several young women also complained of discrimination. A group of five 14- to 17-year-old girls from Rosario, Girón, identified their main problem as “people talking badly of young people” and especially of young unmarried women who did not work. They discussed how a group of elderly women in the *barrio* called them *muchachas vagas* (lazy, corrupt young women), implying that they took drugs and hung around with men.

### Box 7.1. Exclusion of Young Women in Rosario, Girón

The group listed stereotypes used in the community, which they felt contributed to social exclusion. Although they saw themselves as *muchachas alegres*, they were constantly called *vagas*, which they viewed as discrimination.

<i>muchacha vaga</i> (lazy, corrupt girl)	<i>Muchacha alegre</i> (happy girl)	<i>Muchacha sana</i> (healthy girl)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployed</li> <li>• Spends all day in the street</li> <li>• Smokes marijuana</li> <li>• Wears tennis shoes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Happy</li> <li>• Uncomplicated</li> <li>• Wears sporty clothes</li> <li>• Wears tennis shoes</li> <li>• Wears necklace (with friends' names on it)</li> <li>• Has boyfriends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works</li> <li>• Studies</li> <li>• Stays home</li> <li>• Wears clothes similar to her mother's</li> <li>• Should not have a boyfriend (although may have one in secret)</li> </ul>

Source: Five young women.

Young women felt that people in the community labeled young women as either *muchachas vagas* or *muchachas sanas* (healthy girls), refusing to acknowledge young women such as themselves, *muchachas alegres* (happy girls) (box 7.1). Although they admitted that "we are not nuns," they resented being blamed for things they did not do. They also resented the fact that young men in the *barrio* who engaged in some of the same behaviors were not condemned.

### Causes and Effects of Exclusion

A major cause of exclusion among young people was high levels of intergenerational conflict. Channels of communication between parents and their children were broken—often as a result of witnessing or being victimized by intrafamily violence resulting in family disintegration and feelings of isolation. As children turned away from their parents, the older generation began to blame young people for the ills of society.

This intergenerational conflict was especially widespread in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, particularly among male community leaders of the Communist Party-influenced *Provivienda* committee, whose sons rejected the principles of collective action. Indeed, one group of three *jóvenes sanos* (healthy young people), including the son of a community leader, disparaged communism, stating that individualism was much better.

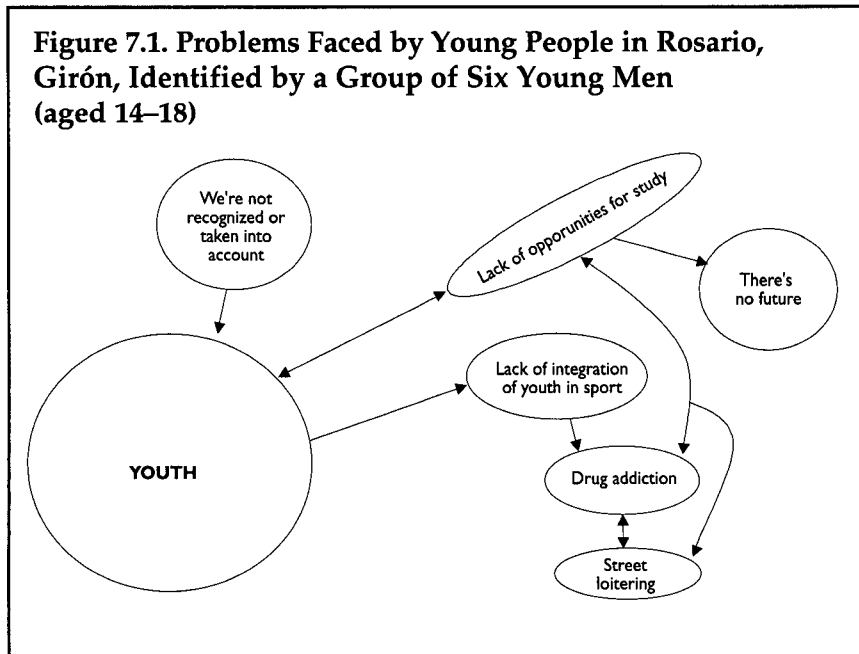
Some sons of Communists had become involved in drugs and gangs as way of rejecting their fathers' teaching.

This type of conflict was not confined to 14 de Febrero or to fathers. In Jericó, Bogotá, a group of five female community leaders noted that some gang members were the sons of leaders. One woman whose son was in a gang pointed out, "I work for the community, and my son damages the community."

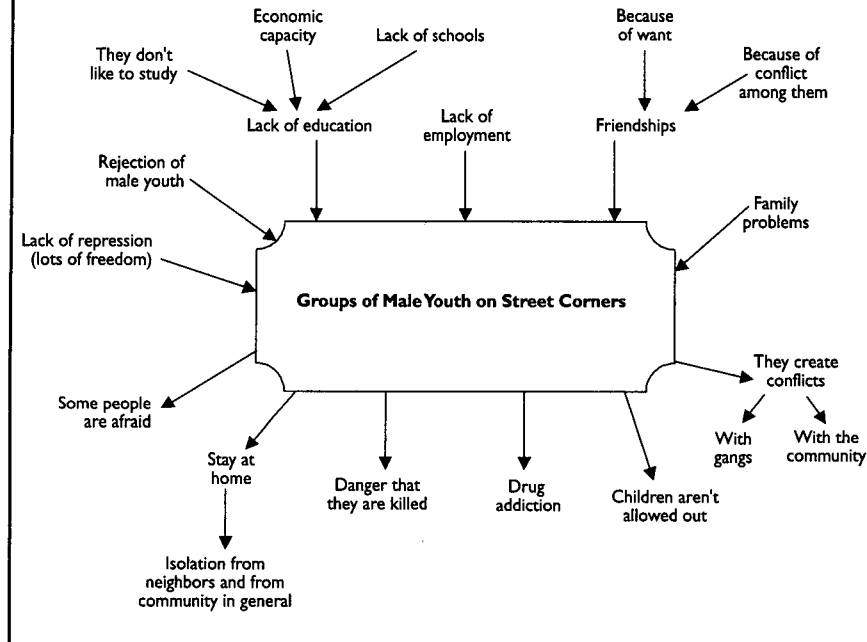
Intergenerational conflict contributed to exclusion by the community as a whole. In many cases, young people withdrew from mainstream society, exacerbating their exclusion. In 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, a group of male rock or punk musicians who dressed in black, shaved their heads, and espoused an ideology of anarchic communism were acutely aware of their exclusion. In their words, "The people don't like us. We are looked on as drug addicts and are associated with satanic cults." These young men gained strength from their music, embracing their exclusion, and what they call the intolerance of the community, as a coping strategy.

For many young people another response to exclusion was drug use or involvement in crime and violence, often through gang membership. A group of six 14- to 18-year-old men in Rosario, Girón, identified the fact that "we're not recognized or taken into account" as a major issue (figure 7.1). They associated their exclusion with lack of educational and

**Figure 7.1. Problems Faced by Young People in Rosario, Girón, Identified by a Group of Six Young Men (aged 14–18)**



**Figure 7.2. Causal Impact Diagram of Causes and Effects of Groups of Male Youth on Street Corners in Pórtico, Medellín, Prepared by a Mixed Group of Eight Adults (all aged over 40)**

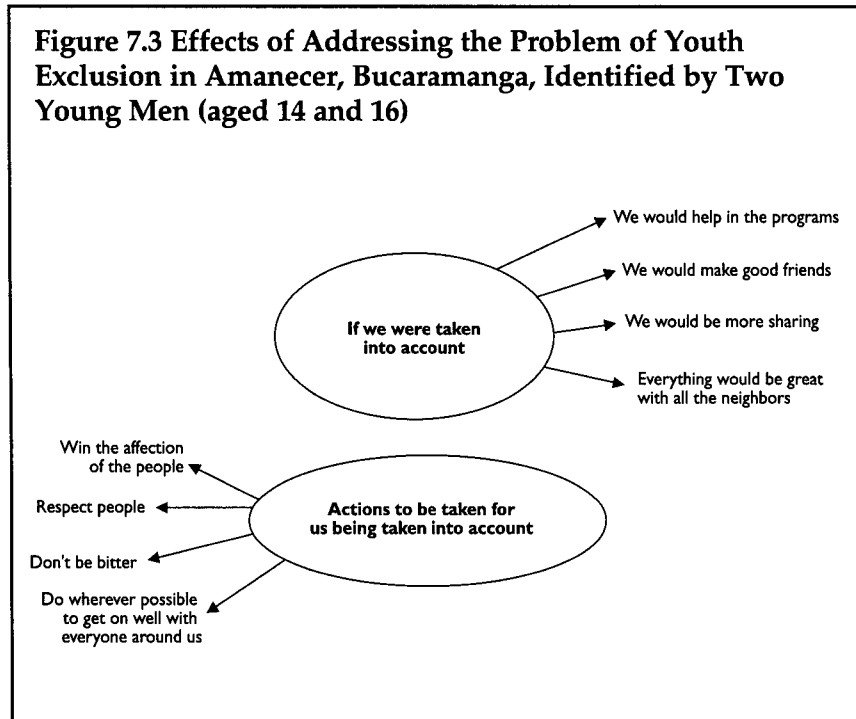


recreational opportunities, noting that football tournaments in the *barrio* were organized either for children or adults. Exclusion led to drug use and loitering, as well as the lack of a promising future.

Older people identified similar problems faced by young people in the *barrios*. In Pórtico, Medellín, a group of eight adults analyzed the problem of young men on street corners, providing a sophisticated account of the nexus of violence, exclusion, and social capital (figure 7.2). The causal factors they identified included rejection, lack of education and employment opportunities, family problems, and the influence of friends (“bad company”). Young men got involved in drugs and gangs, which led to violence. As a result, the community became afraid of them, contributing to the erosion of cognitive social capital.

Exclusion was often exacerbated as a result of involvement in violence. For instance, a member of the Los Muchachos gang in Pórtico, Medellín,

**Figure 7.3 Effects of Addressing the Problem of Youth Exclusion in Amanecer, Bucaramanga, Identified by Two Young Men (aged 14 and 16)**



noted that he felt rejected by the community because people ran away when he went by their houses. A drug addict from 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, said he felt “rejected because of drugs” and wanted to give up drugs, have a family, and become part of the community again.

Young men and, to a lesser extent, young women destroyed trust in their communities by generating fear within their communities and failed to lay the groundwork for social capital. Indeed, young people’s exclusion from the functioning of the community undermined the creation of ties and networks within communities—except those that developed within perverse institutions.

Two young men from Amanecer, Bucaramanga, who felt acutely excluded from their community, outlined what actions needed to be taken to include young people in the community (figure 7.3). They felt that if affection and respect toward young people were established, there would be more sharing, and community programs would be more efficient. As it stood, they did not participate in any community activities because of the conflict between young people and the rest of the population.





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## Chapter Eight

# Community Perceptions of Solutions to Violence

Strategies for coping with violence can be divided into four types: avoidance, confrontation, conciliation, and other strategies (Moser 1996, 1998) (table 8.1).

Most people reported adopting *avoidance mechanisms*, with “ignoring the situation” the most prevalent. Fear of retribution, powerlessness, and fear of exacerbating the situation prompted these responses. Particularly marked was the silence surrounding intrafamily violence (see chapter 3). Neighbors and friends did not intervene in this type of conflict, and family members maintained silence. One young man from Pórtico, Medellín, noted that he watched television when his father beat his mother, mainly because he felt he could do little to help. Responses to political violence were also dominated by silence. In communities in which the level of political violence was high, “keeping one’s mouth shut” was often necessary to avoid being killed.

Another important avoidance strategy involved changes in mobility patterns. Many people avoid places where drug addicts or gangs congregate, changing their walking routes or staying home in the evening. Two *jóvenes sanos* (healthy young people) from 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, noted how they avoided drug addicts by taking a long route home. Many people also restricted their movements after dark, locking themselves in their homes in the evening when the incidence of violence increased. Women reported being particularly afraid to go out in the evenings. A group of young women from Rosario, Girón, identified the danger of going out at night as a major restriction in their lives. Some, for example, wanted to continue their education at night school but were afraid to leave their homes in the evening.

Other community members noted that they avoided speaking to people involved in violence-related activities. Young people avoided falling into bad company or getting involved with friends who would lead them astray, particularly with respect to drugs. People avoided being robbed by not carrying valuables. A group of three adults from El Arca, Cali,

**Table 8.1. Strategies for Coping with Violence (percent of total)**

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Percentage of total strategies cited</i>
<b>Avoidance strategies</b>	
Avoid bad company	4
Avoid people involved in violence-related activities	7
Remain silent/ignore situation	21
Avoid dangerous areas	11
Don't go out at night	10
Flee from attackers	11
Don't carry valuables	3
Avoid gossip	2
Leave <i>barrio</i>	2
Lock house/put bars on windows	4
<b>Confrontation strategies</b>	
Confront person causing problem	2
Carry weapons	2
Use violence	2
<b>Conciliation strategies</b>	
Develop relations with people involved in violence	2
Turn to religion; pray for those involved	2
<b>Other strategies</b>	
Report violence to family members or teachers	5
Report violence to police	2
Submit, cry, abort (in the case of rape)	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

*Note:* Violence-related activities include drugs, insecurity, intrafamily violence, perverse social institutions (gangs, militias), rape, robbery, murder, and fights in the street.

*Source:* 133 focus group listings.

noted that one had to go out “without rings, without a watch, without luxury shoes, and without brand name clothes.” Another basic avoidance strategy was to flee from thieves or gangs. Flight was also significant as a way of coping with intrafamily violence for both victims of and witnesses to intrafamily violence.

*Confrontation strategies* were much less common than avoidance strategies because of fear of violence. Indeed, the few community members who cited confrontation as a response were either gang members or drug users. According to a member of the Los Muchachos gang in Pórtico, Medellín, “killing them first” was a way of dealing with murder in the

community. A few people suggested that “hitting back” was an appropriate way of dealing with intrafamily violence.

*Conciliation strategies* were rare. In a few cases, young people got to know drug addicts or gang members, both to protect themselves and to make the addicts and gang members feel less excluded. Most people, especially women and the elderly, were afraid of these groups, however. Some said that they prayed for people committing acts of violence.

The *other mechanisms* for dealing with violence were to report conflicts to the authorities or to family members or teachers (in the case of children and young people). Few people felt that reporting violence solved the problem, however. Most people felt that the only thing to do was to submit. A group of four 11-year-old girls in Jericó, Bogotá, noted that they were afraid to tell their parents about rape for fear of rejection and could talk about it only with their friends. Their main strategy was to have an abortion and “be brave and deal with it as it comes.”

Three women in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, summarized many of the coping and conciliation strategies, including forgiveness and trusting in God (figure 8.1). With alcoholism a major problem in the community, they also suggested that the bars be closed early to prevent intrafamily violence and street fights among drunks. As this community was severely affected by political violence, confrontation was not an option for fear of assassination.

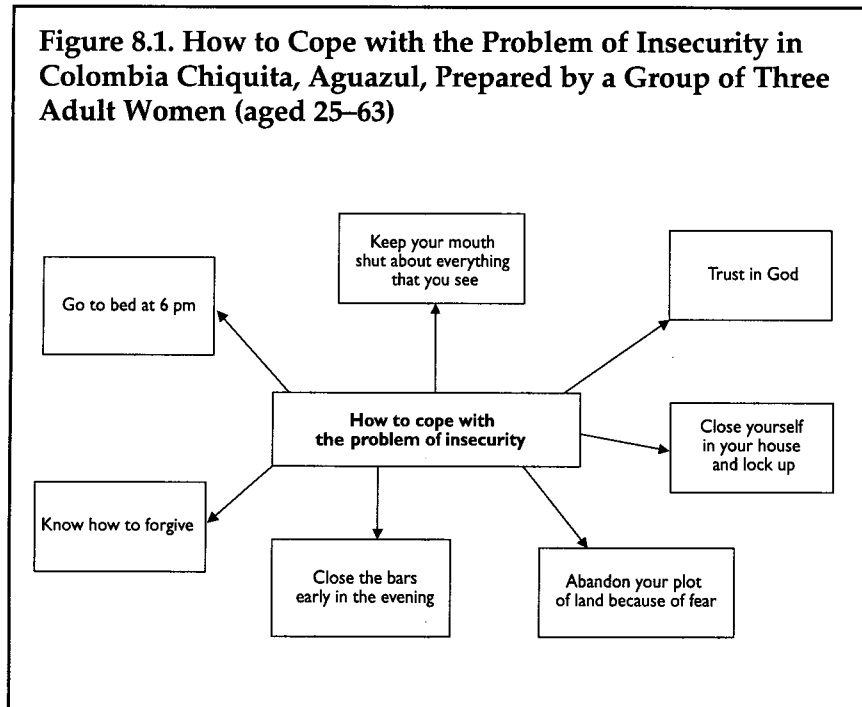
### **Interventions to Reduce Violence**

People in the communities had a variety of ideas for reducing violence. Almost half of the solutions were associated with social capital (tables 8.2 and 8.3). Within this category, the promotion of family values and dialogue between family members and community members was the most important strategy (see table 8.3). Improving human capital represented almost a third of the interventions cited, while increasing physical capital represented just a fifth of all proposed interventions.

#### *Increasing Social Capital*

Social capital interventions were the most important type of intervention in seven of the nine communities. Productive social capital interventions (building trust, integrating young people into society, and reforming policy) outnumbered perverse social capital interventions (social cleansing, harsher police behavior) by a factor of three to one. The most important productive solutions were the generation of dialogue among both family and community members, the promotion of family values, and the building of trust. In Jericó, Bogotá, for example, a family felt that the most appropriate solution to the problem of insecurity was “to unite the com-

**Figure 8.1. How to Cope with the Problem of Insecurity in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, Prepared by a Group of Three Adult Women (aged 25–63)**



munity to make everyone alert" (figure 8.2). Education in conflict resolution techniques was suggested in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, and Pórtico, Medellín.

Community organizations were an important solution for addressing violence. Some community members suggested increasing the resources of existing organizations, such as the Communal Action Committees. Others suggested seeking external assistance in order to establish new organizations, which would be run and controlled from within the *barrio*.

A group of seven community mothers in Jericó, Bogotá, identified a series of solutions to the problem of violence. They stressed the importance of bottom-up solutions, noting, "Peace is not [attained by] throwing resources around without building projects from below, from families and community organizations." Their proposed solutions involved building both structural social capital (through community-based organizations) and cognitive social capital (by building trust among those involved in violence) (box 8.1).

Almost a third of the social capital interventions involved repressive activities, such as social cleansing. Community members who endorsed

Table 8.2. Interventions for Reducing Violence, by Type of Capital and Community (percent of total)

Intervention	14 de														Colombia		
	Embudo, Bogotá	Febrero, Bogotá	Jericó, Bogotá	Amanecer, Bucaramanga	Rosario, Girón	El Arca, Cali	Pórtico, Medellín	Cachicamo, Yopal	Chiquita, Aguazul	Total							
<b>Increase physical capital</b>	16	17	17	23	28	21	11	20	45	21							
Create jobs	5	6	4	9	8	9	11	6	24	8							
Provide housing	3	0	2	2	0	5	0	0	3	1							
Improve infrastructure	0	1	11	8	0	5	0	2	0	3							
Build more prisons	0	6	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	2							
Increase household security (locks, bars)	0	2	0	2	8	2	0	0	0	2							
Implement land reform in rural areas	2	1	0	0	4	0	0	6	12	2							
Improve urban planning	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1							
Other <sup>a</sup>	0	1	0	0	8	0	0	4	6	2							
<b>Increase human capital</b>	30	35	23	14	20	45	35	39	34	31							
Improve academic and vocational education	13	9	15	5	12	22	17	24	9	14							
Provide more drug and alcohol rehabilitation	10	10	0	2	4	5	3	2	3	5							
Provide drug and sex education	2	4	4	0	0	2	10	0	7	3							
Provide self-esteem training	5	2	2	2	0	2	0	4	3	3							
Provide sports and recreational opportunities	0	3	0	5	4	2	0	2	9	3							
Improve health care	0	2	0	0	0	10	0	4	0	1							
Provide conflict resolution education	0	5	2	0	0	0	5	0	0	1							
Provide family counseling	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	3	1							

Table 8.2. cont.

Intervention	14 de														Colombia	
	Embudo, Bogotá	Febrero, Bogotá	Jericó, Bogotá	Amanecer, Bucaramanga	Rosario, Girón	El Arca, Cali	Pórtico, Medellín	Cachicamo, Yopal	Chiquita, Aguazul	Total					Total	
<b>Increase social capital</b>	54	48	60	63	52	33	54	41	21	48						
<i>Productive social capital</i>																
Promote family values and dialogue among family and community members	20	11	21	12	4	17	32	7	3	14						
Endorse effective peace process	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	1						
Help community organizations get started	10	7	2	9	20	0	0	6	0	6						
Develop programs to integrate young people into society	0	1	11	7	0	2	7	0	0	3						
Build trust	5	2	13	9	12	2	7	12	12	7						
Reform the police	0	7	4	9	8	2	0	0	0	4						
<i>Perverse social capital</i>																
Tighten police control over communities	3	8	4	5	4	2	0	0	0	4						
Increase social cleansing	11	6	4	7	4	5	7	0	0	6						
Increase military protection/strengthen state presence	4	6	0	5	0	2	0	12	0	4						
Provide arms to citizens	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1						
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

a. This includes solutions such as reporting violent incidents to authorities (Girón), leaving the country (Cachicamo), disarming offenders (Cachicamo), and prohibiting sale of alcohol (Colombia Chiquita).

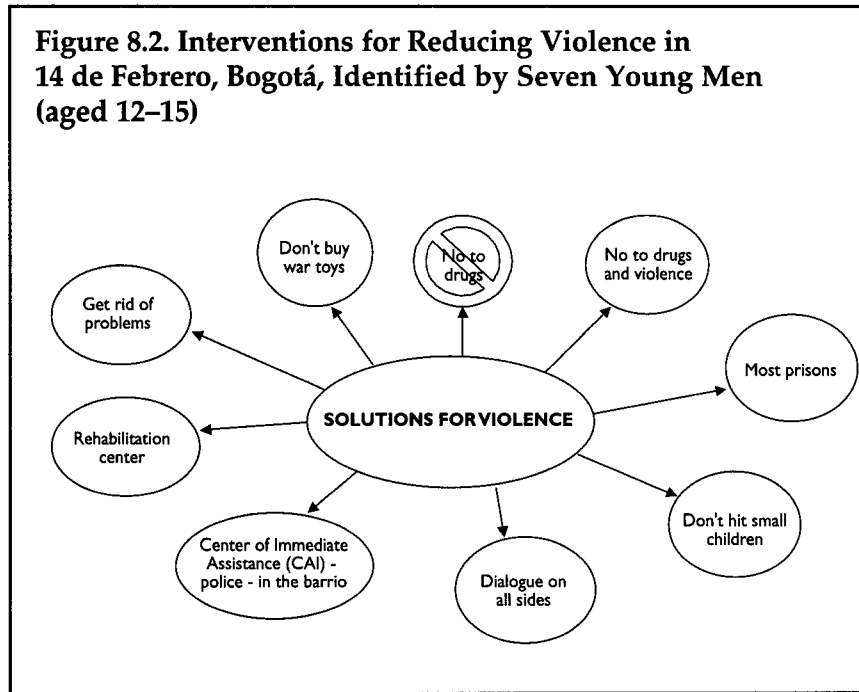
Source: 133 focus group listings.

**Table 8.3. Interventions for Reducing Violence, by Type of Violence (percent of total)**

<i>Intervention</i>	<i>Percentage of all solutions</i>
Increase social capital	48
Productive	35
Perverse	13
Increase human capital	31
Increase physical capital	21
Total	100

social cleansing groups had lost faith in the police and army and believed that social cleansing represented the only hope for dealing with violent offenders. As a community leader from El Arca, Cali, noted, "Often the people are in favor of social euthanasia because the state doesn't respond."

**Figure 8.2. Interventions for Reducing Violence in 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, Identified by Seven Young Men (aged 12–15)**



### Box 8.1. Seven Community Mothers' Approach to the Problem of Violence

#### What do they do?

- Recognize violent people.
- Listen to them.
- Make them participate in peace building.
- Do not reject them.
- Pacify them.
- Provide moral support.
- "Orientation."

#### Solution

- Create schools for parents on peace building.
- Generate income.
- Bring public and private resources within the community together, without institutional corruption.
- Increase participation of community organizations in decisionmaking.
- Ensure that peace begins in the family, in the nursery, and in the school.

While social cleansing was a repressive social capital solution in response to the absence of the state, the other types related to greater presence of the state security forces to deal with violence. In Cachicamo, Yopal, many people endorsed a greater military presence coupled with state provision of arms to help ordinary citizens defend themselves. Two small-scale cattle farmers called for "paid official protection from the state" as well as training the army in international humanitarian laws and human rights.

Men favored repressive interventions much more often than women. Among the female-only and male-only focus groups that discussed interventions, only one group of women favored social cleansing. Of 11 single-sex focus groups that suggested various types of repressive solutions, nine were male.

#### *Increasing Human Capital*

Education and drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers dominated the human capital interventions proposed by community members. In El Arca, Cali, human capital solutions were viewed as the most significant (see table 8.2). Also notable was the need for drug and alcohol rehabilita-



tion in Embudo and 14 de Febrero, Bogotá, and for drug and sex education interventions in Pórtico, Medellín.

### *Increasing Physical Capital*

Increasing physical capital was less important than increasing social or human capital in most of the nine communities. Such solutions were perceived as critical in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, however, where they represented almost half of all interventions. They were also important in Rosario, Girón, where they represented 28 percent of all solutions. Better

**Table 8.4. Recommended Interventions, by Type of Violence (percent)**

<i>Type of violence</i>	<i>Physical capital intervention</i>	<i>Human capital intervention</i>	<i>Social capital intervention</i>
<b>Economic violence</b>			
Drugs	20	32	48
Insecurity	26	17	57
Gangs	17	36	47
Robbery	28	16	56
Delinquency	14	43	43
<b>Social violence</b>			
Alcoholism	0	0	100
Fights	20	0	80
Murder	19	13	68
Violence against women	18	55	27
<b>Domestic violence</b>			
Rape	9	39	52
Verbal abuse	11	22	67
Disputes between neighbors	14	0	86
Killings	14	29	57
<b>Political violence</b>			
Police abuses	0	50	50
Hooded gunmen/militias	0	0	100
Intimidation	50	0	50
War	43	30	27
<b>Total</b>			

Source: Focus groups.

community infrastructure, especially community centers, was also perceived as important.

### Interventions by Type of Violence

Community members proposed different types of interventions to different types of violence. Social capital interventions were suggested most often to address economic and social violence; physical capital interventions were suggested most often to address political violence (tables 8.4 and 8.5). This was especially marked in Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul, where job creation was viewed as the most important solution to political violence.

More than half the interventions proposed for reducing violence against women involved human capital. These interventions involved consciousness-raising activities for women as well as training to help women find jobs that would allow them to leave their husbands. Training and workshops for male perpetrators of violators were also suggested.

Probably the most critical issue raised by local communities was their recognition that dealing with the continuum of violence in their communities required implementing a variety of solutions simultaneously. This was illustrated by a group of members of the Los Muchachos gang, who identified a range of impacts, strategies, and solutions to socially motivated murder (box 8.2).

### Constraints and Recommendations

The perceptions of the poor can help policymakers formulate public policy. Local communities identified three national-level constraints to solving the problems of violence:

- *The extensive nature of political violence.* Negotiating peace among the guerrillas, paramilitaries, and other violence groups was perceived as

**Table 8.5. Recommended Interventions, by Type of Violence (percent of all interventions)**

<i>Type of violence</i>	<i>Physical capital</i>	<i>Human capital</i>	<i>Social capital</i>
Economic	22	26	52
Social	16	34	50
Political	40	27	33

### Box 8.2. Impact, Strategies, and Solutions to Gang Murder Suggested by Three Young Gang Members in Pórtico, Medellín

Impact	What do you do?	What would you like to do?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shock and restraint.</li> <li>• Personal insecurity.</li> <li>• Lack of trust among friends.</li> <li>• Negative psychological and moral effects.</li> <li>• Negative atmosphere in the <i>barrio</i>.</li> <li>• You look after yourself more.</li> <li>• Community is shocked—no one goes out into the street, children aren't allowed out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk with the young men, searching for the why and for what.</li> <li>• Confront the problem.</li> <li>• Make sure the problem doesn't get worse.</li> <li>• Try to solve the problem in the friendliest way.</li> <li>• Try to prevent the problem from affecting the whole community.</li> <li>• Secure justice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain dialogue with other gangs.</li> <li>• Try to make sure the young people keep busy in their free time.</li> <li>• Establish educational or night center in the school.</li> <li>• Create employment.</li> </ul>

an important precondition for the success of many other violence reduction interventions.

- *The problem of displaced people*, which affects the daily lives of all communities. Local people perceive newly arrived displaced people as competitors for employment and income-generating opportunities, provoking economic and social violence. Even the basic needs of many displaced people are not being met, highlighting the importance of a policy and program agenda on displaced people.
- *Unemployment*. All of the communities were concerned about government reforms necessary to pull the economy out of the worst recession in decades. While poor urban communities recognized that violence is not simply a consequence of the downturn in the economy, they understood that high levels of unemployment and stagnant local economies exacerbate political, economic, and social violence.

Local community recommendations for reducing violence can be summarized in terms of seven priorities:

- *Create job opportunities in the formal, informal, and self-employment sectors.*
- *Attack the problem of drug consumption.* The high level of drug consumption was one of the most important concerns in most communities. A comprehensive strategy must include drug (and to a lesser extent alcohol) consumption, both prevention and rehabilitation. Implementing such a solution requires collaboration among education, health, social welfare, and other sectors as well as between the government and NGOs.
- *Reduce society's tolerance for intrahousehold violence.* All communities acknowledged that violence begins at home. Dealing with high levels of physical and mental abuse requires a strategy that encompasses both prevention and rehabilitation. Many agencies have already struggled long and hard to address different aspects of intrahousehold violence. A holistic approach, with extensive interagency, media, and NGO collaboration, may help meet the demand from communities to address this issue.
- *Rebuild trust in the police and judicial system.* The severe lack of confidence in the government's capacity to provide adequate police or judicial protection fosters the development of alternative informal justice systems and social cleansing and raises the level of fear and insecurity. Despite extensive measures to address this issue (through, for instance, the introduction of local houses of justice), fundamental measures are still needed to rebuild trust at the local level in order to eliminate informal justice and social cleansing.
- *Strengthen the capacity of community-based membership organizations, particularly those run by women.* Childcare organizations run by women in the community and neighborhood associations are highly trusted by people in the communities. Both types of organization need to be strengthened to help reduce violence.
- *Target intervention for young people.* Involving young people in the community was perceived as critical to overcoming violence-related problems (table 8.6). The most frequently cited intervention was workshops and talks with young people, usually about drugs and self-esteem. Establishing rehabilitation centers for gang members was also perceived as an important step toward reducing violence. One innovative solution to address the inclusion of young people into society suggested by community members was the development of small locally based community centers for young people, based on

**Table 8.6. Community Solutions to Including and Excluding Young People (percent of total)**

<i>Interventions for including youth</i>	<i>Percent of all solutions cited</i>	<i>Interventions for excluding youth</i>	<i>Percent of all solutions cited</i>
Offer workshops and talk to young people.	24	Have the police chase them.	5
Integrate young people into society.	14	Don't give any charity to drug addicts.	5
Provide rehabilitation for gang members.	14	Remove them from the <i>barrio</i> .	5
Advise young men of dangers, establish dialogue with them.	10	Ignore them.	15
Increase job opportunities for all young people.	8	Kill them all.	15
Provide young men with vocational and technical training.	8	Clean the streets of sources of aggression.	5
Employ gang members and drug addicts.	6	Send them to the military.	10
Provide more education for teenagers.	4	Don't mix with them. Mix only with "healthy people."	10
Provide psychological help/therapy.	4	Do not get involved with drug addicts.	5
Develop relationships with young drug-addicted men.	4	Build houses to displace drug-addicted men.	5
Give them work in community-related type jobs.	2	Keep young men occupied somewhere else.	15
Acknowledge drug addicts as human beings.	2	Don't allow children from other <i>barrios</i> here.	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source:* 155 focus group listings.

the “community mother” model and run directly by local men, women, and young people.

People living in poor urban communities recognize that the problem of violence is so complex that it requires cross-sectoral solutions. They also recognize that local ownership is crucial if the sense of fear, powerlessness, and lack of trust is to be overcome. Given the conventional sector divisions in line ministries and NGOs alike, developing such solutions is likely to prove challenging.

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## Notes

1. Development practitioners use participatory urban appraisal as a research tool for sharing local people's knowledge and perceptions with outsiders. Chambers (1994a, 1994b, 1994c) provides comprehensive detailed reviews of the participatory rural appraisal approach. The techniques used in that methodology are also applicable in urban settings and are used here. The World Bank's Participation Sourcebook (World Bank 1995) includes participatory appraisals as one of the techniques currently being integrated into the Bank's operational work. The methodology has already been incorporated into several recent Bank studies, including country poverty assessments in Zambia, Ghana, and South Africa (World Bank 1994). The first study on urban poverty and violence using this methodology was undertaken in Jamaica in 1996 (Moser and Holland 1997).

2. For both translation and production purposes, the diagrams have been transferred into computerized form.

3. One of the participatory urban-appraisal ground rules is ownership of visual outputs through named acknowledgment. Given the nature of the issue being studied, however, anonymity was considered essential.

4. The terms "intrafamily" and "intrahousehold" are used interchangeably in this report.

5. Prostitution among young men was also noted in Pórtico, Medellín. A group of four teachers noted that when young men wanted to buy something or find money (which could be used for drugs), they sold sexual favors.

6. The term *pájaro* dates back to the Liberal/Conservative conflict that resulted in La Violencia (1949–53). It purportedly refers to the way the Liberals threw the Conservatives out of airplanes, making them "fly."





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## Annexes

**Annex A. Participatory Urban Appraisal Tools Used in Study**

**Annex B. Importance of Social Institutions**

**Annex C. Problems Identified by Community Members**

### **Annex A. Participatory Urban Appraisal Tools Used in Study**

Participatory urban appraisals are usually based on focus group discussions, semistructured interviews, direct observation, ethnocentric histories, and biographies and case studies of community members. Discussions with community members take place in local community centers, communal buildings, or in the street (on street corners, at football or basketball fields, outside people's houses).

Various tools were used to gather information on the following themes: community characteristics; the history of the community and violent events; general problems and types of violence as perceived by communities; poverty; well-being and violence; changes in levels of violence over time; social capital and exclusion; causes and consequences of different types of violence; social capital and mapping social institutions; and strategies and solutions for dealing with and reducing violence (Moser and McIlwaine 1999). The specific tools used in the study included the following:

- Matrix of general data.
- Matrix of social organization.
- Listing of general problems.
- Ranking of general problems (scoring, onion diagram, flow diagram).
- Listing of types of violence.
- Ranking of types of violence (scoring, onion diagram, flow diagram).
- Map of institutional relationships.
- Preference matrix on social institutions.
- Participatory map of the community.
- Participatory map of secure and insecure places.
- Matrix on history of the community.
- Matrix on trends of general problems.
- Matrix on trends of types of violence.
- Daily, weekly, monthly, and annual time lines.
- Causal flow diagram on types of violence and/or other problems.
- Problem tree.
- Listing of strategies to cope with violence.
- Diagram of strategies to cope with violence.
- Listing of solutions to reduce violence.
- Diagram of solutions to reduce violence.
- Drawings.

**Annex B. Importance of Social Institutions**  
**Table B.1. Importance of Social Institutions (percent of all institutions cited)**

<i>Problem</i>	<i>Embudo, Bogotá</i>	<i>14 de Febrero, Bogotá</i>	<i>Jericó, Bogotá</i>	<i>Amanecer, Bucaramanga</i>	<i>Rosario, Girón</i>	<i>El Arca, Cali</i>	<i>Pórtico, Medellín</i>	<i>Cachicamo, Yopal</i>	<i>Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul</i>	<i>All communities</i>
Neighborhood committees	2	26	10	5	12	21	6	4	12	14 (98)
Women's and childcare groups	7	3	8	7	7	7	5	1	12	8 (57)
Institutions for the elderly		7	2			5	1	2		2 (17)
Youth, sports, and recreational organizations		5	3	2	4	11	3	1	3	5 (32)
NGOs	4	2	7	1		19		13	3	7 (49)
Violence-related groups	5	11	13			11	6	15	10	10 (71)
State security/justice	3	7		4	2	4	2	22	21	9 (65)
Social services	8	20	4	7	3	17	13	21	16	16 (109)
Drug rehabilitation	7		2	1		5				2 (15)

Table B.1. cont.

<i>Problem</i>	<i>Embudo, Bogotá</i>	<i>14 de Febrero, Bogotá</i>	<i>Jericó, Bogotá</i>	<i>Amanecer, Bucara- manga</i>	<i>Rosario, Girón</i>	<i>El Arca, Cali</i>	<i>Pórtico, Medellín</i>	<i>Cachicamo, Yopal</i>	<i>Colombia Chiquita, Aguazul</i>	<i>All commu- nities</i>
State/government institutions	3	4	8	6	7		2	33	19	12 (82)
Religious groups	4	10	10	3	6	1	3	8	10	8 (55)
Private organizations	1			1	5	3		14	17	6 (41)
Productive services	1			1	4	1	1	1	3	2 (12)
Total number of institutions	(45)	(95)	(67)	(38)	(50)	(105)	(42)	(135)	(126)	(703)

*Note:* Figures in parentheses represent number of institutions.

*Source:* 92 institutional listings, institutional mapping/Venn diagrams, and institutional preference matrices.

**Annex C. Problems Identified by Community Members**  
**Table C.1. Problems Identified by Community Members (percent of all problems cited)**

Problem	14 de														Colombia	All
	Embudo, Bogotá	Febrero, Bogotá	Jericó, Bogotá	Amanecer, Bucara- manga	Rosario, Girón	El Arca, Cali	Pórtico, Medellín	Cachicamo, Yopal	Chiquita, Aguazul	Yopal	Medellín	Cachicamo, Yopal	Chiquita, Aguazul	Colombia		
<b>Violence</b>	58	63	49	52	35	41	21	34	23	43						
Drug use	16	18	6	10	12	9	5	3	0	9					9	
Insecurity	11	12	21	10	3	8	3	7	4	9					9	
Robbery	5	11	3	14	5	13	0	6	1	6					6	
Intrafamily violence	5	4	10	3	4	3	2	2	4	4					4	
Loitering	0	4	0	6	9	1	3	1	1	3					3	
Fights	5	6	2	2	0	1	0	2	1	2					2	
Gangs	0	2	6	1	0	3	6	1	1	2					2	
Killing	11	2	0	1	0	0	2	2	3	2					2	
Rape	5	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	1					1	
Alcoholism	0	4	0	2	0	3	0	1	1	1					1	
Prostitution	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	1					1	
Paramilitary groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	1					1	
Threats	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	1					1	
Guerrilla	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0					0	
<b>Lack of physical capital</b>	15	23	33	21	27	28	37	34	36	28					28	
Unemployment	5	11	6	6	7	9	13	11	11	9					9	
Lack of public services	0	2	13	9	9	7	7	8	11	7					7	
Poverty	5	8	10	1	2	5	6	5	6	5					5	

Table C.1. cont.

Problem	Embudo,		14 de		Amanecer,		El Arca,		Pórtico,		Colombia	
	Bogotá	Bogotá	Febrero,	Jericó,	Bucara-	Rosario,	Cali	Medellín	Yopal	Cachicamo,	Chiquita,	All
	Bogotá	Bogotá	Bogotá	Bogotá	manga	Girón					Aguazul	commu-
Housing problems	5	1	2	2	1	2	3	9	7	5	4	4
Transport problems	0	1	3	3	4	8	4	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Lack of social capital</b>	16	8	10	10	19	9	18	14	17	13	14	14
Lack of unity	0	2	6	6	10	5	3	13	12	0	5	5
Absence of the state	0	0	3	3	1	2	2	2	2	11	3	3
Discrimination / stigma	5	2	0	0	3	1	4	0	3	0	2	2
Corruption	11	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	2	2
Distrust of police	0	2	0	0	3	1	9	0	1	0	2	2
<b>Lack of human capital</b>	10	6	8	8	6	16	11	27	12	17	12	12
Lack of education	5	0	6	6	4	10	7	13	6	7	6	6
Lack of health services	5	0	0	0	0	4	3	6	4	6	3	3
Lack of recreation	0	4	2	2	2	2	0	8	1	4	2	2
Hunger	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	1
<b>Lack of natural capital</b>	0	1	0	0	2	13	2	1	3	10	3	3
River (flooding)	0	1	0	0	1	13	1	0	1	7	2	2
Environmental hazards	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Erosion	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Natural disasters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Focus groups.

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ISBN 0-8213-4731-4