

SEIZING A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY: COMMUNITY AUTONOMY AND INFLUENCE IN THE 2016
COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS

By

Noah Tobias Rosen

Submitted to the

Faculty of the School of International Service

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

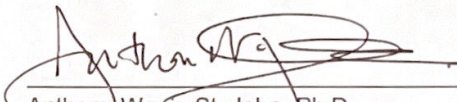
the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

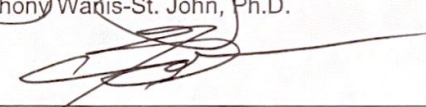
In

International Relations

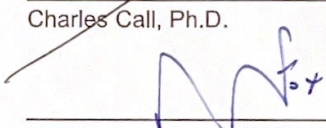
Chair:



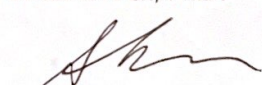
Anthony Warris-St. John, Ph.D.



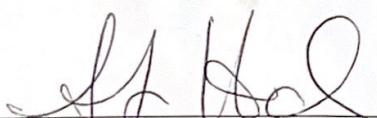
Charles Call, Ph.D.



Jonathan Fox, Ph.D.



Susan Shepler, Ph.D.



Dean of the School of International Service

Date

7/27/2022

2022

American University

Washington, D.C. 20016

© COPYRIGHT

by

Noah Rosen

2022

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

SEIZING A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY: COMMUNITY AUTONOMY AND INFLUENCE IN THE 2016 COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS

BY

Noah Tobias Rosen

ABSTRACT

My dissertation research seeks to understand how rural grassroots movements shape the local impacts of a peace deal. Specifically, I ask: What explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation? A peace process creates a fragile, volatile political context that poses both threats and opportunities for rural communities impacted by conflict. I hypothesize that variation in the autonomy and influence of communities in a peace process can be explained by their relative levels of ‘regional integration’, defined as the degree of representative functions and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. I focus on rural Afro-Colombian movements in the Pacific region of Colombia in the five-year period following the signing of the 2016 Colombian peace agreement. I develop controlled comparisons in two regions of the department of Chocó, Atrato and Baudó. In each comparison, I assess the capacity of groups of communities to maintain their autonomy in the face of post-conflict insecurity created by FARC demobilization, and to advance their collective development interests in the participatory peacebuilding program PDET (Territorially-Focused Development Program). Overall, my empirical data suggest that the relative advantages of regional integration – organizational capacity, regional cohesion, external legitimacy – increase the ability of communities to shape local peace outcomes, although these advantages are mitigated to a degree by the tradeoffs of integration, namely democratic deficits and a lack of local independence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I must begin by thanking the network of people in Chocó who made this work possible. From the first day I arrived in Quibdó, I was received with warmth and grace, with quick jokes and easy laughs met with a seriousness of purpose and careful attention to my wellbeing. Any knowledge that I was successful in advancing in this thesis must be credited to the Pacífico leaders in Bogotá, Quibdó, Baudó and Atrato, the bittersweet inheritance of generations of struggle. They shared their wisdom with me in the hopes that it might be of value to other communities facing down the outputs of global capitalism, the crushing violence of accumulation through dispossession. También invirtieron su tiempo en mí con la esperanza que yo podría ser un verdadero amigo de los pueblos de Chocó. In this dissertation I have chosen to keep the anonymity of all my contacts in Chocó, which I will maintain in my acknowledgements. That has the unfortunate side effect of denying me the opportunity to directly credit here the visionary leaders whose knowledge is the bedrock of this thesis. Igual así, ustedes mis amigos, compañeros, guías, maestros y familia, saben muy bien quien son. Muchas gracias por todo. I hope that I was able to understand enough to faithfully represent your ideas. Any errors are solely mine.

I am forever indebted to the ACABA leader who brought me into his home on the very first day of meeting me and gave me a safe and comfortable place to stay. That place soon turned into my home in Quibdó, where I was cared for and looked after by my Chocoan family. That same leader brought me into the offices of ACABA that first day in Quibdó. The organization welcomed me in and taught me so much about what a consejo comunitario is and how it functions, the daily grind to gestionar, acompañar, incidir, the contradictions and challenges they face, and the dedicated work of their leadership. I'm deeply thankful for their patience and their openness in allowing me to slowly come to understand their work. I'm thankful for the trips to Puerto Meluk, for everyone who kept an eye out for me and welcomed me into their social circles in Quibdó and Baudó. If I close my eyes, I can still see the sun setting over the river Baudó as it rounds the bend in front of Puerto Meluk.

Likewise, I am deeply thankful for the support and welcome from the organizations FISCH and COCOMACIA, two organizations with truly incredible trajectories de lucha. It was a true privilege to be able to learn from the sharp, dedicated leaders quien ha dado sus vidas en la defensa de sus territorios y sus pueblos. Tienen una visión de paz transformativa, forward-looking and at the same time grounded in a pride and love for their culture and history. They taught me so much about a deeply pressing question: what does it mean for Colombia's rural people to be able to survive and thrive in the aftermath of 'peace'. Leaders from both organizations made it clear to me that not all of their previous experiences with academics had been positive, that too many people had come asking for their time and offering too little. Despite that, both organizations opened their doors to me. I will do my best to be worthy of the faith you placed in me.

To the communities in Atrato and Baudó who showed me incredible welcome, thank you so much for your hospitality and your willingness to offer a small window into your lives, to teach me a little bit about what it means to build collective strength under conditions of incredible stress. It was so wonderful to get some small slices of how beautiful life on the river can be. Pero también recuerdo el mensaje central: que estas comunidades están siendo tan golpeadas por los grupos y completamente olvidadas por el estado. They are demanding international attention and support in their struggle against state neglect, armed group control and poverty.

Furthermore, none of the community visits would have been possible without the two guides I went with, both extremely respected movement leaders in their own right. Both guides went far beyond their duties, offering me valuable advice and insights into my project, richly engaging in the meetings in each of the communities we visited and allowing me a window of insight into what it means to be a leader in the river communities. I also acknowledge that they both did a lot of unseen (by me) work ahead of time to ensure my safety and comfort. Fue un placer aprender de ustedes y tener su amistad.

I'm also indebted to the kind support from my friends in the Church, in Quibdó Diocese, in Yuto, and in the Parroquia de Riosucio, who shared with me insights and hard won advice from decades of dedicated acompañamiento. Me mostraron una visión de una Iglesia que sinceramente lucha por el pueblo. I learned so much about allyship and about what it means to build horizontal relationships within a

movement from the humility and steadfastness of leaders of the Church that I had the pleasure of spending time with.

I also want to thank the Chocoan academics who offered me their time and knowledge. I'd like to name in particular Sergio Mosquera, Lisneider Cuesta and Ana Arango, who are all essential reading for anyone wanting to learn about Chocó or the consejos comunitarios. A particular moment of remembrance for Padre José Óscar Córdoba Lizcano, a towering figure in Chocó who sadly died from Covid, and whose leadership will be missed. Muchas gracias por su simpatía, me encantó su libro. Y para mi hermano de lucha en la Claretiana, much respect and love.

I am also deeply indebted to the cultural spaces in Quibdó that I stumbled upon in those first few weeks, Motete, Wontanara and the Cumbancha, which opened up so much life for me in Quibdó, and made me feel like I was part of the city. To the friends I made there, who took me under their wings and showed me so much of their city, and always made sure I got home safe, even if they were a little deep in the guaro. Tengo tantos recuerdos moviendo en la ciudad, andar en el barrio San Vicente, pasar por la Cumbancha y bailar chirimía, ir a Tutunendo, Isla del Amor, Ichó, Condoto. Mis hermanos, muchas gracias. Nos vemos muy pronto.

In Bogotá, I want to especially thank some of the professors who oriented me, offered kind words of advice and helped get me started with contacts. A specific thank you to Prof. Carlos Andrés Meza, who brought me to Chocó for the first time as part of a visit to the Atrato with some burgeoning young anthropologists, and set up some of the most important first contacts I made in Quibdó. I also want to note my sincere appreciation for the friendship, feedback and support I received from two incredibly knowledgeable people in Bogotá: Mariana Cepeda and Helmer Quiñones. Mariana, I always looked forward to catching up with you in our favorite Juan Valdez, and deeply appreciate your patience in explaining to me the never-simple Colombian bureaucracy. Helmer, this thesis owes a lot to you, your thoughtful insights and deep knowledge. Thank you also for putting a roof over my head, for repeatedly helping me find contacts, and for watching out for me. I also want to mention Marino Córdoba, who for a busy man was always exceptionally generous with his time.

I am extremely thankful for my committee of four sharp and caring professors. It didn't necessarily come easy, and I readily admit that I had (and still do) have a lot to learn about being a scholar and a researcher. But all of your feedback always felt fair, and always felt like it was exclusively in the interest of pushing me to be the best academic and person I can be. Anthony, you had my back from day one. I can't thank you enough for your support, your careful feedback, and for your curiosity and interest in my project well before I had any confidence that I was moving in the right direction. Even beyond the dissertation, you taught me so much about how to navigate the bewildering world of academia. I'm lucky to count you as my friend. Jonathan, you went far beyond your duties as a committee member, and I'm incredibly grateful for your time and your willingness to share your knowledge with me. It's a pleasure to get to learn from your work in Colombia, your ability to find the information and resources, to fill the gaps to maximize the impact of the movements you work with. You've shown me a powerful model for allyship between movements and academics. Susan, thank you for your always-keen feedback matched with empathetic support for me when I was wrestling with tough questions about fieldwork. Your help played a big part in getting me back to Colombia to finish my fieldwork. Chuck, you always challenged me, but your feedback was always incisive, thoughtful and caring, and you pushed me to improve as a scholar and a thinker. I'm very grateful to all of you.

Some other academic-related notes: huge thank you to the support from my academic community, namely Cherie, Veronica and Manuel, you are wonderful friends. To my supportive PhD program directors, Sharon, Boaz and Susan, you all have done so much to build our strong academic community at AU. To Oliver Kaplan, many thanks for taking on the task of being an outside reader; as I think will be apparent to you, your work is one of the true foundations of this project and I have learned so much from you. I would also like to thank USIP and the American Philosophical Society for their generous support for this project.

To my family, and especially my two wonderful parents, Jeff and Esther, I hope you can see how deeply my work is informed by the values you worked to instill in us, an understanding of the fundamental link between personal and social transformation, a hunger for new experiences, a willingness to work hard but be joyful and have fun. You've been patient with me as I went through the inevitable challenges

of finishing a PhD, always showed true curiosity in my work, and offered me the support I needed to come to the finish line. I hope to carry on our proud legacy of envisioning and enacting a better world.

To my wife Luisa, you've played an enormous role in this project. You were an essential sounding board in helping me shape my ideas and an invaluable source of support in the often scary and lonely parts of fieldwork. You taught me Spanish and gave me some of my first connections in Colombia. You are an incredible scholar in your own right and I learn so much from you every day: your passion for learning, the ease you have in connecting with people and making everyone feel heard and seen, and your absolutely unshakeable belief that another world is possible, if we build it. Te amo, meu amor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xi
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	xii
INTRODUCTION: EXPLAINING COMMUNITY AUTONOMY AND INFLUENCE IN THE 2016 COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS	1
Engaging with the Peacebuilding Literature	6
Outlining a Theory of Regional Integration.....	13
Research Design.....	20
Dissertation Overview.....	32
LITERATURE REVIEW: SITUATING REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN THE PEACEBUILDING LITERATURE.....	36
The ‘Local’ During War	37
Intended Impacts of a Peace Process	46
Obstacles to peace.....	55
Existing Answers	60
Literature Review Conclusions	66
THEORY: THE IMPACT OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION FOR THE THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF A PEACE DEAL	68
Integration & Independence Tradeoffs.....	71
Peace Deal Threats.....	80
Peace Implementation Opportunities.....	97
Theory Chapter Conclusions	110
RESEARCH DESIGN: INVESTIGATING REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN CHOCÓ’S CONSEJOS COMUNITARIOS.....	114
Controlled Comparison	115
Independent Variable: Regional Integration in Chocó	119
Dependent variables: Post-Conflict Violence and Peace Implementation	128
Case Selection	134
Alternative explanations / Threats to Inference	138

Approach to Fieldwork.....	148
Research Design Chapter Conclusions	158
HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE COLOMBIAN CONFLICT, ORGANIZATIONAL FORMATION, AND THE WAR IN CHOCÓ	160
The Colombian Civil Conflict: An Overview.....	161
Organizational Formation in Atrato and Baudó	171
War in Chocó.....	184
Post-Peace deal in Chocó	197
Conclusions.....	202
POST-PEACE VIOLENCE IN THE ATRATO: DASHED HOPES AND COLLECTIVE RESISTANCE	207
Introducing the Cases.....	211
Comparison	224
Evaluation	244
Alternative Explanations	253
Atrato Empirical Chapter Conclusions	257
POST-PEACE VIOLENCE IN BAUDÓ: AN OVERLOOKED REGION BUILDS ITS OWN PEACE 261	
Introducing the cases	264
Comparison	278
Evaluation	295
Alternative Explanations	301
Baudó Empirical Chapter Conclusions.....	306
ADVANCING ETHNIC VISIONS FOR PEACE IN THE CHOCÓ PDETS: REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN PEACE IMPLEMENTATION.....	310
Introducing the PDETs	313
Case Analysis.....	329
Competing Explanations.....	354
PDET Empirical Chapter Conclusion	360
COMMUNITY AUTONOMY AND INFLUENCE IN PEACE IMPLEMENTATION: FINDINGS, TAKEAWAYS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCHOLARSHIP AND PRACTICE.....	364
Summarizing the Findings	370
Contrasting Evidence	395

Conclusion: Takeaways and Contributions	404
APPENDICES	414
APPENDIX 1: PDET PROJECTS OF CHOCÓ, 2016-2021	414
REFERENCES	423

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Consejo Comunitarios: A Range of Territorial and Population Sizes	123
Table 2: Economic Comparisons Among the Cases	139
Table 3: UARIV Violence Comparisons Among the Cases.....	142
Table 4: National Police Violence Comparisons Among the Cases.....	142
Table 5: OCHA Violence Comparisons Among the Cases	143
Table 6: Violent Events in Atrato, 2016-2021	245
Table 7: PDET Projects Per Community, 2016–2021	331
Table 8: PDET Implementation Progress 2016–2021.....	332

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: Independence and Integration Trade-offs for Community Peacebuilding.....	20
Figure 2: Introducing Atrato and Baudó.....	22
Figure 3: Degrees of Integration Among the Consejos Comunitarios	25
Figure 4: Zooming in on the cases in Atrato and Baudó.....	29
Figure 5: Consejos Comunitarios of the Pacífico.....	120
Figure 6: Lederach's Peacebuilding Pyramid	125
Figure 7: Rivers of Chocó	127
Figure 8: Zooming in on the cases in Atrato	211
Figure 9: Zooming in on the cases in Atrato	211
Figure 10: Zooming in on the cases in Baudó	264
Figure 11: PDET Structure. Image from Confecoop, 2017	315

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: EXPLAINING COMMUNITY AUTONOMY AND INFLUENCE IN THE 2016 COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS

In 1991, the emergent Black¹ social movements of Chocó, a poor, rural, majority black department in the northern Pacific region of Colombia, were fully mobilized. Colombia was in the process of rewriting its Constitution in an attempt to respond to the systemic exclusions underlying decades of internal conflict. One of the proposals under discussion had the potential to forever reshape the Colombian Pacific by granting rural black communities the right to create collective property titles in their ancestral lands, which the Colombian government treated as state-owned property. In order to push the proposal through, movement leaders staged marches, occupied government buildings in Chocó as well as the Haitian Embassy in Bogotá and sent thousands of telegrams to the architects of the new Constitution. Their efforts paid off two years later with the Law 70 of 1993, which granted Afro-Colombian people a broad set of official recognitions and protections as an ethnic group, including the right to collective land titles in state-owned lands in the Colombian Pacific.

This organizing wave was spurred by the biggest threat facing the communities at the time, the rapid expansion of extractive industries, particularly logging, in the lands that Afro communities had lived in for hundreds of years. Despite their generational connection to the land, the Colombian government had not recognized the legal claims of Afro-Colombian people to the land, considering most of the territory in the Colombian Pacific as *baldíos*, or empty lands owned by the state. This legal framework allowed logging, mining and agro-industrial companies to profit from the wealth of resources in the region with little in return for the communities who lived there. The Law 70 thus was a massive victory, a turning point in the relationship between the Colombian state and Afro-Colombian peoples. Collective titles

¹ Following the general practice on academic research with Afro-Colombian people as well as discussions with Black leaders in Chocó, I use the terms Black and Afro-Colombian interchangeably.

offered a robust set of protections for the communities by making the titled lands “inalienable, immune from seizure and not subject to the statute of limitations” (*inalienable, inembargable e imprescriptibles*). Put simply, the titled lands cannot be bought or sold outside of the community, guaranteeing that it belongs to the community into perpetuity (Moreno & Palacios Blandón, 2016).

However, a new and far more violent threat would soon present itself in Chocó. The guerrilla organization Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, FARC) and other guerrilla groups had been present in Chocó since the 1970s, taking advantage of its minimal state presence and position near the Panama border to use the department as a rearguard and site for petty smuggling operations. Yet up until the mid-1990s, Chocó was an “oasis of peace” in Colombia (Agudelo, 2001). That all drastically changed in the late 1990s. The very first of the collective titles, received in December of 1996, was followed just a few months later by Operation Genesis, a massive invasion coordinated between the Colombian military and the right-wing paramilitary United Self-Defenses of Colombia (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*, AUC).

This event was the beginning of decades of bitter conflict between the left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitaries and the Colombian state for control in Chocó. The conflict was intensified by competition for Chocó’s rich natural resources: gold, timber, fertile soil, abundant land as well as a dense network of rivers offering access to international drug trafficking routes. Caught in between the armed groups, the communities found themselves as direct targets of the war: armed actors robbed the communities and imposed taxes and tight social and political control, killed suspected ‘collaborators’ and repeatedly displaced the communities *en masse*, both as a “drain the sea” style counterinsurgency tactic and to steal the land and resources of the communities (Guerrero Home, 2013).

The brutality of the war forced the newly forming consejos comunitarios to drastically reorient their work, from the defense of natural resources that drove their formation in the 1980s, to humanitarian aid for the victims and urgent protests that the armed groups and the Colombian government respect the human rights of Chocó’s rural communities. In the process, these organizations generated a series of remarkable innovations to resist violence and armed group impositions, including an ‘active neutrality’

posture, humanitarian zones, rural community stores, flotilla protests, department-level ethnic organizing platforms (Guerrero Home, 2013).

Despite their efforts, the conflict had a debilitating impact on the Black communities of Chocó and their organizations, the *consejos comunitarios*. The armed groups killed many social leaders and forced many more to flee Chocó. The conflict debilitated the *tejido social*, or social fabric, of the communities and undermined respect for the authority of community elders, the foundation of the movement's strength. The economic desperation caused by the conflict pushed many people to cooperate with the armed groups and work in their economies, allowing the groups to replace the *consejos comunitarios* as the *de facto* authorities in the communities. Families were destroyed or divided, and communities were displaced so often that many people gave up on the idea of return. In the aftermath of the violence, the communities have been left with illegal mining, deforestation, coca crops. People have suffered the loss of their ways of life and cultural roots: "la vida ya es muy diferente".²

Thus, the news of the advancing peace negotiations between the government and the FARC were met with consistent, widespread support within the Afro movements of Chocó. In the October 2016 national referendum on the peace deal, 80% of Chocoans voted in favor of the peace deal; in some of the municipalities most affected by the conflict, as much as 95% of votes were in favor of peace.³ And in the earliest days of the peace deal, that optimism was validated with dramatic improvements in the security conditions in rural Chocó. People returned to their communities for the first time in years, families reunited, people could safely go out and hunt or fish in the night. There was a widespread belief within the communities that they had come to a transition point, that the Colombian government was going to extend its control into the territories.⁴

² ASCOBA leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

³ Data available from the Colombia Registraduría: <https://elecciones.registraduria.gov.co/>

⁴ Fieldnotes, AHY conversatorio, 7/9/2020

This newfound tranquility in rural Chocó was matched by the initiation of a massive participatory development program, the Territorially-Focused Development Plans (*Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial*, PDET), which emerged as one of the central commitments of the peace deal. The goal of the program was no less than to consolidate peace in the Colombian countryside by closing the gaps (*cerrar las brechas*) between rural and urban Colombia. Towards that goal, government officials began arriving in communities throughout Chocó, discussing with the campesinos what the needs were in their territories and generating proposals for a vision of community-driven, ethnically-rooted development.

However, that *momento dulce* was not to last. An Afro leader explained to me: “When the peace process began, it was a huge joy for the peasants, thinking that now we can live in peace...those were just our hopes....Colombia celebrated peace but the truth is that here we haven’t had peace”.⁵

From the early days of the peace process, Chocoan social leaders argued that in the absence of an effective state presence, other armed groups would rapidly move to take over FARC territories. That is exactly what has come to pass in Chocó. The ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*) guerrillas have assumed the mantle of Colombia’s largest leftist guerrilla organization; they made a series of agreements with FARC commanders to position themselves to inherit FARC territories in Chocó. Their attempts for dominance in Chocó have failed in the face of a ferocious response from the AGC (*Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia*), the paramilitary successor group which has emerged as Colombia’s most powerful non-state armed actor. Other players, including FARC dissidents, urban gangs and (possibly) Mexican cartels create a still more volatile environment. Meanwhile, the PDET programs, which initially showed so much promise, have lagged under the weight of foot-dragging and shifting priorities within the state, corruption and clientelism.

How do conflict-affected communities navigate these complex, countervailing impacts of a peace deal? In this dissertation, I argue that despite the ‘local turn’ in peacebuilding that has increasingly directed attention to the fundamental necessity of creating space for grassroots visions for peace, we

⁵ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

essentially know very little about how communities at the grassroots engage with the challenging obstacles they face in advancing those visions for peace. As a step towards answering these questions I seek to explain variance in the diverging outcomes and strategies of communities in shaping the local impacts of a peace process.

I conceptualize these diverging outcomes through the interrelated concepts of autonomy and influence. By influence, I mean the capacity of communities to direct the outcomes of broader political processes: the implementation of a government policy; the decision-making of an armed group. By autonomy, I mean the capacity of communities to maintain free and independent control over the internal decision-making within the community – over local natural resource use, cultural and social norms, justice administration – which may also be understood as a form of limited self-rule within the context of a broader state. While *influence* points to the direct impact of community organizing on the peace process, I include autonomy to capture the ways in which the communities seek to protect themselves from the potentially harmful impacts of the peace deal. The concept of autonomy is widely used in the civilian agency literature as well as by the Chocoan community organizations themselves to discuss the key goals of their movements (De la Torre, 2000; Kaplan, 2017; Ortiz-Guerrero et al., 2017; Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019). In essence, these two concepts are two sides of the same coin: influence is external-facing, seeking to advance community interests by way of negotiations with outside entities. Autonomy is internally-facing, seeking to minimize external interference with the affairs of the community.⁶

Thus, for this dissertation, I ask the question: “What explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation?”.

This introductory chapter proceeds as follows: first, I offer an initial engagement with the peacebuilding literature, discussing the motivations for this project and the ways in which my work hopes to advance the field. Then, I discuss my theory of regional integration, pointing to variance in meso-scale organizational structures among rural campesino movements as a key explanation for the variation in

⁶ H/t Prof. Wanis-St. John

community influence and autonomy. I continue by outlining my research design, introducing the figure of the *consejos comunitarios*, defining the key explanatory and outcome variables and discussing my case selection. I conclude by offering an overview of the rest of the dissertation.

Engaging with the Peacebuilding Literature

Motivating Questions: Linking National and Local Peacebuilding

This dissertation has been my attempt to engage with a tension at the heart of what Lederach (2012, p. 9) describes as the peacebuilding literature's "most significant weakness": the 'vertical gap'...the lack of connection between community and political processes of negotiation". Under the banner of the "local turn", the peacebuilding literature effectively argues that translating a national peace process into sustainable local peace depends on the inclusion and participation of everyday civilians. It furthermore recognizes the significant political obstacles that civilians face in advancing their visions for peace. Yet I argue that it insufficiently engages with the question of how civilians overcome the structural power asymmetries that they face in advancing transformative change. In the following section, I provide an overview of the link between national and local peace processes, highlighting the necessity of 'local' inclusion. I then offer a broad typology of obstacles that civilians face in advancing local peacebuilding: failures of peace implementation and new threats created by a peace process. I conclude the section by exploring what answers the peacebuilding literature offers for understanding civilian agency in shaping the impacts of a peace process and define how I seek to expand on this literature.

A national peace process offers a monumental opportunity for a country to overcome a history of violence and injustice. I define a peace process as the formal negotiation and implementation of a peace deal. As Call and Cousens (2008, p. 4) argue, peace agreements and their implementation "define...enable and constrain the framework for peacebuilding". Galtung and Tisné (2009, p. 93) similarly argue that a peace deal creates significant path-determinant consequences, "setting the stage for the future direction of the country". A range of scholars and practitioners argue that a peace process represents a uniquely favorable peacebuilding moment, a "window of opportunity" with the possibilities to inculcate long-term political, economic and social transformations addressing underlying causes of conflict (Dudouet, 2017; Galtung & Tisné, 2009; Salamanca et al., 2017).

Despite the undeniable opportunity that peace deals present to a society, they are inherently fragile processes that often fail; even nominal 'success' cases tend to be marked by persistent insecurity and instability (Call, 2012; Westendorf, 2015). One consistent line of critique has focused on the tendency of peacebuilding efforts to nearly exclusively focus on national-scale causes of conflict, operating out of the national capital and proceeding in a top-down fashion (Autesserre, 2017; Manning, 2003; Richmond, 2006). I define the local as the subnational scale at which everyday citizens experience their lives, through interactions in their communities, with the local government, in the economies and social and cultural practices that shape the lives of themselves and the people they know.

Manning (2003) argues that frequently, the greatest challenges to peace implementation emerge from the bottom, when elite actors seek to extend state authority and the rule of law to the local level. However, both theory and practice had thus far focused on building central state institutions, practically and intellectually ignoring the challenges of extending state authority. The severe difficulties for either state counterinsurgents or peacekeepers to establish durable security because of localized threats offered a forceful impetus to reconsider the assumptions that local conflict drivers mirrored national-level causes, and that national peace efforts would inevitably "trickle down" (Autesserre, 2014, 2017). Autesserre (2010, p. 11) most forcefully demonstrated the failure of international peacebuilding projects through the 2000s to address these local conflicts, which they viewed as, "unimportant, unfamiliar, and unmanageable".

In response, peacebuilding scholarship has increasingly centered 'local' or 'grassroots' peacebuilding approaches, a shift dubbed as peacebuilding's "local turn". Building on the work of peacebuilding thinkers like Adam Curle, Elise Boulding and John Paul Lederach, this approach has sought to reframe the approach of international peacebuilders to communities in conflict zones, in which local people are "resources for" and not "recipients of" peacebuilding (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015). As such, this approach has argued that peacebuilding work should seek to create space for 'local agency', both by empowering autonomous civilian peacebuilding work and by including local civilian stakeholders and culturally relevant approaches directly in the peacebuilding and statebuilding process. The logic of

this approach is that it is perceived as more legitimate, culturally resonant, sustainable, and better targeted towards the ‘real’ drivers of conflict (Boege, 2011; Dudouet & Lundström, 2016).

I argue that this emergent consensus on the importance of local inclusion has fundamentally reshaped peace processes. The ‘local turn’ has been deeply integrated into the international community’s system of peacebuilding norms. Repeated UN documents from the last decade make reference to the need to create local ownership and build local capacity in order to fully engage a range of local actors in peacebuilding planning and implementation (*From Rhetoric to Practice*, 2011; *Report of the Secretary-General*, 2012; *Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, 2010). Additional emphasis has been placed on local governance and statebuilding as a vital means of peacebuilding (*Governance for Peace*, 2011; *Peace Dividends and Beyond*, 2012). This emphasis on inclusive statebuilding at the local level has been echoed by other major international players including DFID (DFID, 2010) and the World Bank (*The State- and Peacebuilding Fund*, 2011).

The result of this norm shift towards the local, I argue, is that contemporary peace processes are virtually guaranteed to include a wide range of projects funded by the state and international actors that seek to involve local actors, including civilians, in the process of building local peace. Despite this massive shift in international attention towards the ‘local’, I make the argument in this dissertation that we fundamentally know fairly little about what makes such grassroots peacebuilding efforts successful, especially in the face of well-resourced and/or well-armed opposition. This is the motivating question of my dissertation: how can grassroots peacebuilding actors overcome the power asymmetries they are likely to face?

Obstacles to Peace Implementation

The peacebuilding literature has an expansive well of empirical evidence illustrating why we should expect severe political obstacles in any grassroots peacebuilding effort. Fundamentally, peace is a power-laden process in which elites with a demonstrated capacity for violence compete for limited power and resources; attempts to promote inclusive social change frequently threaten elite interests (Albertus & Kaplan, 2013; Berg, 2020; Dininio, 2009). I categorize two kinds of threats to grassroots-driven

peacebuilding: implementation failures in state peacebuilding programs, and new threats emerging from the peace deal.

First, the state may fail to implement the peace because of a lack of political capacity or (state or non-state) political will, or because of political obstacles outside of the state. The countries that experience civil wars already tend to have low state capacity (Fearon & Laitin, 2003); the destruction of civil war further undermines an already fragile state (Chen et al., 2007). And yet, these same states are tasked with leading the mammoth task of peace implementation and post-war reconstruction. Capacity gaps may undermine implementation either because of lack of resources, lack of administrative capacity and insufficient coordination (Call, 2011; Ghani & Lockhart, 2008; Menkhaus, 2006).

Beyond issues of state capacity, implementation failures can also be caused by issues of political will both inside and outside of the state. Political blockages on issues such as land reform or refugee resettlement may prove to be irresolvable or sensitive enough to threaten the peace (Manning, 2003). Similarly, power-sharing compromises deemed necessary to arrive at a peace agreement may grant effective vetoes to key factions; in conditions of high polarization, further implementation of the peace can become effectively blocked (Dininio, 2009; Dudouet & Lundström, 2016). National and local elites may block peacebuilding programs both through informal channels and legal mechanisms: selective inaction, legal challenges and alterations to slow and water down policy, and links to informal allies willing to use violence (Albertus & Kaplan, 2013; Berg, 2020; Dininio, 2009). Even if elites don't directly challenge a policy, persistent corruption drains peace implementation of necessary resources (June & Heller, 2009; Lindberg & Orjuela, 2014; Scharbatke-Church & Reiling, 2009). Finally, international actors, including other states, diaspora groups or multinational corporations, may seek to interfere with peace implementation if it runs counter to their perceived interests (Newman & Richmond, 2006).

Meanwhile, despite the significant hope a peace deal represents, it is also rife with potential to reignite violence for civilians through a variety of avenues: commitment and information problems in a DDR process, 'spoiler' violence, power vacuums, or by failing to address and/or exacerbating existing grievances and causes of conflict. Alternatively, the expanding 'post-conflict' state may itself be the threat.

A DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) process may fail, leading to remobilization of the main conflict parties (Walter, 2002). Deep underlying distrust in the other party prompts endemic cheating, 'hedging bets' and potentially spiraling security dilemmas by both sides, eventually leading back to conflict (Haywood, 2014; Krebs & Licklider, 2016; Kurtenbach & Wulf, 2012; Spear, 2002). Information and commitment problems may also manifest internally, splintering armed groups and leading to remilitarized factions (Cronin, 2006; Duursma & Fliervoet, 2021; Pearlman, 2009; Staniland, 2014). Alternatively, "spoiler" groups from inside or outside of the peace process may use violence to deliberately undermine the peace, either because actors 'want in' to the peace and its spoils, or because they see the peace as an attack on their interests (Stedman, 1997; Zahar, 2008). Likewise, peace deals and their (failed or partial) implementation can further inflame grievances by creating unsustainable expectations or exacerbating pre-existing horizontal inequalities (Schouten, 2011; Woodward, 2002).

A peace process creates ample opportunity for new sources of violence – new insurgent groups, dissident factions and criminals – to emerge. There is often an abundance of small arms cheaply and readily available, a newly available labor force of unemployed ex-combatants and economic opportunities to control the rents that demobilizing armed groups have left behind (Garzón-Vergara, 2015; Munive & Stepputat, 2015; Ruggeri et al., 2017). In contrast, while most of the previous conflict drivers have focused on a weak state as a permissive condition for violence, the state itself may constitute a central threat for communities in the 'post-conflict' space. Berg (2020) identifies that state security forces may emerge from conflict strengthened and be able to consolidate power and attack perceived opponents in the absence of strong enough civilian control. The state may likewise perceive autonomous civilian sources of local order, such as peace communities or tribal authorities, as a rival power base and a threat to its authority (Menkhaus, 2006; Mitchell, 2012).

Answers in the Literature and Remaining Questions

In the previous sections, I have illustrated both the increasing recognition for the importance of including local-level civilians in the peacebuilding process as well as the significant obstacles and threats

those civilians face in that process. What tools does the peacebuilding literature offer to understand the capacity of local civilians to shape the local impacts of a peace process?

The grassroots peacebuilding literature offers a useful point of departure. The literature tends to focus on a conflict resolution frame: civilians at the grassroots contribute to peace by constructing local spaces for dialogue, reconciliation and dispute resolution. These forms of peacebuilding are effective because they are culturally intuitive and legitimate, based on consensus, relationships and existing social norms. However, speaking broadly, the grassroots peacebuilding literature generally either fails to engage with the question of power dynamics entirely, or else it notes the fundamental vulnerability of grassroots-scale actors to co-option and coercion, and their limitations to affect issues stemming from scales beyond the community level. Grassroots efforts may also fail to contribute to peace because of their own internal limitations, as they may be built on regressive values or reflect dominant local interests (Boege, 2011; Mac Ginty, 2010).

One attempt to engage with issues of power asymmetries that grassroots actors face is the “Infrastructure for Peace” literature, which builds from Lederach’s (1997) ‘peacebuilding pyramid’ and emphasizes the need to build linkages across the grassroots, meso and elite-level scales. However, this approach sometimes tends towards a fairly depoliticized understanding of peacebuilding, rendering conflict fixable through improved coordination and dialogue. It readily admits that local peace committees often ‘lack clout’, are easily ignored by political elites and are highly vulnerable to shifting structural conditions (Kamatsiko, 2015; Odendaal, 2012; van Tongeren, 2013).

Another offshoot of the grassroots peacebuilding literature, ‘hybrid peacebuilding’, led by Roger Mac Ginty and Oliver Richmond, foregrounds questions of power and resistance between ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ peace processes and investigates the delicate accommodations and integrations that result from this interaction, the ‘hybrid peace’ (Mac Ginty, 2010, 2011; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013; Richmond & Mitchell, 2011). This literature argues that local capacity to shape peacebuilding interventions are determined by the ability to resist, ignore or adapt liberal interventions or maintain alternative forms of peacemaking. A related body of literature builds from these critical studies on hybridity, going even deeper into the focus on everyday resistance and shifting the target of resistance from international

peacebuilders to national statebuilders. The work of Iñiguez de Heredia (2012, 2017) and Kerannen (2013) and others reveals everyday strategies of resistance to official state peacebuilding programs: mockery, evasion, co-option, and the construction of alternative sources of governance.

In contrast to the work on ‘everyday’ or hidden repertoires of resistance, the “Mass Mobilization and Peace” literature explores the linkages between mass mobilization and transitions from conflict to peace and democracy. Scholars working at the intersection of nonviolence and negotiation argue that nonviolent mass mobilization levels power asymmetries by creating a situation so pressure-packed and costly that elites are forced to negotiate on fair terms (Dudouet, 2017; Finnegan & Hackley, 2008; Wanis-St. John & Rosen, 2017). Their work demonstrates that bottom-up mass mobilization can quite literally initiate and sustain a peace process and set the stage for post-war democratization. Peace implementation, as opposed to peace negotiation, has received somewhat less attention. Nevertheless, Dudouet (2017) argues that civil resistance and mass mobilization play an essential role in preventing violent backsliding or autocratic backlash, putting pressure on the state and other key stakeholders to implement their commitments to progressive reform and social justice.

The literature on civil society in peace processes further supplements these arguments by pointing to the importance of the organizational forms that such resistance strategies take. This work describes the huge range of peacemaking work conducted by civil society organizations (CSOs), voluntary organizations separate from the state with highly mutable organizational forms, ranging from urban NGOs to rural mass movement organizations (Kew & Wanis-St. John, 2008; Nilsson, 2012; Paffenholtz, 2011; Paffenholz, 2014; Pouligny, 2005).

My dissertation asks, “What explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation”, with specific emphasis on two challenges likely to always be present: implementation failures and new threats of violence. The existing peacebuilding literature that I have pointed to offers some rich insights into this question. At the tactical level, these bodies of literature illustrate the range of nonviolent tactics that civilians use to influence peace processes, from nearly invisible strategies of individual avoidance and evasion to mass mobilizations of thousands of people. On scale, the literature points to the necessity to aggregate beyond the community level, to build power

through collective mobilization. On organizations, the literature points to the need for academics to develop differentiated understandings of organizational types and structures, pointing to the ways that organizations vary in their reach, purpose and internal relationships.

My dissertation seeks to pick up where this work has left off: on tactics, I hope to build an understanding of the repertoires of tactics that are most relevant for local actors in responding to the twin challenges of local peace implementation discussed above, implementation failures and new sources of violence. On scale, I hope to offer new understandings of civilian action at the meso- or regional-scale, the level of aggregation above the individual community. Specifically, I hope to understand what kind of collective organizing structures operate at this level, and how they function to enable communities to potentially overcome the structural power asymmetries and “scale shift” — that is, the process of accessing power holders and coordinating with allies at scales beyond the individual community to the regional, national and international levels (Soule, 2013). On organizations, I seek to advance our understanding of the impacts of organizational differences, by attempting to link variation in the organizational structures of CSOs and their subsequent impacts on local peace outcomes. In doing so, my dissertation not only offers new insight into all three issues, but also carves out new analytical territory by explicitly linking explorations of scale and structure to formulate a theory of grassroots power in peacebuilding. I explore these goals in greater depth in the subsequent section by outlining a theory of regional integration in a peace process.

Outlining a Theory of Regional Integration

Regional Integration in the Social Movement Literature

Thus, this project focuses on variation in meso-scale civilian collective organizing structures, and how these differences impact the outcomes most relevant to civilians in a peace process: their autonomy and influence over local peace outcomes. I focus on a central cleavage in the social movement literature, between organizational integration and unit independence. This can be understood as the degree of centralization of authority within an organization: what degree of independence do the individuals (or communities, local chapters, etc.) of an organization have? What degree of decision-making power is held exclusively by the leadership of the organization? In the context of local peacemaking, I define

regional integration as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to a regional organization.

This variation hearkens back to fundamental debates that shaped the emergence of social movement theory, comparing the effectiveness of centralized, formalized, bureaucratic organizations against more 'spontaneous' or 'informal' forms of protest (Gamson, 1975; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Piven & Cloward, 1979). The literature moved on from debates about the "best" organizational form, recognizing that no one organizational approach is inherently better for movement organizations, and that key movement tasks such as communication and coordination can be achieved in multiple ways (Den Hond et al. 2015). However, different choices in organizational structures create path-dependent consequences and trade-offs for movements. Structure shapes an organization's ability to mobilize supporters and negotiate with third parties as well as its approaches to decision-making, tactics and strategy, organizational maintenance and conflict resolution practices, among other crucial issues (Staggenborg 1989, Clemens and Minkoff 2004).

As such, variations in structure between integration and independence generate consequential tradeoffs in the ability of communities to pursue their autonomy and influence in a peace process, both in their ability to protect themselves from the threats generated by a peace process, and to press for peace implementation. I argue that while more integrated organizations will likely benefit from greater organizational capacity, cohesion across communities and external legitimacy, they are at a relative disadvantage in terms of membership participation, local independence and decision-making agility.

Following the body of work on organizational structure in the social movement literature, I expect that increasing regional integration among groups of communities should generate three kinds of advantages: increased organizational capacity, regional cohesion and external legitimacy.

First, I argue that increasing regional integration should lead to increasing organizational capacity: more resources, increased professionalization and greater specialized division of labor. Through regional integration, communities collectively create a larger base of resources and human capital, including labor, experience, skills, expertise, and sheer numbers to draw on as compared to individual

communities. Furthermore, regional integration is likely to lead to increased bureaucratization, which I define as rule-bound hierarchical authority, procedural formality and a sophisticated division of labor (Fogarty, 2011, Leach 2005). Bureaucracies create sophisticated divisions of labor that allow for the benefits of specialization: parts of the organization focus on specific movement-related tasks and develop expertise through repeat practice (Polletta 2013).

Second, I argue that increasing regional integration allows groups of communities to more fluidly act collectively with a cohesive strategy and vision, through specific advantages in coordination, communication, rule enforcement and conflict resolution. Regional integration provides distinct coordination advantages by providing a structure for internal linkages and communications (Gerhards and Rucht 1992) and by creating a clear hierarchy and routinized procedures that reduce ambiguity and promote efficient decision-making (Caniglia and Carmin 2005, Staggenborg 1989). Similarly, I argue that increasing regional integration creates increased opportunities for information sharing among local groups by creating formal movement infrastructure for information sharing, serving as a clearinghouse for communications and a bridge between otherwise disparate groups. Furthermore, the formalization of linkages between communities, the creation of a centralized decision-making structure and the bureaucratization that typically accompanies those processes generate rules and enforcement mechanisms that facilitate top-down control in the communities. As such, I argue that regional integration creates advantages in the formal capacity to monitor and enforce rules and resolve conflicts within the communities (Den Hond et al. 2015).

Finally, I argue that the benefits of organizational capacity and regional cohesion are compounded by the external legitimacy granted towards more regionally integrated communities. The size of an organization, its professionalization and its level of formalization are signals to outside actors — in particular, to actors such as foundations, international organizations and governments, who happen to share those traits — of a movement's legitimacy (Andrews et al. 2010, Minkoff 1993). Legitimacy confers tangible benefits: more funding, positive media attention, and access to state institutional spaces.

Given the benefits of centralization, what would drive communities to select independence? This choice is not necessarily driven purely by historical contingency or irrationality: there are serious trade-

offs in regional integration. Specifically, integrated organizations suffer participatory deficits and are frequently overly rigid. As such, more independence for communities is likely to lead to greater membership commitment and offer more flexibility and autonomy to local actors.

Explorations of fundamental trade-offs between bureaucratic efficiency and democratic values in mass organizations date back to Weber (De Bakker et al. 2017), elaborated most famously in Michels' (1911) concept of the "Iron Law of Oligarchy" from his study on German political parties. De Bakker et al. (2017) theorize that the oligarchic tendencies linked to bureaucratized movement organizations have three interrelated consequences for the movement: goal displacement, co-option and membership apathy. Because leaders prioritize organizational (and self-) preservation over movement goals, they shift their demands and tactics, typically (though not exclusively) in a moderating direction to avoid overt challenges to the status quo that might endanger the organization (Clemens and Minkoff 2004, Edwards and McCarthy 2003, Rucht 1999). Piven (2013) argues that the structure of an integrated, bureaucratized organization, which creates a leadership class isolated from the membership, impedes upwards accountability within organizations and makes them vulnerable to co-option. Finally, over-bureaucratization can easily result in the alienation of the membership from an organization that may no longer serve their interests or respond to demands for accountability (Leach 2005).

In contrast, smaller, more independent organizations don't face the same time and space constraints on direct participation (Saunders 2009). It is also significantly more feasible for members of the organization to regularly meet face to face and generate personal connections, which della Porta (2009) argues facilitates participatory democracy within organizations. For similar logistical reasons, smaller organizations in decentralized movements are more likely to employ deliberative, consensus-based decision-making (Guigni and Nai 2009). More direct opportunities to participate in decision-making has been shown to generate enthusiasm for the work, attachment and a sense of ownership over the organization (Choi Fitzpatrick 2014, Corrigan-Brown 2012).

In addition to their democratic deficits, centralized, bureaucratic organizations are notoriously rigid (Haveman 1993). Formalization, routinization and rule-making all enhance internal control, but bring specific costs for movements: a loss of local decision-making power and innovation. When individual

communities integrate themselves into a regional organization, they give up some of their independence; that is, they lose some control over goals, strategies and other decisions that directly affect their community. That independence may in itself have intrinsic value for local groups. However, local independence also has significant strategic value. First, it allows for more flexibility to adapt strategies, tactics and goals to the particularities and needs of a specific local context, maximizing the value of local knowledge. Local actors with greater independence can adapt more quickly to rapidly changing situations on the ground, without having to wait for approval for action from a slow-moving bureaucracy (Caniglia and Carmin 2005, Ganz 2010). Finally, local independence enables bottom-up accountability by creating strong countervailing pressure within the organization (Fox and Hernandez, 1989).

Applying Regional Integration to the Peace Process Context

In order to understand how variation in regional integration maps onto the local dynamics of a peace process, I import two theories linked to the two obstacles I pointed to blocking community autonomy and influence in a peace process: implementation failures and violence linked to the peace process. In order to explain how communities might overcome implementation failures, I look to the literature on social accountability. To explain how communities defend themselves from new threats during the peace process, I look to the literature on civilian resistance to conflict.

Given its focus on civilian bottom-up monitoring and sanctioning of state failure to deliver on entitlements and rights, the field of social accountability offers a sound starting point. Social accountability can be understood as civilian-led actions to demand accountability, “other than the traditional vertical channels (elections) and horizontal channels (legislatures and institutional checks and balances) of formal political accountability” (Schouten 2011, p. 1). Thus, social accountability encompasses a range of tactics, from ‘outsider’ approaches such as mass protest to ‘insider’ approaches such as direct participation in invited spaces (Schatz 2003).

Social accountability mechanisms work to advance the demands of civilian actors either by imposing costs on state actors or through institutionalization, that is, through direct participation in governance. Civilians can impose costs to press for accountability by activating and supporting oversight institutions within the state, passing information and offering political cover to supportive bureaucrats

(Fox, 2016). In the absence of bureaucratic allies, civilians can also deploy civil resistance tactics such as marches, boycotts and strikes to put pressure on the state (Beyerle, 2011).

As an alternative to the 'costs' mechanisms above, civilians can also generate accountability through institutionalization mechanisms, that is, through direct participation in governance. Governments may bring civilians into decision-making spaces in response to movement or international pressure, out of a desire to reform state bureaucracies or to improve the image of government by branding it as 'democratic and participatory' (Wampler 2008). Once inside governance spaces, civilians can push for accountability through collaboration and collective problem-solving or by exercising formal and informal powers allotted to them (Abers and Keck 2009). Both the advantages (access, resources, information, decision-making power) and disadvantages (co-option and ineffectiveness) of institutional strategies illustrate why accountability scholars argue that institutional and extra-institutional approaches are complementary: in challenging accountability contexts, civilians typically must draw on both to be successful (Beyerle 2011, Grimes 2008, Wampler 2008).

In addition to the significant opportunity a peace deal represents, it is also rife with potential to reignite violence for civilians. In order to explain how civilians can protect themselves from the potential threats emerging from a peace deal, I turn to the literature on civilian resistance in conflict. This body of literature has identified that even in extremely limiting circumstances, civilians have meaningful opportunities to resist violence and armed group control, with consequential outcomes (Arjona 2016, Barter 2014, Kaplan 2017). By shifting the cost/benefit analysis of armed groups and/or actively imposing costs on armed groups (instrumental mechanisms) or by persuasion and by reshaping the internal norms of armed groups (normative mechanisms), civilians can increase their autonomy and reduce the violence they face.

First, if violence against civilians is a joint product between competing armed groups and civilians with their own internal conflicts and private interests, as Kalyvas (2006) argues, then self-reliance, social cohesion, strong conflict resolution mechanisms and a collective commitment to avoiding entanglements with armed groups could dramatically limit violence by reducing the inroads of armed groups into the community (Kaplan 2017). In addition to raising the costs of entry, communities also have more

confrontational strategies available to them; these strategies work by directly imposing costs on armed groups, forcing them to shift behavior or continue to suffer consequences. Armed groups to varying degrees seek legitimacy, material aid and information from civilians, through both “everyday resistance” strategies and overt protest, civilians can deny these resources and impose real costs on armed groups (Kaplan 2017, Mouly et al. 2015). Finally, civilians can also use persuasion and dialogue to get armed groups to shift their behavior. Civilians, as opposed to government officials or outside actors, enjoy a “special credibility” as ‘authentic’ voices of the people and thus their complaints may be accorded more legitimacy by armed groups. The potential for trust in dialogue is enhanced by any existing ties between civilians and the armed group, such as shared ethnicity or religion, or even direct family ties (Mouly and Garrido, 2018).

Applying these theoretical frameworks to the variation in regional integration I describe above, I predict that in the context of pushing for peace implementation, increasing integration likely offers advantages in mobilization and scale-shift, resilience to state pressure, professionalized negotiation, access to institutional spaces, and third party support. However, I argue that independence offers communities relative advantages in collective decision-making, internal accountability and smoother communications between membership (the principals) and the leadership (the agents). In the context of collective protection and resistance against violent threats, increasing integration offers advantages in collective mobilization for protest, safety in numbers, internal enforcement of neutrality rules, collective institution-building and information sharing for early warnings. However, more independent communities are advantaged in membership commitment, local flexibility and rapid responses to crises. I summarize these arguments in the table below, which I expand on in much greater detail in my theory chapter.

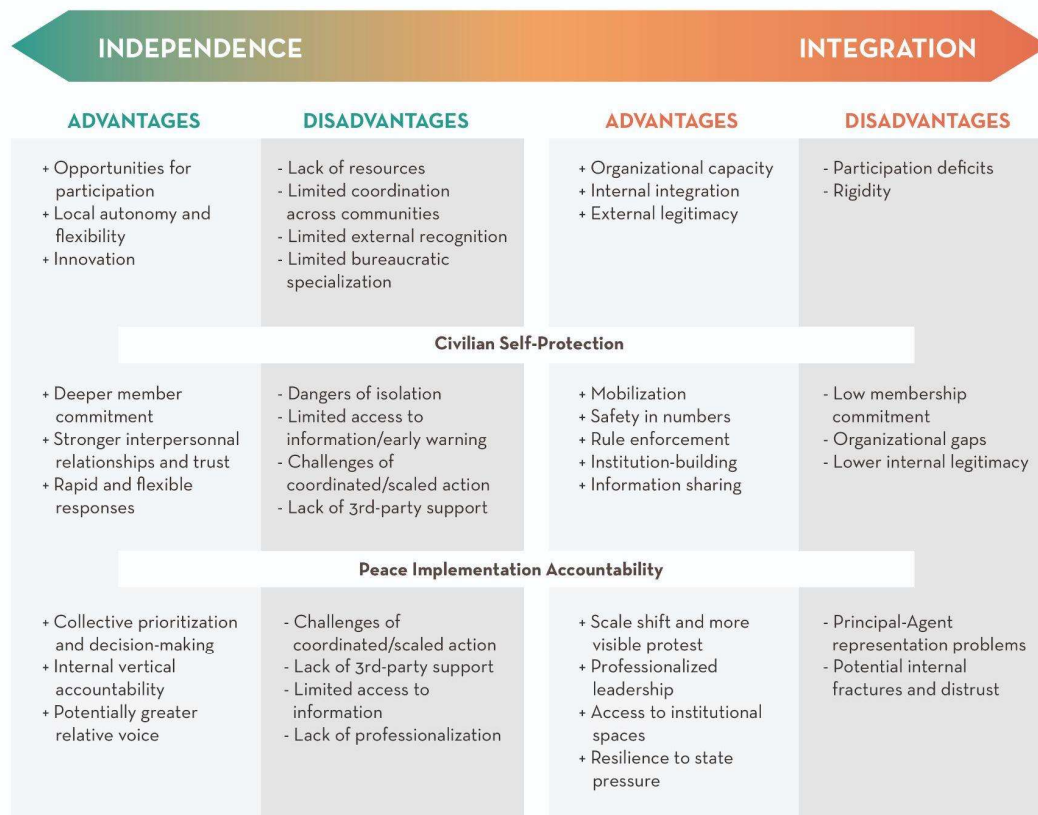


Figure 1: Independence and Integration Trade-offs for Community Peacebuilding

Research Design

This dissertation asks the question: what explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation? In response, I examine the explanatory variable ‘regional integration’, defined as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. In order to test this theory, I develop a research design that includes two controlled comparisons of three cases each, ranging from ‘independence’ to ‘partial integration’ to ‘full integration’. This variation in regional integration serves as my independent variable; I test the impact of this regional integration against two outcomes: post-conflict violence and state-led peace implementation. In this section, I outline my research design. I summarize my approach to controlled comparison, introduce my cases, and outline how variance in regional integration maps onto my cases. I then define,

operationalize and justify my two outcomes and explore possible alternative explanations. I finish by discussing my approach to fieldwork.

Following Slater and Ziblatt (2013), I define controlled comparison as a methodological strategy in which a researcher strategically selects two or more cases for analysis that either demonstrate varying outcomes despite many shared characteristics (most-similar approach) or a shared outcome despite many differences (most-different approach). I adopt a most-similar approach: for each of my controlled comparisons, I select three geographically proximate cases over the same time frame (2016-2021) that are as similar as possible in every way except for variation in my independent variable: the degree of regional integration.

I select the controlled comparison method based on the method's relative advantages over both single-case studies and large-n studies. Relative to large-n studies, controlled comparisons offer a level of analytical richness per each case that would be impossible in larger studies. This fine-grained analysis is necessary for research on civilian autonomy and influence in peacebuilding contexts, which often manifests in ways that are subtle or difficult to measure; large-N studies might not be able to capture this effect. Relative to single cases, comparison potentially has the ability to more effectively evaluate the impact of a given causal mechanism, providing additional analytical leverage by generating a quasi-counterfactual (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; S. Tarrow, 2010). As such, controlled comparisons generate rich insights into causal effects and help account for competing hypotheses while still providing analytical space to dig deep into the details and causal processes of each case.

Introducing the Consejos Comunitarios

My cases are six clusters of communities located in *consejos comunitarios* in two regions of Chocó, Atrato and Baudó. Chocó is a department in the Pacific region of Colombia. In the national imagination of Colombia, Chocó is primarily characterized by its ethnic makeup, poverty and unique climate (Restrepo, 2013). Based on the 2005 census, the department is 83% Afro-Colombian and 13%



Figure 2: Introducing Atrato and Baudó

indigenous, one of only two majority-black departments in Colombia. The department is one of the poorest in Colombia; it has the fourth lowest GDP per capita (about \$2200) and the third-highest percentage of people living in poverty (65%).⁷ Its lowland geography on the seaward side of Colombia's steep interior mountain ranges acts as a rain catch. As a result, the department is one of the rainiest places in the world, characterized by lush tropical forest crosscut by a vast network of rivers that serve as the main form of transportation.

Focusing on a single region in Colombia was a decision made for methodological leverage, relevance and practicality. Narrowing my universe of cases to a

specific subnational regional allows me to hold relevant variables including history, culture and institutional configurations constant (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). Furthermore, Colombia, and especially the region of Chocó, is a highly relevant case for post-conflict grassroots mobilization. Given the length of the conflict and the robustness and innovation of grassroots organizing for peace in Colombia, the country has always served as a crucial laboratory for grassroots peacebuilding, which is reflected in the breadth of research on the subject (Alther, 2006; Aponte & Benavides, 2016; Arjona, 2017; Idler et al., 2015; Kaplan, 2017; Mouly & Garrido, 2017). Furthermore, following a peace process that is already in motion also offers a unique opportunity to investigate how rural organizations manage the transition process of a peace deal while that process is actively in motion. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that

⁷ Statistics taken from the 2018 Census, available from the Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics: dane.gov.co. Poverty rate based on NBI (Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas, Unmet Basic Needs), which is a multidimensional poverty indicator assessing households' living conditions including inadequate housing, access to public services, critical overcrowding, economic dependency and school attendance. Households that do not meet the minimum threshold in at least one indicator are classified as poor. Further discussion of the methodology available: (Angulo et al., 2016).

narrowing my focus on a single region in Colombia introduces challenges to generalizability in my study. This issue can be rectified in future research by applying this theoretical framework to other contexts.

My cases are six groups of communities organized in *consejos comunitarios* in the Atrato and Baudó river basins. Consejos comunitarios are an 'ethno-territorial' organization that administer the collective land titles of black communities⁸. Collective land titles were created by the Law 70 of 1993; they create a property that is collectively owned by the people who have historically lived within its boundaries. The lands cannot be bought or sold outside of the community, guaranteeing that they belong to the community into perpetuity (Moreno & Palacios Blandón, 2016). Before the Law 70, the Colombian government treated the vast majority of the Pacific region as *baldíos*, or empty lands belonging to the state. This legal framework allowed logging, mining and agro-industrial companies to profit from the wealth of resources in the region with little in return for the communities who lived there. The Law 70 recognized Afro-Colombians as an ethnic group with territorial rights, paving the way for the collective titles (Restrepo, 2013).

In Colombia, there are currently 232 formally recognized land titles covering 5.7 million hectares; the vast majority of which are in the Colombian Pacific region. Within these collective land titles, the consejo comunitario is the "maximum internal authority" charged with a specific set of functions: administer the territory within their collective title and manage the natural resources therein; represent the interests of the communities to external parties, defend the rights of the communities and preserve their culture; mediate and resolve internal disputes. All the consejos comunitarios are legally mandated to share the same basic structure, consisting of a general assembly (*asamblea general*), a board of directors (*junta directiva*) and a legal representative (*representante legal*) (Hinestroza Cuesta & Cuesta Rentería, 2017; Rolland, 2005).

⁸ The legal definition under the Law 70 of a black community is a "set of families of Afro-Colombian descent that have their own culture, share a history and have their own traditions and customs in relation to the lands they live in, and which conserve an identity consciousness that distinguishes them from other ethnic groups", from article 2, numeral 5 of Law 70 of 1993, cited in: (Hinestroza Cuesta & Cuesta Rentería, 2017, p. 164).

Key Variables

I explore the independent variable 'regional integration', which I define as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional-scale organizations. Thus, my project takes a multi-scalar approach to the level of analysis, looking at the interactions between 'community' and 'region'.

Among the consejos comunitarios of Chocó, there is massive variation in their size. This variation reflects the main titling strategies in Chocó: with some exceptions, communities either sought titles that corresponded to their individual community, or else they formed large titles that included all of the communities along an entire section of a river basin. Some groups of communities have taken a middle road between these two approaches, opting for individual community titles but forming associations of consejos comunitarios in the same river basin to collectively represent their interests. This variation forms the basis of my independent variable: regional integration.

I define regional integration as a two-part typology of representative functions and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. By representative functions, I mean: is there a formal regional body that has recognized authority to represent the communities in negotiations with external parties? An example would include negotiating an economic project with a corporation or representing the needs of the communities to state institutions; however, final decision to go ahead with any specific project would still require the approval of the individual communities. By legal authority, I mean: does the regional body have the power to make legally binding decisions for the communities? As opposed to representative functions, in this instance, the regional organization has the legal authority both to represent the interests of communities and the final authority to make decisions and approve projects within its territory.

This classification system generates a three-part typology of regional integration, ranging from **independent communities**, which retain all legal authority over the territory as well as representational duties at the community level, to **associations of consejos comunitarios**, which retain legal authority at the community level, but participate in associations which represent their interests externally, to highly

integrated **consejos comunitarios mayores**, which concentrate both legal authority and representational functions at the regional level.



Figure 3: Degrees of Integration Among the Consejos Comunitarios

I argue that a peace process presents communities with two key challenges: new threats from violent groups and obstacles to aspects of state-led peace implementation that communities see within their interests. Evidently, there are no perfect indicators that can encapsulate the heterogeneous and subjective definitions within the communities in this study either for violence or for their desired outcomes from state-led peace implementation. My approach to this issue is to build indicators from participatory processes involving the communities under study, in which members of the communities debated and generated their own collective understandings of these two concepts. For the violence indicator, I look to the *Acuerdo Humanitario ¡Ya! para el Chocó* (Humanitarian Agreement Now! For Chocó, AHY), a grassroots peace effort that sought to advance an ethnic perspective in peace negotiations in 2017 with the ELN. To define community interests in state-led peace implementation, I focus on the PDETs, a participatory development program agreed to in the peace deal, in which the communities under study

worked with government representatives to develop a wide-ranging set of initiatives for the state to address the multi-faceted harm to rural areas caused by the conflict.

In response to the reactivation of armed conflict following the 2016 peace deal, Chocoan organizations came together to launch the Acuerdo Humanitario ¡Ya!, which presents a set of humanitarian demands to overcome the conflict in Chocó, with a specific focus on advancing an ethnic perspective in the then-ongoing negotiations between the ELN and the Colombian government.⁹ The initiative was collectively shaped in August 2017 by 90 Chocoan civil society and ethno-territorial organizations representing diverse voices in Chocoan society.¹⁰ The AHY is a set of demands on behalf of the Chocoan communities calling for an immediate ceasefire and demobilization by all armed groups, respect for the territorial autonomy of the communities as well as an end to violence, displacement, confinement, recruitment and illegal economies affecting communities, recognizing the specific impacts of violence against minors, women and LGBTQ people.

From this set of 11 collectively defined demands for peace, I build my indicators for violence, specifically: 1) any violation of the territorial autonomy of the communities (establishing any military installations inside the community's borders, demanding support or aid from the communities, interfering in the community's decision-making, imposing rules on the community, desecrating sacred spaces, planting any mines in the community's territory), 2) establishing any illegal economies within the borders of the communities, including mining or coca crops, and 3) any form of direct violence against community members, including physical violence, displacement, confinement, recruitment, and sexual violence).

⁹ The talks between the ELN and the government started in January 2018 under the presidency of Juan Manuel Santos and were interrupted in January 2019 by current President Iván Duque right following an attack on a police station by the armed group.

¹⁰ A full list of signatories can be found here: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Acuerdo-Humanitario.pdf>. Especially notable was the role of women's and LGBTQ organizations that worked to expand the platform to include and account for a recognition of the specific impacts the war has had on women, gay and trans people (Primer Informe De Seguimiento Al Acuerdo Humanitario ¡Ya!, 2019).

The PDETs are a national-scale participatory development plan, one of the centerpiece programs of the 2016 peace deal. 170 municipalities were selected for the program, grouped into 16 subregions.¹¹ The municipalities were (officially) selected according to the following criteria: high poverty, presence of illicit crops, weak state presence and historical presence of the armed conflict. The PDET development initiatives were developed in a three-tiered structure: community assemblies generated a local diagnostic and elected representatives to participate in a municipal assembly, who in turn elected representatives to participate in a regional-level assembly to create a list of initiatives, known as the PATRS (Action Plan for Regional Transformation, *Plan de Acción para la Transformación Regional*), based on the diagnostics of the communities (Guarín et al., 2018).

Given that these priorities emerged from internal discussions within the community, I take the development priorities as expressions of the interests of the communities; a reflection of what the communities under study hoped to gain from the peace deal. The initiatives encapsulated in these planning documents carry the force of law; that is, the state is obligated to implement them. Nevertheless, foot-dragging, budget shortfalls, elite capture, corruption and a host of other institutional blockages have slowed the PDET implementation down to a grinding pace, demanding bottom-up pressure to force the state to continue to advance on its development commitments. I track and analyze the strategies used by the communities to press for implementation, as well as the degree of implementation of the priorities as articulated in these planning documents.

Case Selection

A rigorous approach to case selection for controlled comparisons balances control for potentially confounding variables with 'representative' variation in the independent variable, in this case, regional

¹¹ The 170 PDET municipalities include 6.6 million people (24% of Colombia's rural population), of which more than a third are officially recognized as victims of the conflict and more than half live below the poverty line (Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019). The regions are: Alto Patía, Norte del Cauca, Arauca, Bajo Cauca and Nordeste Antioqueño, Catatumbo, Pacífico Medio, Pacífico y Frontera Nariñense, Putumayo, Sierra Nevada – Perijá, Sur de Bolívar, Sur de Córdoba, Tolima, Urabá Antioqueño, Chocó, Cuenca del Caguán and Piedemonte Caqueteño, Macarena-Guaviare, Montes de María.

integration (Seawright & Gerring, 2008; Slater & Ziblatt, 2013). For this dissertation, I sought a set of three cases of groups of communities in neighboring tributary rivers which are as similar as possible in most respects, but still maximize variation along my independent variable, that is, the degree of regional integration. Drawing on theories of social movements, civilian resistance and civil conflict, I generated a set of key factors that I seek to control for: economic factors, resource availability, geography, state capacity, conflict trajectories, political factors and socio-cultural factors.

I argue that the best way to further maximize my ability to control this range of factors is to seek three cases within the closest possible geographic area, that is, within adjacent sections of the major river cuencas. Geographically proximate communities are likely to face relatively similar economic conditions, have similar resources and commodities, share conflict history and the ongoing presence of likely the same armed groups (often down to the same bands within the same fronts), covered by the same diocese and political parties, with similar internal cultural practices. In addition, to at least partially account for potential differences in age among the organizations, I focus on consejos comunitarios who received their titles from the state within no more than two years of each other. While accounting for these factors offers a strong basis for comparison, it of course does not fully eliminate the threat of competing explanations. In my research design chapter, I investigate and begin to address endogeneity threats presented by imperfect comparisons and non-random assignment to treatment.

The two areas with sufficient variation in the independent variable (all three levels of regional integration) in the tightest geographic proximity within the same major river cuenca and greatest similarities in age of organizational formation are along the borders of the Middle and Upper segments of the Atrato river. These two areas (boxed, in Figure 4) form the basis of my two controlled comparisons.

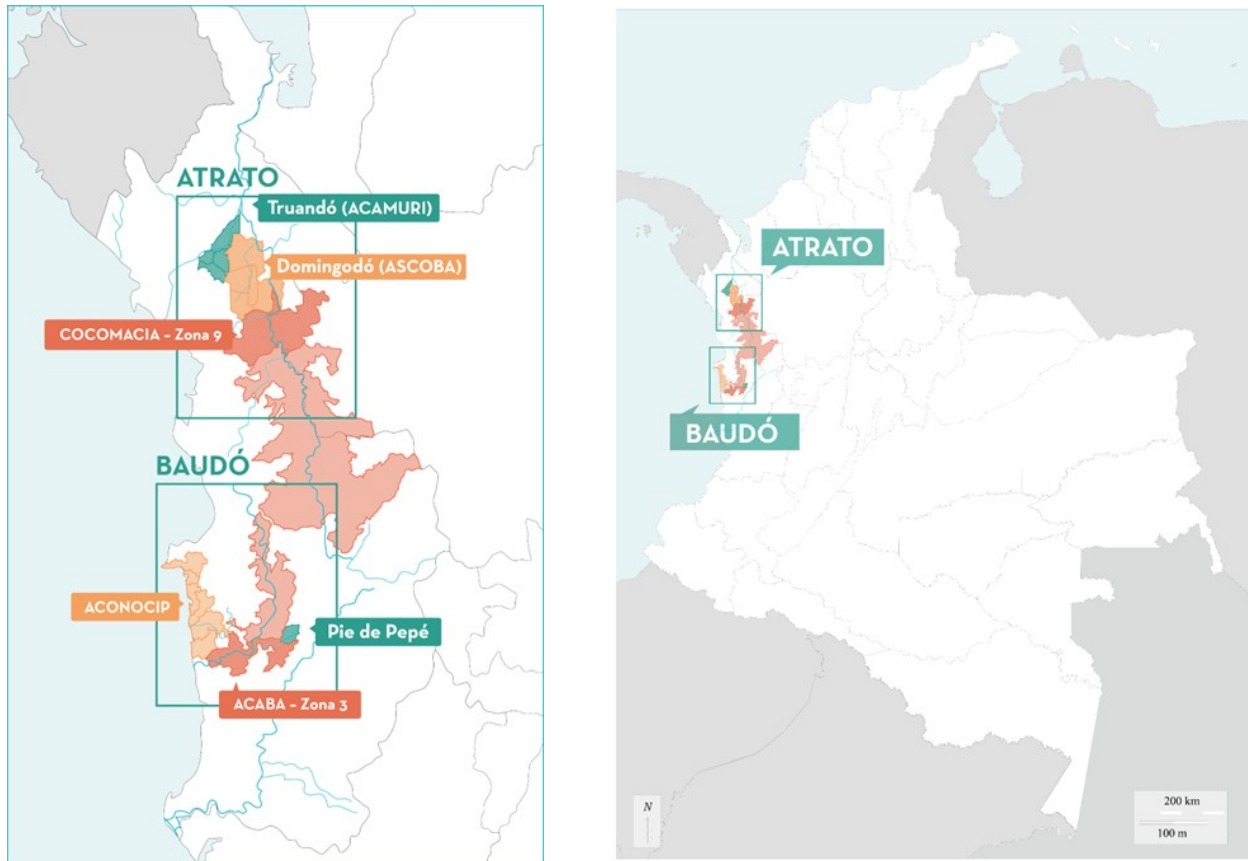


Figure 4: Zooming in on the cases in Atrato and Baudó

Beginning in the Atrato region, in the municipalities of Riosucio, Carmen del Darién and Bojayá, three neighboring clusters of communities are seated in the tributary rivers flowing into the western bank of the Atrato river. Furthest to the north, in the municipality Riosucio are the 6 communities of the tributary river Truandó (Figure 4, in green). These highly independent communities don't belong to any regional organization; rather, they have formed a small, more independent association exclusively of the Afro communities of the Truandó river called ACAMURI (Campesino Association of the Riosucio Municipality, *Asociación Campesina del Municipio de Riosucio*). Immediately to their south, in the municipality Carmen del Darién are the 8 communities of the river Domingodó, a tributary of the Atrato (Figure 4, in yellow). The eight communities are divided into four different consejos comunitarios, all of which belong to the a regional association, the intermediate degree of integration, called ASCOBA (Association of Community Councils and Organizations of Bajo Atrato, *Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios y Organizaciones del Bajo Atrato*). To their south, in the municipalities of Bojayá and Murindó are the 16 communities of the

'Zona 9', the northernmost section of the Consejo Comunitario Mayor COCOMACIA (Greater Community Council of the Integral Peasant Association of the Atrato River, *Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato*), a highly regionally integrated organization (Figure 4, in orange).

In the lower stretches of the Baudó river are three similar clusters of communities. The communities that border the Baudó river belong to the "Zona 3", the southernmost section of the highly regionally integrated Consejo Comunitario Mayor ACABA (General Community Council of the Rio Baudó and its Tributaries, *Consejo Comunitario General del Río Baudó y sus Afluentes*) (Figure 4, in orange). Immediately to the west are six smaller rivers that flow directly into the Pacific ocean, these communities have formed a looser association of consejos comunitarios ACONOCIP (Norsiviria Association of Community Councils, *Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios de Norsiviria*) (Figure 4, in yellow). To the east, the northernmost community of the tributary river Río Pepé, a community called Pie de Pepé, formed its own independent consejo comunitario, and does not participate in any regional organization (Figure 4, in green).

Fieldwork

The empirical evidence for this project is primarily derived from fieldwork, both from interviews and from ethnographic observation. Fieldwork for this dissertation took place over the course of three visits to Colombia between March – August 2019, February – March 2020 and September – November 2021. Of those eleven months, four months were spent in Bogotá and seven in Chocó. In Chocó, I was based in the departmental capital, Quibdó. From Quibdó, I made a number of visits to rural communities, including a three week visit to rural Atrato and a two week visit to Baudó, as well as several smaller trips to both locations. The empirical evidence presented in this dissertation is the results of site visits to 18 rural communities and over 150 interviews conducted in Bogotá, Quibdó, Atrato and Baudó. The COVID-19 pandemic only compounded the challenges of an already difficult fieldwork environment. In addition to my pre-existing safety and security strategies, I had to build a set of COVID safety protocols. I briefly discuss those mechanisms here. I conclude by discussing my understanding of accountability and reciprocity with my research partners.

Ensuring my own safety and the safety of my interlocutors was my highest priority in the field. My everyday safety measures included sharing travel plans and multiple phone numbers where I would be reachable with trusted people both in the country and in the U.S. and daily check-ins with my partner in the U.S. In my visits to the field, I only traveled during the daytime, let community leaders know in advance that I was arriving, and traveled in partnership with a well-recognized local leader. I sought to verify the trustworthiness of my field guides by asking for their reputations in multiple different spaces (i.e. with Church leaders, INGO staff, trusted local friends).

Following standard practice in conflict research, I have sought to maintain the confidentiality of my interlocutors as much as possible and err on the side of anonymity in data collection (Campbell, 2017; Malthaner, 2014; Wood, 2006). I avoided gathering identifying data, such as name, location or identifying features; I did not record any interviews while in Chocó¹² and do not use written consent forms. I further sought to protect my data by writing up my notes in password-protected files in my computer as soon as possible after the interview and destroying the written notes. My approaches to developing informed consent and avoiding the risk of retraumatization is discussed in greater depth in my research design chapter.

As it did for the rest of the world, the pandemic caused significant disruption to my work. Given that most of the communities in my research sites in rural Chocó have extremely limited access to formal healthcare infrastructure, a return to research was a decision to be made with extreme care. In consultation with my committee and my contacts on the ground, we determined that more empirical research was essential for the dissertation, and that the dropoff in cases in September 2021 and the rapid increase in vaccine access made field research feasible.

In order to keep myself and my research subjects safe, I was fully vaccinated and boosted. Furthermore, my research procedures were adjusted to reflect COVID protocols: meetings were only held

¹² I recorded several interviews with professors in Bogotá. I am also using voice messages in whatsapp in several cases to conduct interviews from distance during the pandemic. These messages can be deleted but whatsapp is not necessarily a secure platform.

in outdoor locations, at an appropriate distance, with PPE. I avoided crowded indoor spaces and physical contact if at all possible. I brought home tests, and tested myself for COVID on a bi-weekly basis and/or before moving to any new place, whichever came first. With my committee and the IRB committee, I developed case rate cut-off points that would trigger an immediate return, and created emergency action plans if I or one of my research subjects became sick with COVID. To the very best of my knowledge, nobody I knew of or interacted with caught COVID during the course of my research.

Finally, I take some time to reflect on my understanding of reciprocity and accountability to my research partners: the *consejos comunitarios* who I worked with, as well as the many other people who willingly contributed their time and expertise to help me. Many, many people were incredibly generous in sharing with me their valuable time and hard-earned knowledge. They did so despite the suspicion and necessity for caution that one would expect in a warzone, despite the fact that I frequently heard stories of previous negative experiences with academics who demanded peoples' time and never followed up again after, despite the barriers of race, class and gender and huge gulfs in life experience.

I am deeply grateful for the open-heartedness and wisdom of the people who received me in Chocó, and it is my responsibility to carefully consider how to repay my debt to my friends and teachers. I understand reciprocity and accountability as my best efforts to honor the time of my collaborators and to create meaningful compensation and benefit for their participation, an ongoing openness to making space for feedback and communication, and maintaining real relationships of friendship and collaboration over the long run. More specifically, in this project, I aspired to undertake research in partnership and in collaboration with the participants in my project: by making research that has academic and practical value, by being deliberate in 'returning' the findings, and by thinking through ways to contribute and be in relationship beyond my research. My strategies for fulfilling these goals are discussed in my research design chapter.

Dissertation Overview

The rest of this dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 situates this project in the peacebuilding literature. I offer overviews on three broad streams of literature examining a set of linked questions: What local political orders exist during war? What are the impacts of a peace process on those

local orders? How can civilians shape these impacts? I argue that for civilian populations, the intersection between processes of local wartime order and peace process implementation create 1) formal opportunities for advances in development, governance and quality of life and 2) violent informal contestation in a shifting political settlement, creating threats to local peace and well-being. I examine the answers the peacebuilding literature has to understand how civilian communities attempt to navigate these countervailing changes. I point to avenues to advance this literature with focused attention to scale, power asymmetries and variance in organizational forms, setting the stage for a theory of meso-scale organizational variance that I take on in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 outlines a theory of regional integration for civilian communities in a peace process. Building from the social movement literature, I explore the concept of regional integration in depth, seeking to describe the specific trade offs that campesino organizations encounter between community-level independence and regional-level integration. I argue that while more integrated organizations will likely benefit from greater organizational capacity, cohesion across communities and external legitimacy, they are at a relative disadvantage in terms of membership participation, local independence, decision-making power and flexibility. I apply this theoretical framework to the violence and peace implementation outcomes, drawing on the civilian resistance to conflict and social accountability literatures in order to outline a theory of civilian autonomy and influence in a peace process.

Chapter 4 focuses on my research design. I begin by explaining and justifying my approach to the method of controlled comparison, giving specific attention to developing subnational cases and three-way comparison. Then I introduce my cases: *consejos comunitarios* in Baudó and Atrato, two major river systems of the department of Chocó. I justify my focus on a single peace process (the 2016 Colombian peace process) based on practicality, relevance and methodological leverage. I explain what a *consejo comunitario* is and how it functions, outline the differences between ‘independent’, ‘partially integrated’ and ‘fully integrated’ regions, and briefly acquaint the reader with the geography of Baudó and Atrato. I then define, operationalize and justify my two outcomes and explore possible alternative explanations. I finish by discussing my approach to data collection. I offer particular attention to the ethical challenges of fieldwork I have faced in Chocó, working in partnership with a movement of marginalized people who face

structural racism and direct violence from both the state and non-state actors. I discuss how I have sought to ethically continue fieldwork research during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chapter 5 seeks to provide the reader with a history of three interrelated processes. First, I contextualize the peace process in Chocó by offering a general overview of the course of the Colombian conflict and the 2016 peace process with the FARC. Then, I offer more detailed histories of the formation in the 1980s-2000s of the organizations that make up the cases for comparison in this study, the *consejos comunitarios* in Atrato and Baudó, two regions of Chocó. I follow that with a history of the war in both the Atrato and Baudó regions that began in the mid-1990s and has continued to the present. I conclude this chapter by exploring the impact of the peace process on the communities in Atrato and Baudó that are the focus of this study. I detail the goals of these communities in the peace, the initial optimism they felt, and the consequences of the failure of the state to fill the power vacuum left behind by the FARC.

Chapters 6 and 7 begin the empirical section of this dissertation, focusing on how the communities in the Atrato and Baudó regions, respectively, have sought to defend themselves from the daunting new threats caused by the demobilization of the FARC. Each chapter assesses the impact of regional integration on community self-protection through a controlled comparison of three groups of Afro-Colombian communities in neighboring sub-sections of the Atrato and Baudó rivers. In both sets of comparisons I focus on the differences in the degree of regional integration among the cases. I then examine the effects of those structural differences on their approaches to and capacity for civilian self-protection following the 2016 peace deal. I finish with an evaluation of civilian autonomy and security in each of the three organizations at the present. I find that despite relative advantages in the level of participation, flexibility and independence of the more independent communities, the greatest level of community self-protection was generated in the more integrated organizations, COCOMACIA and ACABA.

Chapter 8 continues the empirical section of the dissertation, shifting focus to the peace implementation outcome, the participatory development project PDET. This chapter assesses the impact of regional integration in shaping state-led peacebuilding interventions through a controlled comparison of three groups of Afro-Colombian communities neighboring sub-sections of the Atrato river, in the

department of Chocó. I offer an overview of the advance of the PDETs through the planning and implementation phases and the key obstacles it faces, both nationally and in Chocó specifically. I then shift to an assessment of the PDET implementation in the region of focus for this study. I detail what each group of communities has received thus far from the PDETs, and explore how variance in regional integration can explain those differences. I find that the more regionally integrated organizations have received more projects, projects that hew more closely to community-defined priorities, with more advanced implementation. However, I also find that more regionally integrated communities have significant issues of information gaps, organizational frictions and (suspected) corruption.

Chapter 9 concludes the dissertation. Here, I examine the findings of this dissertation of the impact of regional integration on community autonomy and influence in peace implementation. The empirical evidence presented here are the results of three fieldwork visits to Chocó from 2019-2021 totaling nine months, site visits to 18 rural communities and over 150 interviews conducted in Bogotá, Quibdó (the departmental capital of Chocó), Atrato and Baudó. I argue that overall, my empirical data suggest that the relative advantages of regional integration – organizational capacity, regional cohesion, external legitimacy – increase the ability of communities to shape local peace outcomes. However, I argue that these advantages are in large part mitigated both by the advantages of more independent organizational structures – democratic and participatory deficits, local independence and flexibility – as well as by the serious organizational gaps that tend to proliferate in regionally integrated structures.

I end my conclusion chapter by examining the relevance of these findings for both research on and the practice of building peace. I argue that understanding how local civilian actors seek to manage these threats and opportunities offers critical insight into building long-term peace and inclusive political settlements. Existing scholarship illustrates the tactics available to civilians to shape local peace outcomes and points to the centrality of collective organizing. This dissertation advances this body of literature with focused attention to scale, structure and aims of civil society organizations. These findings offer utility to practice particularly in sharpening our understandings of the relative advantages of rural civil society formations in peacebuilding and in enriching our approaches to local organizational capacity building in peacebuilding contexts.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: SITUATING REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN THE PEACEBUILDING LITERATURE

This dissertation attempts to engage with a tension at the heart of what Lederach (2012, p. 9) describes as the peacebuilding literature's "most significant weakness": the 'vertical gap'...the lack of connection between community and political processes of negotiation". Under the banner of the "local turn", the peacebuilding literature effectively argues that translating a national peace process into sustainable local peace depends on the inclusion and participation of everyday civilians in the peacebuilding process. It furthermore recognizes the significant political obstacles that civilians face in advancing their visions for peace. Yet I argue that it insufficiently engages with the question of how civilians overcome the structural power asymmetries that they face in advancing transformative change.

In order to better explore the linkages between a national peace process and local conflict transformation, and the agency of civilian communities within that process, I investigate variation among communities in their ability to navigate the local impacts of a peace process. Specifically, this thesis project seeks to answer: "What explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation". By influence, I mean the capacity of communities to direct the outcomes of broader political processes: the implementation of a government policy; the decision-making of an armed group. By autonomy, I mean the capacity of communities to maintain free and independent control over the internal decision-making in the community – over local natural resource use, cultural and social norms, justice administration within a community – which may also be understood as a form of limited self-rule within the context of a broader state (De la torre, 2000; Kaplan, 2017; Ortiz-Guerrero et al., 2017; Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019).

In this literature review, I examine what the peacebuilding literature offers to understand that question. Specifically, here I offer overviews on three broad streams of literature examining a set of linked questions: What local political orders exist during war? What are the impacts of a peace process on those local orders? How can civilians shape these impacts? My review of the literature will demonstrate that for

local civilian populations, the intersection between processes of local wartime order and peace process implementation create 1) formal opportunities for advances in development, governance and quality of life and 2) violent informal contestation in a shifting political settlement, creating threats to local peace and well-being.

I argue that understanding how local civilian actors seek to manage these threats and opportunities offers critical insight into building long-term peace and inclusive political settlements. Existing scholarship offers a number of approaches to this question, illustrating the tactics available to civilians to shape local outcome and the centrality of collective organizing. However, I conclude this chapter by pointing to avenues to advance this literature with focused attention to scale, power asymmetries and variance in organizational forms, setting the stage for a theory of meso-scale organizational variance that I take on in the following chapter.

The ‘Local’ During War

Before engaging with the local impacts of a peace process, I seek to offer an overview of what the local ‘looks like’ during conflict. The subnational spaces that endure armed conflict almost by definition can be characterized as ‘weak’, ‘absentee’ or ‘fragile’ states, given that the state evidently no longer holds (or never held) a Weberian-style monopoly of violence (Meagher, 2012; Staniland, 2012). Much has already been written about what the formal state looks like in these contexts: unable or unwilling to deliver on core functions including security, services and justice administration, inability to collect taxes and serious shortfalls in resources, unaccountable and often violent behavior, channelling benefits to preferred elite allies and identity groups, etc. (Baker & Scheye, 2007; Bakonyi & Stuvøy, 2005; Day & Reno, 2014).

However, a peace process does not map onto a blank slate awaiting the arrival of peace and the state. An emergent consensus in the state formation literature demonstrates that what scholars once characterized as the absence of order in weak states (Kaplan, 2000) rather reflects an alternative (or

multiple alternatives) of political order¹³, at varying levels of institutionalization (Bakonyi & Stuvøy, 2005; Boege, 2011; Boege et al., 2009; Malejacq, 2016). Drawing on foundational work from Charles Tilly, these authors illustrate the emergence of subnational wartime political orders as the outcome of formal or informal bargaining processes, both vertical (between the center and local power-holders) and horizontal (among multiple poles of local power), all competing and/or cooperating to “do the state” (Hagmann & Péclard, 2011; Meagher, 2012; Menkhaus, 2006).

I argue wartime political order is vital to understanding the local impacts of a peace process. Wartime orders create durable political, economic and social legacies that condition the possibilities for peacebuilding. A peace process explicitly seeks to shift these bargains by regularizing state presence, demobilizing armed groups and formalizing politics. Thus, this section explores how wartime order forms in the interaction of national, local and international actors, with a specific focus on civilians, and discusses findings on the consequences of wartime order for peace.

Center / Periphery Bargaining

In its most simplified form, a civil war is a contest between the state and an insurgent force or forces, in which local zones of control are determined by the relative capacity of the state and the insurgent in the area (Kalyvas, 2006). Relatively stable balances of local capacity can create clear territorial divisions, a situation of “segmented” control, while shifting local capabilities (or perceptions of capabilities) collapse these divisions, created “fragmented” control in which both groups fight for control of the same areas (Kalyvas, 2006; Staniland, 2012). Malejacq (2016), for example, uses the relative balance of political resources between the state and non-state armed actors to map political authority in wartime Afghanistan.

¹³ Political order here refers to, “the structure and distribution of authority between armed organizations: who rules, where, and through what understandings” (Staniland, 2012, p. 247). Other scholars prefer the term “political settlements”, which they define very similarly: for example, a common definition of “political settlements is the, “expression of a common understanding, usually forged between elites, about how power is organised and exercised” (DFID, 2010). I use the two terms interchangeably.

However, the relationship between state and insurgent is not inherently limited to violent competition. As Day & Reno (2014) point out, counter-insurgency operations attempt to strike a balance between fighting and co-option. They argue that states favor co-option (i.e. incorporation into the state and/or patronage streams) for politically connected groups that pose the highest risk to regime survival and use coercion on political outsiders from state peripheries. Investigating the state's decision to co-opt or attack opens the door to considering the huge range of "bargains, deals, and tacit understandings between states and insurgents" (Staniland, 2012, p. 243). Staniland (2012) conceptualizes a typology of possible kinds of cooperation ranging from active cooperation in pursuit of shared goals to implicit agreements ('tacit coexistence') to overt hostility. Staniland (2015) adds that the state's decision to cooperate or target is deeply shaped by the 'fit' between regime and armed group ideology.

This deal-making between center and periphery has a profound impact on the emergence of local wartime order, and in the more long-running processes of state formation. As Staniland (2012) incisively argues, despite the frequent claim that civil war represents "competitive statebuilding", the deeper implications of that argument – that civil war reflects another face of the bargaining processes of state formation – were long overlooked. Menkhaus (2006) argues that states lacking either the will or (more frequently) the capacity to extend their formal authority to state peripheries informally delegate local intermediaries to provide core governance functions. In these 'mediated' 'blended' 'hybrid' 'shadow' 'twilight' state conditions, the central state is forced to negotiate with local elites in order to secure (partial) access to resources and maintain some claim to power and sovereign authority (Day & Reno, 2014; Lund, 2006; Meagher, 2012; Raeymaekers, 2007).

Thus, we see that the state is at times content to adopt a minimal presence during war in its more violent and distant peripheries. In the 'absence' of the state, what kind of alternative orders form? Menkhaus (2006) argues that in the absence of the state, the people in these marginal areas consistently seek ways to provide basic state functions, in particular security, varying widely in their effectiveness and legitimacy. Earlier studies on these arrangements tended to focus on 'warlords' based on personalized local authority and violence for the purpose of resource extraction (Leander, 2004; Reno, 1998). Bakonyi and Stuvøy (2005) argue that the primary variation of subnational order in wartime is their 'level of

institutionalization', which ranges from 'warlordism', a form of authority lacking cohesive organization or effective control, to 'quasi-states', which administer and control their territory, exercise basic state functions and enjoy some degree of popular legitimacy. The effectiveness, institutionalization, legitimacy and respect for civilians of these local orders are shaped by its 'organizational capacity' and internal cohesiveness (Renders & Terlinden, 2010), local norms and customs around authority (Bakonyi & Stuvøy, 2005) and relationships to external patrons (Doornbos, 2010).

However, even in spaces of 'weak' or 'fragile' state conditions, the state is rarely completely absent. Instead, central state regimes find other avenues to compete with local power-holders for influence and control over resources and territory. Patronage networks are critical tools to maintain state influence and control in the periphery on the cheap, and to buy off separatist tendencies and elide threats (Day & Reno, 2014; Ruigrok, 2011; D. M. Tull, 2003), though regimes may also extend formal recognition of local autonomy or other concessions to local authority in order to maintain its rule (Naseemullah, 2014; Renders & Terlinden, 2010). Cooperation with pro-state militias or paramilitary groups offer another way for states to extend its influence and undercut threats in areas where it either cannot or doesn't want to establish a full hegemony over violence. These actors are frequently extremely violent and difficult to control, generating highly fragmented, unstable and violent local orders (Ahram, 2011). In addition, the state has at its disposal a range of what Migdal (1988) describes as "dirty tricks": turning armed groups, even erstwhile state allies, against each other to maintain the state's broker role and ensure no one group becomes too powerful (Ahram, 2011; Naseemullah, 2014).

Intra-Local Bargaining

Thus far I have explored dichotomous bargaining between the state and the 'local' in forming wartime order. However, local wartime orders are always made up of a range of actors, the multiple "power poles" at the subnational level – armed groups, religious actors, the business community, traditional authorities, bureaucratic actors – operating either in competition, in cooperation or in parallel, creating a 'hybrid' political order (Hagmann & Péclard, 2011; Raeymaekers, 2007).

Armed groups may take on a huge range of forms – mafias, protection rackets, small-time criminals, remnants of state security organs or previous failed demobilizations, ethnic or religious-based

armed groups, 'self-defense' groups – seeking political objectives, capture of local economies, and/or control over territory and populations, with power based in ethnic identity, business ties, and/or ties to external patrons (Bakonyi & Stuvøy, 2005; Malejacq, 2016; Raeymaekers, 2007; K. Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2009). Mehler et al. (2010) describe this proliferation of armed groups as an 'oligopoly', a competition in which no one actor can fully monopolize violence.

However, local orders include dense networks of cooperation in addition to competition. As Bakonyi and Stuvøy (2005) assert, even warlords require some support from local actors to maintain their rule. Cooperation between local business elites and armed groups to create 'stable enough' order to permit business has been documented in a wide range of contexts (Garrett et al., 2009; Meagher, 2012; Raeymaekers, 2007; K. Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2009; Koen Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004). Traditional authorities and other community representatives may also be incorporated into local order to facilitate local administration and provide legitimacy (Barter, 2014; Menkhaus, 2006; Raeymaekers, 2010). These fragile coalitions can sometimes stabilize to provide fairly regularized public goods, often with a focus on security and dispute resolution (Baker & Scheye, 2007; Menkhaus, 2006). At times, these orders have proved capable of providing basic services including water and trash collection, regulating markets and collecting taxes, often in cooperation with international actors and whatever parts of the local government exist (Lund, 2006; Meagher, 2012; Menkhaus, 2006).

Finally, different local order 'providers' may operate 'in parallel', rather than in direct cooperation or competition. This literature describes the phenomenon of "forum shopping", in which people (sometimes) can choose among various forms of local justice or service provision working in parallel with each other (Baker & Scheye, 2007; Lund, 2006). Local civil society actors providing public goods and services to populations may operate wholly independently of the state or armed groups; such actors may have to explicitly avoid any appearance of partisanship or engagement with armed groups in order to maintain their role (Leinweber, 2013; Seay, 2013).

International Actors

Furthermore, these local orders do not operate independently of international actors, who may intervene to support or attack local actors or political configurations, as well as the international system

itself, which conditions different possibilities for local order. For example, the distributions of state and insurgent capabilities are at least partially determined by the international system, which shapes the availability of different kinds of 'technologies' of rebellion (Kalyvas & Balcells, 2010). Insurgents sometimes voluntarily adhere to international humanitarian norms, or provide state-like services to the populations they operate among in order to attract international support (Stewart, 2018). International actors may cite human rights norms or the responsibility to protect (R2P) to directly intervene with sanctions, prosecutions or possible military intervention. International organizations and networks of NGOs may also play a state-replacement function in providing basic goods and services (Mehler et al., 2010; D. M. Tull, 2003).

External states may also directly intervene with offers of military and political support for their preferred local actors. In exchange, foreign states gain proxies to pursue their political interests and secure avenues to valuable resources (Doornbos, 2010; Meagher, 2012; Regan, 2000; Koen Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2004). Local warlords at times also demonstrate diplomatic expertise in playing off international actors against each other, building legitimacy, securing resources and finding safe havens (Malejacq, 2016). Foreign firms also play a role, building security relationships with armed groups to protect their economic interests (Reno, 2004)

Civilians

A final crucial actor in shaping local order are everyday civilians who live in the areas under contestation. This section will explore first the value of civilian cooperation to local wartime order. Then I explore the scope of variation in the relationship between armed groups and civilians and the variables that drive this relationship.

Arjona (2015, p. 1) summarizes civil wars as a "battle for control between a government and its competitors over civilians and the territory upon which they reside". The strategic necessity of civilian cooperation has been emphasized in both revolutionary (Guevara 2012 [1961], Mao 2013 [1937]) and counterinsurgency (Gentile 2009, Hazelton 2017) doctrine. Civilians can offer armed groups three types of resources: material support, information and legitimacy. First, civilians can supply food, shelter and transportation, a source of tax revenues, labor supply and recruiting pool (Barter 2014, Moreno Leon

2017, Rubin 2019). Second, civilians can offer perhaps the most valuable commodity in war: information. Civilians are frequently hyper-aware of the movements and locations of bands of armed groups in their territories (Barter 2014). Civilian support can thus serve as both a key offensive and defensive resource, allowing groups to plan and/or avoid imminent attacks (Lyll, Shiraito, and Imai, 2015). Finally, civilians can be a critical resource in generating legitimacy for would-be rulers by taking public actions (attending rallies, flying flags, wearing colors) to demonstrate popular support (Kasfir, 2005; Metelits, 2010; Stewart, 2018). Because of the value of these resources, civilian support is both sought out by armed groups and violently repressed by their adversaries.

How armed groups decide to extract these resources from civilians and deny them to their enemies has a determinative effect on local wartime order, in two related dynamics: in the character of local violence, and the provision of public goods from whatever local authority structure exists. Metelits (2010) identifies a spectrum of insurgent-civilian relationships, ranging from coercive (indiscriminate violence to forcibly extract resources from the population) to contractual (in which insurgents observe a social contract of services and public goods in exchange for resources). As Metelits (2010) explains, violence is the primary tool that armed actors use to create and maintain these relationships. Armed groups may use violence to sanction civilians individually or collectively for providing support to adversaries (Kalyvas, 2006; Lyll et al., 2015), to demonstrate their capacity to bring order and enforce their rules (Arjona, 2017) or to reorder the local completely through mass displacement or ethnic cleansing (Valentino et al., 2004).

In addition to violence, armed groups may provide goods and services to civilians in exchange for their support. Governance provision can range from some form of security and dispute resolution to more expansive forms of governance that may include health, education and other public services, as well as opportunities for direct civilian participation in governance (Arjona, 2016; Kasfir, 2005; Mampilly, 2011; Péclard & Mechoulam, 2015). At the far end of this spectrum, this “rebel governance” represents an informal social contract between civilians and wartime authority, in which an armed group provides public goods in exchange for regularized access to the resources described above (material support, information, legitimacy), eliminating space for competitors (Aponte, 2019; Arjona, 2015). Similarly,

counter-insurgents may seek to provide goods and services to civilians in exchange for cooperation and information in areas that they don't fully control, often referred to as a "hearts and minds" COIN strategy (Berman et al., 2011; Hazelton, 2017).

What determines these variations in governance and violence by local authorities in wartime? From the insurgent side, scholarship has identified three key variables. First, cooperation between civilians and armed groups is shaped by the degree of armed group control over a given territory, which provides the opportunity for more expansive governance projects (Kalyvas, 2006; Kasfir, 2005; Metelits, 2010). Second, the relationship is conditioned by armed group dependence on civilians: whereas 'resource-rich' armed groups can easily pay recruits and fund the war without civilians, 'resource-poor' insurgents are forced to cultivate civilian support by constructing attractive ideologies, building trust and deep relationships with civilians, and providing public goods (Kasfir, 2005; Péclard & Mechoulam, 2015; Weinstein, 2007). A third set of arguments focus on internal factors of armed groups to explain their relationships with civilians including the degree of internal discipline and control (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2006; Wood, 2006), ideology (Revkin, 2017; Stewart, 2018), embeddedness in shared social networks (Staniland, 2014).

What role do civilians themselves play in shaping wartime order? Kalyvas (2006) argues that civilian decisions to collaborate are more or less direct reflections of the degree of armed group control. Other scholars argue that armed actors that receive funding from other sources have no need for civilian support and thus are highly insensitive to civilian preferences (Day & Reno, 2014; D. M. Tull, 2003; Weinstein, 2007). However, a range of other research illustrates that civilians make deliberate decisions in whether or not to collaborate with armed groups based on shared ethnicity and other identity markers (Lyall et al., 2015), armed group selectivity and restraint in exercising violence (Condra & Shapiro, 2012; Kocher et al., 2011; Moore, 2018) as well as civilian perceptions of restraint (Condra & Wright, 2019), armed group provision of resources and public goods (Aponte, 2019; Berman et al., 2011; Mampilly, 2011) and shared ideology, political vision or animosity towards the enemy (Kasfir, 2005; Wood, 2003).

This body of literature has identified that even in extremely limiting circumstances, civilians have real agency in the choices they make during civil wars, and that those choices produce important

outcomes (Arjona 2017). Drawing on Hirshman's (1970) classic "voice-exit-loyalty" framework, civilian choices can be usefully categorized as independent resistance to all armed groups (voice), cooperation with an armed group (loyalty), or domestic or international flight, ranging from brief displacement to permanent out-migration (Arjona 2016, Barter 2014, Kaplan 2017).

A crucial distinction can be made between organized forms of civilian agency compared with individual or ad hoc decision-making. The literature on civilian agency illustrates that civilian action based in 'strong' local collective organizing traditions are likely to have much more profound and strategic impacts on local wartime order, because collective organization generates a platform for collective action and more certainty about collective intentions (Aponte & Benavides, 2016; Arjona, 2016; Finnbogason & Svensson, 2019; Kaplan, 2017; Rubin, 2019; Vélez & Lobo, 2019).

How does the War Shape the Peace?

These local wartime orders have profound impacts on the peace, shaping the possibilities for peace implementation and beyond. The destructive impacts of war are well known: devastated economies, collapsed social trust, and undermined capacity and legitimacy of the state (Collier & World Bank, 2003; Fearon et al., 2009). However, a newer generation of scholarship has begun to examine the more complex, countervailing impacts of conflict on peace (R. Bateson, 2015; Wood, 2008, 2015).

First, conflict propels political mobilizations along various axes, forming new actors with politicized identities and political power. Individuals victimized by the conflict frequently demonstrate increased propensity towards a range of political participation (Bellows & Miguel, 2009; Blattman, 2009) as well as egalitarian or altruistic behavior (Bauer et al., 2014; Voors et al., 2012). Women mobilized into the war effort or pushed by the war to adopt new ways of work and collective action are likely to pursue transformed gender roles in postconflict (Nielsen, 2015; Wood, 2008). Finally, the internal structures of armed groups (Staniland, 2014; Zeeuw, 2008) and the relationships armed groups built with their local social bases has a determinative impact on the success of armed group transition to politics and the ways in which they govern (Dudouet, 2009; Huang, 2016; Müller, 2012; Péclard & Mechoulam, 2015). In a crucial piece, Huang (2016) finds that rebel governance mobilizes civilians, generating political experience and vision; widespread mobilization increases the likelihood of postwar democratization.

Second, wars create profound social and cultural impacts through increasing polarization and a socialization of violence. Recruits into armed groups are socialized into the use of violence and the dehumanization of the other, and are trained into wielding violence as their primary marketable skill (Wood, 2008). Bourgois (2001) documents how legacies of this socialization into violence trickle down long after the war into normalized interpersonal brutality. Identity categories that motivate the war may increasingly gain salience at the local level, especially as external actors foment divisions and violence. These cleavages can solidify after conflict, collapsing social trust (Balcells, 2012; Cassar et al., 2013).

Third, the institutions of local authority constructed during the conflict are likely to have long-term impacts on the shape of post-war political orders. Wood (2008) argues that conflict militarizes local governance, collapsing traditional authority structures such as community elders and replacing them with men with guns, permanently shifting local power to emergent actors. Bateson (2013) demonstrates the durability of these wartime institutions; particularly in contexts where the state fails to gain a monopoly on violence, wartime security structures re-emerge.

Thus, the post-wartime order is likely to reflect both severe damage to local economies, social trust and state capacity, as well as a wide variety of emergent actors who have mobilized and/or acquired power over the course of the conflict, building local institutional orders that are likely to have significant sticking power. As such, the post-conflict context is not, as Huang (2016) explains, a 'tabula rasa' in which the state and its partners are free to implement whatever vision of the peace they might hold. Rather, a peace process is implemented in a mediated fashion, operating in between the ideals of a peace accord and the political realities on the ground. This truth is reflected in the explosion over the last decade plus of research and policy work advising peacebuilders to build and blend with what already exists (Baker & Scheye, 2007; DFID, 2010; Englebert & Tull, 2008; Menkhaus, 2006).

Intended Impacts of a Peace Process

I define a peace process as the formal negotiation and implementation of a peace deal. Specifically, it is a process that encompasses three "separate but simultaneous" transitions:

...a social transition from internecine fighting to peace; a political transition from wartime government (or the absence of government) to postwar government; and an economic

transition from war-warped accumulation and distribution to equitable, transparent postwar development that in turn reinforces peace (Paris & Sisk, 2009, p. 1).

As such, I see it as a specific moment within the broader context of peacebuilding and conflict transformation, the long-term, multi-scalar processes to mitigate conflict and generate sustainable peace by transforming the underlying sources of conflict (Dudouet, 2017; Ramsbotham et al., 2011). Nevertheless, a peace process is a decisive moment in the history of a conflict. As Call and Cousens (2008, p. 4) argue, peace agreements and their implementation “define...enable and constrain the framework for peacebuilding”. Galtung and Tisné (2009, p. 93) similarly argue that the peace deal creates significant path determinant consequences, “setting the stage for the future direction of the country”. A range of scholars and practitioners argue that a peace process represents a uniquely favorable peacebuilding moment, a “window of opportunity” with the possibilities to inculcate long-term political, economic and social transformations addressing underlying causes of conflict (Dudouet, 2017; Galtung & Tisné, 2009; Salamanca et al., 2017).

In this subsection, I explore how peace processes function as an opportunity for local civilian actors to shift local political settlements in favor of their interests. I argue that these opportunities reflect the dominant contemporary paradigm in peacebuilding: ‘inclusive statebuilding’, which I define as a version of statebuilding that seeks to build legitimacy and effectiveness by creating systematic opportunities for civilian voice and democratic participation. I outline how this paradigm emerged and its impacts at the local level.

Statebuilding and Peacebuilding

The peacebuilding and conflict resolution field has seen dramatic growth since its initial explosion at the tail end of the Cold War in the late 1980s. First generation peacekeeping interventions from the late 1980s and early 1990s tended to emphasize ‘peacemaking’: frequently a light touch, focusing on principles of consent, neutrality and impartiality. Both because of increasing recognition of the challenges of peace implementation (Stedman 1997, Walter 2002) and because of an emerging consensus on the link between liberalism and peace carved out a larger role for a “multidimensional” approach to peacekeeping (Doyle & Sambanis 2000). The mandates for these missions expanded to eventually

include work on sustainable development, poverty eradication, democracy promotion, good governance, the rule of law and the promotion of human rights, among other tasks (Jeong 2005).

These efforts highlighted the gap between the broad, holistic objectives of peace processes and the inability of domestic state capacity to meet the scale of those tasks. At the same time, the issue of “failed states” was securitized as a direct threat to Western security, necessitating a heavier (Western-led) international footprint in peace operations over a longer time frame (Duffield, 2014; Paris & Sisk, 2009). Debates over ‘greed’ (or opportunity) vs. grievance as the primary causes of war proved somewhat inconclusive, but both lines of argument pointed for the need for greater state capacity, either to address social grievances or to increase the opportunity cost of rebellion by providing security and economic opportunity (Berman et al., 2011; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Fearon and Laitin, 2003). Thus, in the early 2000s, a range of actors offered either partial or total ceding of state sovereignty to the UN or other external body as a possible solution to post-conflict state-building (Krasner 2004, Paris 2004). The strong critiques of the paternalism of this approach, matched with its high price tags and limited successes, focused attention on the complexity of building legitimate, effective state institutions, leading to the emergence of a new paradigm, “peacebuilding as statebuilding” (Call & Sims, 2015; Chandler, 2017).

Statebuilding here is understood as the (re)building of governance institutions capable of delivering public goods to the general population, or, more simply, building a legitimate and effective government (Ramsbotham et al., 2011). This approach reoriented international actors towards engagements that gave primacy to national “ownership” over the peace process across long time-frames, focused on building state capacity to meet the challenge of effective, minimally equitable service delivery across several key areas: revenue generation through taxation, the rule of law, resource regulation, security sector reform, etc (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008; Fukuyama, 2004).

The essential logic of statebuilding is that at least “minimally functioning” state institutions capable of providing public goods such as security, the rule of law and economic opportunity with some level of equity create the basis for peace by solidifying the relationship between state and society and by creating institutions capable of resolving societal conflicts nonviolently (Call & Cousens, 2008, p. 9). The statebuilding approach has thus become the dominant approach to peacebuilding, and building a

minimally effective, legitimate state is the goal that underwrites contemporary peace processes (Call and Sims 2015).

Inclusive Peacebuilding

Following Dudouet and Lundström (2016), I define inclusion as the degree of access to social and political power; participation offers the potential of inclusion by opening access to decision-making spaces. Here I focus on “social” or “vertical” inclusion, rather than “horizontal” or “elite” inclusion: meaning, the inclusion of the key demographic groups of society, with specific attention to historically marginalized groups. Despite the dominance of the statebuilding approach, two key critiques pushed it to integrate the norm of inclusion, leading to the emergence of what I call “inclusive statebuilding”: an ‘internal’ critique focused on the failure of statebuilding to build “legitimacy”, and an ‘external’ critique that accuses statebuilding of functioning as an extension of Western neocolonial power.

Norms of ‘participation’ and ‘inclusion’ have been mainstreamed in development practice since the 1990s, driven by the failures of top-down development and emerging research on ‘good governance’ (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010; Speer, 2012). These norms slowly trickled over to the peacebuilding field throughout the 2000s, a decade in which the practice dealt with its own set of failures in top-down delivery. First, critics from within the liberal statebuilding paradigm argued that contemporary approaches over-focused on the ‘capacity’ element of statebuilding rather than its legitimacy (Call & Cousens, 2008; Call & Sims, 2015; Paris & Sisk, 2009). This approach led external actors to adopt overly rigid, technocratic approaches that “blindly supported” states as long as they met service delivery targets. These top-down processes resulted in failed social contracts, in which societies overtly rejected the rules governing authority, economic accumulation and shared nationhood (Call, 2011; Holsti, 1996). The solution to these legitimacy gaps, “rests particularly on processes of popular participation and the inclusion of salient social groups” (Call, 2011, p. 314) that can transcend the “excessively wooden” mechanisms of participation such as national elections (Call & Sims, 2015, p. 22).

Simultaneously, a collection of critical scholars developed a forceful set of external critiques against the “peacebuilding as statebuilding” paradigm as the latest manifestation of the liberal peace project. First, they argue that these approaches function to attribute violence to the dysfunction of the

Global South and reinforce the hegemony of Western power through cosmopolitan, universalizing discourses justifying “humanitarian militarism” or “enlightened imperialism”, while constructing the contemporary “strengthened” state as a technology of governmentality to sustain control over unruly areas of the world (Chandler, 2017; Jabri, 2010; Richmond, 2010; Williams, 2010). Furthermore, they argue that statebuilding comes at the expense of indigenous forms of political organization, or that it functions poorly specifically because it fails to attempts to impose a set of institutions imagined as universal onto places with completely different histories, cultures and values (Englebert & Tull, 2008; Williams, 2010). Both ‘critical’ lines of critique advocate for civil society participation and inclusion as avenues in order to alternative imaginaries and models for peace that could be, at least, more adaptive and tailored to national culture and socio-economic realities, and, from a more utopic perspective, could contain the seeds of global structural change (Richmond, 2010, (FIX CITE) Richmond 2009, see also Richmond and Franks 2009, Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam 2011.).

Meanwhile, a robust set of empirical research has demonstrated the link between social, economic and political exclusion and conflict, and offered direct participation in peacebuilding and long term social and political inclusion as potential remedies (Bell & Pospisil, 2017; Mani, 2005; Wimmer et al., 2009). Later scholarship explored in systematic detail the possible spaces, timing and sequencing of civilian participation and inclusive reforms in a peace process, thus countering the claimed necessity for secrecy at the negotiating table by illustrating the many ways that civil society could be included while maintaining some exclusive spaces for high-level negotiations (Kew & Wanis-St. John, 2008; Paffenholz, 2014a).

By the early 2010s, donor agencies such as DFID began incorporating the language of “participation” and “inclusive settlements” in their peacebuilding guidelines (DFID, 2010; Dudouet & Lundström, 2016). A set of landmark UN reports from 2012 to 2015 firmly entrenched the inclusion norm: in his 2012 report “Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict”, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon wrote “inclusivity needs to be applied throughout peacebuilding, from analysis, design and planning to implementation and monitoring” (UN Report 2012). The 2015 HIPPO report recognized that “efforts to sustain peace have foundered partly due to a failure to establish inclusive political

arrangements” and sought to commit the UN peacebuilding apparatus to “inclusive and participatory peace processes” (UN Report 2015a). The 2015 AGE report found that “inclusive ownership” was a critical determinant of the success of a peacebuilding effort (UN Report 2015b).

I argue that these two paradigms, ‘statebuilding’ and ‘inclusion’, are the orienting philosophies of contemporary peace processes, creating focused attention on building an ‘inclusive state’. Put another way, I argue that the intent of contemporary peace processes is to reshape the ‘political settlement’ of a post-conflict state by orienting it towards becoming effective, legitimate and inclusive in providing a basic range of public goods for its citizens, in a manner likely to have long-term, path-determinant impacts on the future of the state. As Dudouet and Lundstrom (2016, p. 6) argue,

Peace processes usually set the stage for carrying out structural state reform through new, formal power arrangements, and thus offer a window of opportunity to negotiate a more inclusive political settlement, by creating a new social contract between ruling elites as well as between citizens and the state, based upon mutual rights and obligations.

In the following section, I investigate how this intended purpose of a peace process seeks to arrive at the local level.

Translating to the ‘Local’

How does a national-level peace process, with its attendant range of policy shifts and projects described above, arrive at the local level? To answer, I look to the ‘local turn’, an emergent trend in peacebuilding which has pushed peacebuilding practice to think systematically about how to ‘bring’ the ‘peace through inclusive statebuilding’ model articulated at the national level down to the local level. Defining the ‘local’ is inherently tricky: Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) simply argue that the ‘local’ is “differentiated from the national and international”. Furthermore, as Fox (2022) explains, ‘local’ is both a relative and hierarchical concept: it is the ‘lowest’ geographical scale, though what exactly is contained in this scale depends on the definer. I define the local as the subnational scale at which everyday citizens experience their lives, through interactions in their communities, with the local government, in the economies and social and cultural practices that directly shape the lives of themselves and the people they know.

Space for 'local' or 'bottom-up' approaches emerged from the same crisis of confidence in international peacebuilding approaches that generated the shifts towards statebuilding and inclusion described above, matched by an "increasing assertiveness by local actors" (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 763). The 'local turn' in peacebuilding emphasizes focused attention on local context and local agency. 'Local context' refers to an increased understanding of the importance of specifically local political settlements and their contribution to violence; local-scale statebuilding is the proffered solution. 'Local agency' emphasizes the need to build 'local ownership' and adapt peacebuilding programming through participatory mechanisms to fit local cultures in order for peacebuilding programs to take root and be sustainable. I explore both streams in turn.

The emphasis on local context emerged out of the recognition that the efforts of would-be statebuilders were nearly exclusively focused on national-scale causes of conflict, operating out of the national capital and proceeding in a top-down fashion (Autesserre, 2017; Manning, 2003; Richmond, 2006). Manning (2003) argues that frequently, the greatest challenges to peace implementation emerge from the bottom, when elite actors seek to extend state authority and the rule of law to the local level. However, both theory and practice had thus far focused on building central state institutions, practically and intellectually ignoring the challenges of extending state authority. Intersecting failures by peacekeepers and counter-insurgents specifically attributable to the inability to establish security and other state services at the local level offered a forceful impetus to reconsider the assumptions that local conflict drivers mirrored national-level causes, and that national peace efforts would inevitably "trickle down" (Autesserre, 2014b, 2017).

The roots of this scholarly reassessment stem from the work of Kalyvas (2006) and colleagues, who demonstrated that contrary to assumptions in the civil war literature that conflicts were driven by big political questions over ideology and identity, violence in national conflicts is generally animated by micro-scale economic and social disputes: land conflict, family and romantic rivalries, local political competition, etc. Autesserre (2010) most forcefully and systematically demonstrated how the failure of international peacebuilding projects to address these local conflicts, which they viewed as, "unimportant, unfamiliar, and unmanageable", contributed directly to massive peacebuilding failure in the DRC (Autesserre, 2010,

p. 11). This research was paralleled by a hugely influential shift in the U.S. military's approach to counterinsurgency towards a "population-centric" or "hearts and minds" model, encapsulated in the Army's counterinsurgency field manual FM 3-24 published in 2006 (U.S. Army And Marine Corps, 2006) and endorsed by leading figures within the US military (McMaster, 2008; Petraeus, 2006; Sepp, 2005).

The remedy offered to address the lack of focus on local context has been to augment the 'good governance' statebuilding project by adding a focus on local-level statebuilding. This perspective acknowledges both that local exclusion inhibits state legitimacy and contributes to violence while recognizing that the central state often does not have the capacity to effectively govern in the peripheries (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015). Autesserre (Autesserre, 2008, 2010) explains that rather than an exclusive focus on large-scale peacekeeping and elections, the international community should have also focused on local scale security, institution-building and enforcement of the rule of law. Manning (2003, p. 30) argues that to redress the tendency of peace processes to collapse when they travel outside of the capital, international and national actors must focus on, "the construction of effective and authoritative (legitimate) state institutions at local levels". This statebuilding project is potentially augmented by democratic reforms such as decentralization (Bland, 2007; Boko, 2008; Brancati, 2006; Crawford & Hartmann, 2008).

The 'local agency' approach emphasizes the powerful peacebuilding potential that exists at the grassroots and the necessity to include (or ideally, to center) local communities and civil society actors in the prioritization, design and implementation of peace. The roots of the push for increased local agency date back to the origins of the 'peacebuilding' concept in the 1990s. Thinkers such as Adam Curle and John Paul Lederach offered a vision for peacebuilding in which the solution to conflict originates from and is built by the afflicted society itself, in which local people served as "resources for" and not "recipients of" peacebuilding (Curle, 1994; Lederach, 1997; Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015) Their arguments in favor of local actors and local culture as the primary architects and resources for peace was echoed by other prominent early articulators of the "peacebuilding" and "conflict transformation" approach (Boulding, 2000; Nordstrom, 1997; Rupesinghe, 1995).

Leonardsson and Rudd (2015) argue that attempts to build space for local agency have taken two forms: a liberal approach using the language of 'local ownership' and a critical approach that frames its efforts in terms of bottom-up emancipation. Liberal approaches to local ownership center on the idea that it is the process of fitting and adapting a national peacebuilding project to the local context, within the framework of the liberal peace. In contrast, emancipatory approaches see the local as a generative site for completely new ideas and approaches to peacebuilding, opening the door to 'peacebuilding as emancipation' (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013). Whether from a liberal or critical approach, examples of 'local agency' in peacebuilding work include participatory budgeting and design of development projects, civil society 'strengthening', developing and training local 'infrastructures for peace', peace communities or other collective commitments to nonviolence and reconciliation projects that draw on traditional conflict resolution practices, among others (Boege, 2011; Mitchell, 2012)

The 'local turn' in peacebuilding has faced a number of important critiques: that external actors tend to see the local as homogenous, and inherently 'authentic' and 'good' (Donais, 2012), that 'local' really serves as a stand-in for professionalized NGOs in the capital city or local elites (*Creating an Enabling Peacebuilding Environment*, 2014; Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015), that 'localizing' peacebuilding allows national and international elites to offload costs, responsibilities and blame to local actors (Chandler, 2008; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013), or that the local does not exist outside of the imaginary of external actors (Hirblinger & Simons, 2015).

Nevertheless, the 'local turn' has been deeply integrated into the international community's system of peacebuilding norms. Repeated UN documents from the last decade make reference to the need to create local ownership and build local capacity in order to fully engage a range of local actors in peacebuilding planning and implementation (*From Rhetoric to Practice*, 2011; *Report of the Secretary-General*, 2012; *Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, 2010). Additional emphasis has been placed on local governance and statebuilding as a vital means of peacebuilding (*Governance for Peace*, 2011; *Peace Dividends and Beyond*, 2012). This emphasis on inclusive statebuilding at the local level has been echoed by other major international players including DFID (DFID, 2010) and the World Bank (*The State- and Peacebuilding Fund*, 2011). The result of this norm shift towards the local, I argue,

is that contemporary peace processes are virtually guaranteed to include a wide range of projects funded by the state and international actors that seek to involve local actors, including civilians, in the process of creating material and political change for the benefit of peace at the local level, with varying degrees of success.

Obstacles to peace

In the previous section, I sought to demonstrate that the inclusive statebuilding model of contemporary peace deals create, in theory, a series of opportunities for civilians to exercise their voice at the local level in shaping the post-conflict political settlement. In this section, I explore the factors that militate against civilian influence at the local level. Specifically I identify two main obstacles: 1) implementation failures in enacting the policies created peace deal implementation and 2) emergent threats and new sources of violence emerging from the process of peace implementation. I discuss each in turn.

Implementation Failures

The large majority of post-peace deal contexts are shaped by three interrelated dynamics: low state capacity, the compromises that were necessary for peace-making, and the durability of wartime institutions. First, the countries that see civil wars already tend to have low state capacity (Fearon & Laitin, 2003); the destruction of civil war further undermines an already fragile state (Chen et al., 2007). And yet, these same states are tasked with leading the mammoth task of peace implementation and post-war reconstruction. Second, the course of peace implementation reflects the compromises necessary to sign a peace deal, with two especially relevant components: intentionally vague points left in the deal to allow compromise (Manning, 2003), and the allocation of power and resources to actors with uncertain qualifications and commitment to peace in order to ‘buy off’ and bring in factions that might otherwise threaten the peace (Billon, 2003; Englebert & Tull, 2008; Scharbatke-Church & Reiling, 2009). Finally, as explored earlier, the informal settlements that shaped the wartime endure long into the peacetime; within those informal rules governing power and accumulation, the same (or similar) set of actors continue to compete with each other. In short, a peace process usually does not fundamentally transform actors or their interests: it is a power-laden process in which elites continue to compete for power and resources

(Englebert & Tull, 2008). These intersecting processes generate two overarching sources of implementation failures: lack of capacity and lack of political will.

Capacity gaps undermine implementation through three channels: lack of resources, lack of administrative capacity and insufficient coordination. Post-conflict states often have extremely limited autonomously generated resources to draw on; meanwhile, the external funding most post-conflict states depend on is unreliable and may exacerbate the problem by further undermining state capacity in the long-term (Call, 2011; Ghani & Lockhart, 2008; Menkhaus, 2006). To maintain basic security and state functions, the vast majority of resources are allocated to the central state and security institutions, often at the expense of rural projects. Internationally-enforced economic restructuring or global economic downturns may further limit resource availability (Dudouet & Lundström, 2016).

Out-migration 'brain drain' during the conflict and longer legacies of limited educational opportunities contribute to limited human capital capable of administering the tasks of reconstruction (June & Heller, 2009). Newly-made political elites and their allies may have very limited experience with managing state bureaucracy: war-fighting and peace administration skills don't necessarily overlap (Dininio, 2009; Scharbatke-Church & Reiling, 2009). These problems are exacerbated by the coordination challenges and logistical failures endemic to post-conflict contexts, both among government institutions (who may be under control of competing political factions), and between the government and the dizzying array of NGO and IO agencies (Dudouet, 2017; Jones, 2002).

I identify three pathways in which issues of political will lead to implementation failures: political stalemates and blockages that prevent policies from getting off the ground, informal and formal elite actions to undermine peacebuilding programs once they're underway, and corruption drains on program resources. First, political blockages and stalemates may prevent agreements from the peace deal from ever materializing. Peace deal resolutions on issues such as land reform or refugee resettlement, left intentionally vague or unfinished in order to allow for compromise, may prove to be irresolvable or sensitive enough to threaten the peace (Manning, 2003). Similarly, power-sharing compromises deemed necessary to arrive at a peace agreement may grant effective vetoes to key factions; in conditions of high polarization, further implementation of the peace can become effectively blocked (Dininio, 2009; Dudouet

& Lundström, 2016). Alternatively, either through co-option or elimination of its rivals, the ruling party may succeed in monopolizing political control; in the absence of a true opposition, it has little pressure to implement the more redistributive or inclusive elements of a peace deal (Dudouet & Lundström, 2016).

Second, even after agreements from the peace deal become codified into state policy, national and local elites may block peacebuilding programs both through informal channels and legal mechanisms that violate the 'spirit', if not the letter of the project: selective inaction, legal challenges and alterations to slow and water down policy, and links to informal allies willing to use violence (Albertus & Kaplan, 2013; Berg, 2020; Dininio, 2009). International actors, including other states, diaspora groups or multinational corporations, may seek to meddle or otherwise interfere with peace implementation if it runs counter to their perceived interests (Newman & Richmond, 2006).

Furthermore, even if elites don't directly challenge a policy, persistent corruption drains peace implementation of necessary resources. The post-conflict space is extremely prone to corruption. Corruption and profiteering networks developed under the 'fog of war' persist into peacetime (June & Heller, 2009; Lindberg & Orjuela, 2014; Scharbatke-Church & Reiling, 2009). Massive inflows of foreign aid and investment, as well as weak state accountability structures create significant new opportunities for illicit gain (Galtung & Tisné, 2009; Schouten, 2011; Uvin & Heller, 2009). Power sharing compromises may place highly unscrupulous actors in positions of power, offering them direct access to peace resources (Billon, 2003; Dininio, 2009). At the same time, international actors are often hesitant to be overzealous in oversight, as some degree of corruption is seen as a fair price for peace and perhaps even a useful tool to keep restless elites engaged in the political process (Englebert & Tull, 2008; Galtung & Tisné, 2009; Lindberg & Orjuela, 2014; Uvin & Heller, 2009).

New Threats

Meanwhile, despite the significant hope a peace deal represents, it is also rife with potential to reignite violence for civilians through a variety of avenues: commitment and information problems in a DDR process, 'spoiler' violence, power vacuums, or by failing to address and/or exacerbating existing grievances and causes of conflict. Alternatively, the expanding 'post-conflict' state may itself be the threat.

A DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) process may fail, leading to remobilization of the main conflict parties. Walter (2002) describes the prisoner's dilemma demobilization creates: disarming creates vulnerability to a surprise attack, since verifying the demobilization of the other side is nearly impossible without external verification. Deep underlying distrust in the other party prompts endemic cheating, 'hedging bets' and potentially spiralling security dilemmas by both sides, eventually leading back to conflict (Haywood, 2014; Krebs & Licklider, 2016; Kurtenbach & Wulf, 2012; Spear, 2002). These general commitment problems can be exacerbated by the internal structure of armed groups and opposition movements. Daly (2016) identifies the information problems that develop at the local level between armed groups that recruited locally (who remain cohesive) vs. non-locally (who fragment), generating bargaining failures and remilitarization. Information and commitment problems may also manifest internally, splintering armed groups and leading to remilitarized factions (Cronin, 2006; Duursma & Fliervoet, 2021; Pearlman, 2009; Staniland, 2014).

Stedman (J. Stedman, 2002; S. J. Stedman, 1997), critiques this 'commitment problems' approach for its assumption of the good faith of actors, introducing the concept of "spoilers": groups willing to use violence to deliberately undermine the peace. Within this umbrella term, scholars identify two specific motivations for post-conflict violence: either because actors 'want in' to the peace and its spoils, or because they see the peace as an attack on their interests (S. J. Stedman, 1997; Zahar, 2008). First, a range of 'spoiling' behavior revolves around questions of inclusion and exclusion from a peace deal and its benefits. Powerful elites frequently respond with violence to (perceived or actual) exclusion from the peace negotiations itself (Blaydes & Maio, 2010; Nilsson & Söderberg Kovacs, 2011) or from administration posts in the post-war state (Berg, 2020; Call, 2012). Fears of exclusion may be intensified by 'winner-take-all' elections (Paris, 2004); alternatively, overly inclusive power-sharing agreements may incentivize spoiling by demonstrating that political benefits are available to anyone capable of mobilizing enough violence (D. Tull & Mehler, 2005; K. Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2009). Even actors that are 'included' in the post-war settlement may return to violence if they are dissatisfied by peace and/or believe they are entitled to a greater share of power and resources of the post-conflict state (Atlas & Licklider, 1999; Zartman, 1995). It is worth noting that this kind of behavior is not inherently oriented towards securing personal benefits or access to rents: actors may be representing a set of interests

unfairly excluded from the peace, or responding to implementation failures from the state (Gunning, 2007; Newman & Richmond, 2006).

Another set of motivations for spoiling behavior goes in the opposite direction: actors see the peace as a threat to their power and interests, and use violence to undermine it (Newman & Richmond, 2006; S. J. Stedman, 1997). This stream of literature tends to focus on the threat peace presents to wartime rents, given that demobilization and the expansion of state control threatens armed actor control over loutable resources and land (Manning, 2003; Melo, 2012; S. J. Stedman, 1997). Spoiling behavior may reflect internal fragmentations within armed groups, either because certain factions seek to defend rents (Garzón-Vergara, 2015) or because peace threatens to marginalize the power of radical wings (Pearlman, 2009). Alternatively, expanding political rights and inclusion may also present a threat to the political power of vested interests: in Colombia, multiple violent 'counter-reforms' emerged to attack political openings that brought in new political actors, for example, against the *Unión Patriótica* in the 1980s (Dudley, 2004) and against emergent ethnic actors in the 1990s (Rampf & Chavarro, 2014; Valencia, 2011). Similarly, the expansion of state control after a peace deal presents threats to the local authority structures that emerged during the war, prompting a violent response if the state is unwilling to negotiate or incorporate local elites (Bliesemann de Guevara, 2010; Menkhaus, 2006)

A peace process creates ample opportunity for new sources of violence – new insurgent groups, dissident factions and criminals – to emerge. There is often an abundance of small arms cheaply and readily available (Gamba, 2008; Kurtenbach & Wulf, 2012) and a population of thousands of newly unemployed ex-combatants whose most readily marketable skill is violence (R. A. Bateson, 2013). Armed groups that had previously established high degrees of local authority demobilize, leaving behind local power vacuums (Garzón-Vergara, 2015; Munive & Stepputat, 2015; Ruggeri et al., 2017). International peacekeepers who seek to replace them are impermanent and often limited in the scope of their mandate (Mehler et al., 2010). Meanwhile, the economic opportunities that fuelled wartime rents often remain in place, motivating new armed criminal enterprises (Garzón-Vergara, 2015). This amounts to a massive political and security challenge for an often highly fragile post-conflict state to enforce the rule of law with security forces and justice systems of questionable legitimacy and capacity (R. A. Bateson, 2013; Berg,

2020). As such, many post-conflict states tend to suffer from persistent insecurity and low-level violence (R. A. Bateson, 2013; Call, 2011; Kurtenbach & Wulf, 2012).

Given the magnitude of the root causes of violence that drive a civil war, it is perhaps unsurprising that peace deals usually fail to fully address and transform these issues, particularly at the local level (Autesserre, 2010; Kurtenbach & Wulf, 2012). However, peace deals and their (failed or partial) implementation can further inflame grievances: uneven implementation of land reform or development projects can exacerbate pre-existing horizontal inequalities and generate significant new frustrations from dashed expectations (Albertus & Kaplan, 2013); similarly, unsustainable inputs into patronage systems or new state services can generate exaggerated expectations (Schouten, 2011; Woodward, 2002). Economic liberalization projects tend to increase economic inequalities and undercut state safety nets (Paris, 2004; Woodward, 2002). Ongoing or expanding grievances create fertile territory for new insurgency movements, particularly when distributed along salient identity lines (Cederman et al., 2011)

Finally, while most of the previous conflict drivers have focused on a weak state as a permissive condition for violence, the state itself may constitute a central threat for communities in the 'post-conflict' space. Berg (2020) identifies that state security forces may emerge from conflict strengthened and be able to consolidate power and attack perceived opponents in the absence of strong enough civilian control. Indeed, state security forces may hold significantly less legitimacy, and be much more predisposed to attacking civilian opponents than some non-state groups, particularly in areas of high insurgent control (Raeymaekers, 2007; K. Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers, 2009). The state may likewise perceive autonomous civilian sources of local order, such as peace communities or tribal authorities, as a rival power base and a threat to its authority (Menkhaus, 2006; Mitchell, 2012). The state may also pursue extractive projects along the newly opened frontier that may directly threaten the cultural survival of local people (Lindberg & Orjuela, 2014; Melo, 2012).

Existing Answers

Thus far, I have argued in this chapter that peace processes generate volatile, uncertain changes at the local level. First, I examined how the 'local' during wartime comprises a range of political orders built by coordination and (violent) competition between different local power-holders. Then, I explained

that a peace process attempts to intercede in these authority structures by (re)-introducing the 'inclusive' state as the guarantor of local order. I argue that this process generates significant opportunities for civilians to advance their interests: as discussed earlier, a consolidation of norms ensures that the statebuilding project includes efforts to build the legitimacy of the post-conflict state through opportunities for direct citizen participation in the state as well as economic, social and political programs to strengthen the long-term inclusiveness of the state.

However, as I explored in the previous section, implementation failures may severely limit the actual material benefits that 'arrive' at the local: so how do civilians shape and advance implementation processes? Furthermore, I have shown that in addition to the opportunities it creates, peace processes can also reinforce old sources of violence and/or create new threats: so how can civilians defend themselves from the threats a peace process creates? In the next section, I explore the answers that exist in the peacebuilding literature to explain how civilians simultaneously navigate this mix of opportunities and threats presented by a peace process.

Grassroots Peacebuilding

The peacebuilding literature offers some rich avenues of investigation to help understand these questions. As discussed earlier, the first generation of peacebuilding literature explored the numerous ways in which 'ordinary' civilians built peace. Lederach (1997, 2005) developed a relational vision for peacebuilding in which people generate transformational shifts in conflict societies by building webs of connections between and across social groups. Boulding (Boulding, 2000) discusses everyday people's role in developing resources for peace cultures: aspects of societies that promote connection, unity, awe and wonder, citing social justice movements as especially rich resources in generating cultures of peace. Touchstone grassroots peacebuilding projects such as the Wajir Peace and Development Committee in Kenya (Menkhaus, 2008) and the Gacaca courts (Corey & Joireman, 2004) in Rwanda demonstrated that peacebuilding strategies that drew deeply on local culture and centered local voices could outperform liberal state-centric approaches. Work such as the 'People Building Peace' series demonstrated just how widespread the phenomenon of regular civilians taking actions to promote peace and reconciliation is (van Tongeren et al., 2005).

This literature tends to adopt an explicit, perhaps even exclusive conflict resolution frame: civilians at the grassroots contribute to peace by constructing local spaces for dialogue, reconciliation and dispute resolution. These forms of peacebuilding are effective because they are culturally intuitive and legitimate, based on consensus, relationships and existing social norms. However, these approaches are highly vulnerable and unable to effectively engage with problems stemming from scales beyond the community level (Boege, 2011; Mac Ginty, 2010). Nevertheless, this approach outlines some of the key tools available to communities: dialogue, cultural practices, traditional forms of conflict resolution.

Infrastructure for Peace

Within the grassroots peacebuilding literature, one of the best-known engagements with the scale limitation of grassroots actors is Lederach's (1997) 'peacebuilding pyramid', which emphasizes the need to build linkages across the grassroots, meso and elite-level scales. Lederach places special emphasis on meso-scale or 'middle-range' actors, who have more freedom of movement and linkages to other scales as compared to grassroots and national top-level leadership. As such, these actors are well-positioned to address peacebuilding's "most significant weakness: the 'vertical gap', "the lack of connection between community and political processes of negotiation" (Lederach, 2012, p. 9).

From his work, scholars have built an 'infrastructure for peace' research agenda focusing on stronger integration and coordination across scales in order to address the 'vertical gap' in peacebuilding (Donais & Burt, 2014; Kamatsiko, 2015; van Tongeren, 2013). Infrastructures for peace emphasize building linked platforms for dialogue among civilians, the state and other key stakeholders, thereby generating spaces both for civilians to resolve conflict among themselves and to communicate concerns and peace innovations upwards (Donais, 2013; Obiekwe, 2009; van Tongeren, 2013) 'Peace committees' are the key unit within this framework: structures that facilitate dialogue, consensus- and trust-building and cooperation among local actors (Issifu, 2016; Odendaal & Olivier, 2008).

This approach sometimes tends towards a fairly depoliticized understanding of peacebuilding, rendering conflict fixable through improved coordination and dialogue. It readily admits that local peace committees often 'lack clout', are easily ignored by political elites and are highly vulnerable to shifting structural conditions; however, the research agenda doesn't give systematic attention to how grassroots

actors overcome power asymmetries (Kamatsiko, 2015; Odendaal, 2012; van Tongeren, 2013). Nevertheless, this body of work strengthens our attention to scale and the importance of vertical linkages, even within the category of the 'local' (Donais & Burt, 2014; Kamatsiko, 2015)

Everyday Resistance in Peacebuilding

Another offshoot of the grassroots peacebuilding literature, 'hybrid peacebuilding', led by Roger Mac Ginty and Oliver Richmond, foregrounds questions of power and resistance between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' peace processes and investigates the delicate accommodations and integrations that result from this interaction, the 'hybrid peace' (Boege et al., 2009; Mac Ginty, 2010, 2011; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013; Richmond & Mitchell, 2011). Research on hybridity is interested in the encounter between two forms of peace: top-down liberal peace and bottom-up grassroots and traditional peacebuilding. In contrast both to descriptions of the 'local' as an institutionally empty vessel and liberal internationalism as an 'all-powerful' monolith, they argue that 'local' actors strategically challenge and interact with the liberal peace, producing unpredictable and unstable accommodations, integrations and conflicts; in other words, a 'hybrid peace' (Boege et al., 2009; Mac Ginty, 2010, 2011; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013; Richmond & Mitchell, 2011). Mac Ginty (2010) argues that the outcomes of these encounters are determined by the 'compliance powers' (guns and economic power) and 'incentivizing powers' (ideological appeals, material benefits) of western interveners as well as the ability of local actors to 'resist, ignore or adapt' liberal interventions or maintain alternative forms of peacemaking.

This literature offers insights into both the capacity and the strategies of local actors to shape peace. Mac Ginty (2010, 2011) cites the strength of government institutions, the resources available to local and national elites and the intactness of traditional or indigenous governance structures to explain the ability of local actors to shape liberal peace interventions. Mac Ginty and Sanghera (2012) cite social capital as a determinant of strength of resistance. In terms of strategies, this work focuses on the ways in which grassroots actors can reshape local peace through everyday or hidden repertoires of resistance, subversion, non-cooperation, strategic accommodation and escape (Mac Ginty, 2010; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013; Mac Ginty & Sanghera, 2012; Richmond & Mitchell, 2011). Mac Ginty (2010) and Mac Ginty and Sanghera (2012) discuss 'hidden' tactics of subversion and non-cooperation that external

actors might not even recognize. Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) discuss small-scale peace and subsistence mobilizations, hidden from view, that express ‘informal critique’ rather than head-on resistance. Richmond and Mitchell (2011) cite examples of failing to comply, foot-dragging, subtly co-opting liberal principles through partial acceptance, and/or redirecting or escaping liberal projects by channeling them through informal institutions.

A related body of literature builds from these critical studies on hybridity, going even deeper into the focus on everyday resistance and shifting the target of resistance from international peacebuilders to national statebuilders. As Iñiguez de Heredia (2012, 2017) explains, peacebuilding and statebuilding provoke everyday civilian resistance not because of their liberal or external origins, but because these are frequently deeply violent, extractive, dispossive processes, as exemplified by the statebuilding process in the DRC. Her research reveals everyday strategies of resistance and escape: mockery and bad-mouthing, support for local armed groups and self-defense, and the construction of alternative sources of governance. Galvanek (2013) explores strategies of discursive resistance, evasion and co-option that allow civilians to undermine highly politicized ‘peacebuilding’ projects from the state. Keranen (2013) shifts this body of literature more explicitly into the realm of contentious politics by looking at the open strategies of defiance – boycotts, walk-outs, protests and refusals to co-operate – employed by Bosnian Serbs to undermine the Bosnian statebuilding project.

Mass Mobilization and Peace

In contrast to the work on ‘everyday’ or hidden repertoires of resistance, another body of work explores the linkages between mass mobilization and transitions from conflict to peace and democracy. Wood (2000) explores how bottom-up mass mobilization built pressure towards a transition from conflict to democracy in El Salvador and South Africa: through a combination of violent and non-violent tactics, grassroots mobilization created such sustained costs that it convinced enough elites that their interests were better served by ‘democratizing compromise’. Gbowee (2011) explores how she and other women led mass mobilizations to create pressure towards the signing, and (to a lesser degree) the implementation of a peace agreement in Liberia. Dudouet and Lundström (2016) add that in Nepal, Aceh and Colombia, it was only for the *combined* pressure of armed actors and civilian mobilization that

incumbent elites opened the door to a negotiated transition to peace. Scholars working at the intersection of nonviolence and negotiation argue that this trade-off constitutes the 'fundamental bargain' of nonviolent resistance: it levels power asymmetries by creating a situation so pressure-packed and costly that elites are forced to negotiate on fair terms (Dudouet, 2017; Finnegan & Hackley, 2008; Wanis-St. John & Rosen, 2017). Their work demonstrates that bottom-up mass mobilization can quite literally initiate and sustain a peace process and set the stage for post-war democratization.

Peace implementation, as opposed to peace negotiation, has received somewhat less attention. Nevertheless, Dudouet (2017) argues that civil resistance and mass mobilization play an essential role in preventing violent backsliding or autocratic backlash, putting pressure on the state and other key stakeholders to implement their commitments to progressive reform and social justice. Huang (2016) demonstrates that democratization is much more likely to result from conflicts in which armed groups were dependent on civilians. She argues that this process creates a mobilized citizenry who are aware of their rights and expectant of political change; their potential for mass mobilization pressures post-war elites to follow through on promises to democratize. Wanis and Rosen (2017) develop some preliminary hypotheses on the relative capacity of mass movements to maintain pressure throughout the transition process based on their unity, internal trust and negotiation capacity.

Civil Society in Peace Processes

While each of the previous bodies of literature offers illuminating detail on the strategies available for local actors to shape the peace, there is limited attention specifically on the organizations that contain and direct this highly varied mobilization. The literature on civil society in peace processes addresses this limitation by pointing to the figure of the civil society organization (CSO), voluntary organizations separate from the state with highly mutable organizational forms, ranging from urban NGOs to rural mass movement organizations (Nilsson et al., 2020). Authors working in this vein have elaborated the huge variety of roles that CSOs can play in a peace process, at times simultaneously: monitoring, advocacy, direct action, development work, civilian protection and early warning, reconciliation, service delivery, participation in multi-track diplomacy, and more (Kew & Wanis-St. John, 2008; Nilsson, 2012; Paffenholz, 2011; Paffenholz, 2014; Pouligny, 2005). However, a limitation of this literature is that it has not yet

attempted to explain variation in the effectiveness of CSOs in shaping the peace; my dissertation picks up on this point.

Literature Review Conclusions

My dissertation asks, “What explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation”, with specific emphasis on two challenges likely to always be present: implementation failures and new threats of violence. The literature offers an exceedingly rich range of tactics that grassroots actors deploy to shape local peace: hidden mechanisms of escape and avoidance, alternative governance structures and mechanisms for dialogue and conflict resolution and a series of different direct action and mass mobilization tactics. Unanswered so far are the questions that motivate this dissertation: how do civilians select between and combine these tactics to address the simultaneous challenges of peace implementation and new sources of violence?

Second, existing work suggests the critical importance of scale: while mass mobilization literature emphasizes actions that are national in scale, much of the grassroots peacebuilding literature illustrates hyper-localized projects. The ‘infrastructure for peace’ and vertical integration literatures push our attention towards the meso-scale as a space of linkage between these two spaces of action. However, its limited power analysis leaves unanswered how civilian actors can build power and ‘scale shift’ to address implementation failures and sources of violence that stem from scales above the grassroots.

Finally, all of the tactics discussed above, perhaps with exception to some forms of ‘everyday’ resistance, demand an organizing vehicle capable of mobilizing people and resources and making coherent claims on the state and other actors. The civil society literature points to the importance of the CSO and has hinted at the peacebuilding potential of mass membership organizations, but there is no systematic investigation of how organization, and more specifically, organizational variance, matters for local peacebuilding. Thus, my work advances peacebuilding research by focusing on neglected questions of organization.

In the following chapter, i build an answer to these three questions by moving outside of the peacebuilding literature, integrating insights from the research on social movement organizations, civilian

agency in wartime and social accountability literatures to shape a theory of how organizational variation at the meso-scale frames both the capacity and approach of civilian actors in shaping local peace.

CHAPTER 3

THEORY: THE IMPACT OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION FOR THE THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF A PEACE DEAL

The 1991 Colombian Constitution created a historic set of recognitions for Afro-Colombians as an ethnic group, codified in law two years later as the Law 70 of 1993. The most impactful provision of the Law 70 established the right of Afro-Colombian people to create collective land titles in state-owned lands (*baldíos*). A collective title creates a demarcated property collectively owned by the people living within its boundaries that is, “inalienable, immune from seizure and not subject to the statute of limitations” (*inalienable, inembargable e imprescriptibles*); that is, it cannot be bought or sold outside of the community (Moreno & Palacios Blandón, 2016). The Decreto 1745, which regulates the Law 70, created the figure of the *consejo comunitario* (community council) as an governing body to administer the collective territory, manage the natural resources therein; represent the interests of the communities in the title to external parties, defend the rights of the community and preserve its culture; mediate and resolve disputes within the community (Hinestroza Cuesta & Cuesta Rentería, 2017; Rolland, 2005).

In the wake of this landmark legislation, activists and community leaders were faced with a key decision: what kind of territorial demarcations should they create? The state denied proposals to create a single title for the entire Pacific region, as well as a proposal to create individual titles for each department (Valencia, 2011). Afro leaders in Chocó generated three different approaches to titling: by *cuenca*, integrating many communities along a river basin into a single title, by *vereda*, creating individual titles for each community, and hybrid federated structure, which brought together individual vereda-level titles into a collective association.

Different communities made diverging decisions out of a combination of rational, expressive and contingent reasons explored in greater depth in the following chapters. These decisions on how to structure the consejos comunitarios made in the mid-1990s created path dependencies that shape communities' ability to pursue peacebuilding objectives twenty-five years later—the focus of this

dissertation. Thus, I focus on this variations in organizational forms to answer my dissertation question: “What explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation”.

I describe the differences in the structures of consejos comunitarios alluded to above as variation in *regional integration*, defined as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities allocate to regional organizations. Regional integration varies from *independent communities*, which maintain retain all legal authority over their territory as well as representational duties at the community level, to *associations*, which retain legal authority at the community level, but participate in an association to represent their interests externally, to *Consejos Comunitarios Mayores (CCM)*, highly integrated bodies which concentrate both legal authority and representational powers at the regional level.



Independent communities - no linkages to a formal regional organization, communities represent their own interests



Association of consejos comunitarios - each community has legal control of their own land title, but the association represents their interests externally



Consejo Comunitario Mayor (CCM) - the regional organization has legal control of the land and represents the collective interest of the communities

In this chapter, I explore the concept of regional integration in depth, seeking to describe the specific trade offs that campesino organizations encounter between community-level independence and

regional-level integration. I argue that while more integrated organizations will likely benefit from greater organizational capacity, cohesion across communities and external legitimacy, they are at a relative disadvantage in terms of membership participation, local decision-making control and flexibility.

I ground my theoretical argument to explain movement autonomy and influence in a peace process in the social movement literature exploring the consequences of movement structures. This variation harkens back to fundamental debates that shaped the emergence of social movement theory. In a seminal early work, Gamson (1975) found that centralized, formalized, bureaucratic organizations facilitated organizational maintenance, internal unity and “combat readiness” (p. 91-93), enhancing a movement’s ability to force concessions from the state. Similarly, as part of the emergent resource mobilization paradigm, McCarthy and Zald (1977) described formal organization as a resource that facilitated and directed mobilization, which they saw as the determinative factor in movement success. In contrast, Piven and Cloward (1977) invoked Michels ([1915] 1962) theory of the “iron law of oligarchy” to argue that highly integrated, formalized, bureaucratic organizations redirected movement energy to prioritize organizational preservation, moderating their goals and abandoning the disruptive tactics necessary to force concessions.

These arguments were paralleled by scholarship on feminist social movements, which explored in depth the emergent alternative forms of organization in the “younger” or “third-wave” branch of feminism, which eschewed traditional bureaucratic, formalized structure in favor of radical independence, shared leadership and collectivist values (Freeman 2013, Mansbridge 1983, Staggenborg 1989).

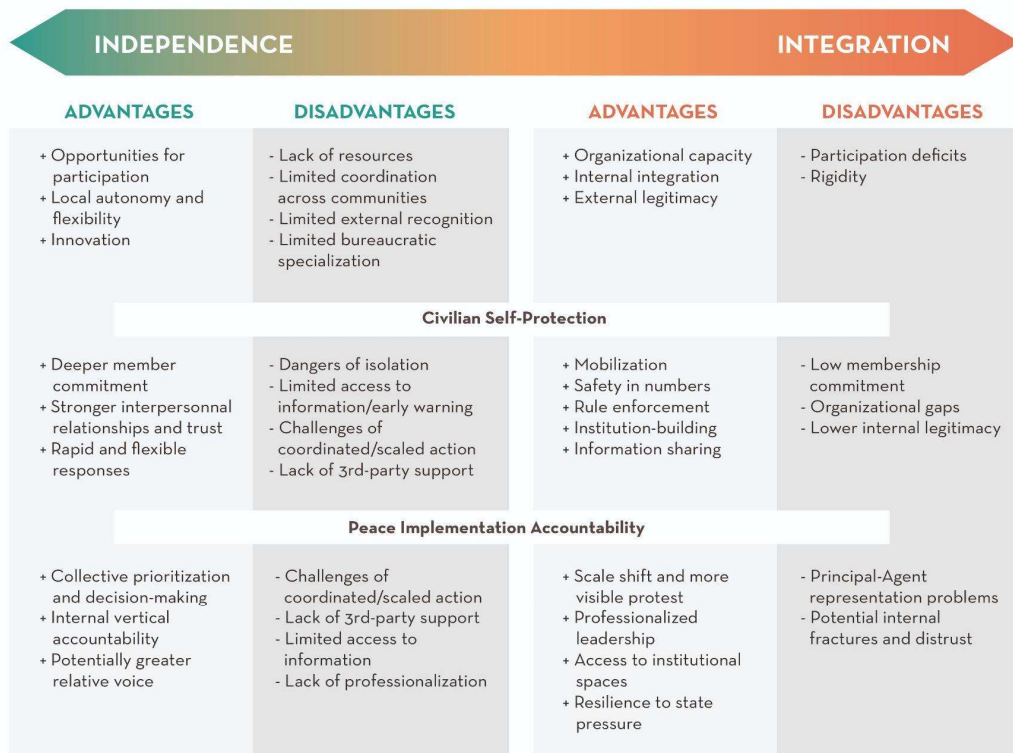
Both streams of literature soon moved beyond debates between thinly conceptualized, homogenized ideal types of ‘leaderless’ protest and stodgy bureaucratic organizations. Instead, this literature built a recognition that all movements have an organizational structure of some kind, and that these structural variations have meaningful consequences and trade-offs for movements (Staggenborg 1988, Clemens and Minkoff 2004, Rucht 2013). Piven, known for his strong critiques of formal organization, echoes these findings, writing:

There is no such thing as a protest movement that masters the basic task of communication and coordination, and that's nevertheless literally unorganized. So, finally,

let us put those canards aside, and then maybe we can go on to consider the advantages and disadvantages to the movement of different kinds of structure or organization. (2013, p. 191)

This literature furthermore recognizes that no one organizational approach is inherently better for movement organizations, and that key movement tasks such as communication and coordination can be achieved in multiple ways (Den Hond et al. 2015). However, different choices in organizational structures create path-dependent consequences and trade-offs for movements. Structure shapes a movement's ability to mobilize supporters and negotiate with third parties as well as their approaches to decision-making, tactics and strategy, organizational maintenance and conflict resolution practices, among other crucial issues (Staggenborg 1989, Clemens and Minkoff 2004). I explore these trade-offs in the following section.

Integration & Independence Tradeoffs



Integration Advantages

Following this body of work in the social movement literature, I expect that increasing regional integration among groups of communities should generate three kinds of advantages: increased organizational capacity, regional cohesion and external legitimacy. These advantages are likely to manifest in comparison to more independent communities as more extensive and better-resourced internal programs and external-facing campaigns, more unity and information sharing across communities, stronger capacity for formal accountability and conflict resolution, more responsiveness in their demands on state and non-state actors, and stronger external alliances.

First, I argue that increasing regional integration should lead to increasing organizational capacity. Zald et al. (2005) define 'organizational capacity' as, "the organization's financial and human resources as well as the administrative knowledge and capabilities to implement procedures and programs relevant to movement-related goals" (p. 265). More organizational capacity allows movement organizations to become more efficient and capable in accomplishing a broad range of tasks, including organizational maintenance, internally-facing programs, and externally-focused mobilizations, campaigns and negotiations. Zald et al.'s (2005) definition points to three specific components of organizational capacity: resources, professionalization and specialization. I explore each in turn.

Through regional integration, communities collectively create a larger base of resources and human capital, including labor, experience, skills, expertise, and sheer numbers to draw on as compared to individual communities. A repeated insight from the social movement literature is that there is power in numbers: the more resources and people a movement can mobilize, the greater its chances of success (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011, McAdam et al. 2009, Tarrow 2011). Larger mobilizations are more disruptive and inflict greater costs, are harder to repress, demand more media attention and are perceived by external audiences as a more credible signal of legitimate demands of the population. In contrast, individual communities are more easily isolated (Fox and Hernandez, 1989) and draw on a smaller talent pool for leadership, making them extremely vulnerable to variation in the quality of individual leaders (Andrews et al. 2010).

I define professionalization as paid staff as well as leadership with professionalized expertise (Everett 1992). I argue that regional integration is likely to lead to increased professionalization within the movement: relative to more independent communities such organizations have more resources to pay professional staff and to allocate to internal education and skilling of members, as well as a larger talent pool to draw on (Staggenborg, 1988). Research has found that professionalized expertise leads to more effective campaigns and fundraising (Staggenborg, 1988), more consistent and more positive media coverage (Barker-Plummer, 2002) and increased ability to institutionalize, or generate routine spaces for collaboration with the state (della Porta, 2009). Furthermore, research has shown that paid staff tend to be more effective in completing the bureaucratic, frequently boring work of organizational maintenance work (such as fundraising, accounting, base-building, etc.) (Minkoff, 2008).

Furthermore, regional integration is likely to lead to increased bureaucratization, which I define as rule-bound hierarchical authority, procedural formality and a sophisticated division of labor (Fogarty, 2011, Leach 2005). The increased size and range of tasks that more regionally integrated organizations have to perform requires specialization, professionalized administrative skills, routinized decision-making and rules to govern the inter-relations of organizational subunits (Tolbert and Hiatt 2009). Polletta (2013) argues that as organizations increase in size, the demands for efficiency are such that groups either “bureaucratize or they collapse” (p. 2)

In addition to professionalization, integrated movements have expertise advantages because of their tendency to bureaucratize. Bureaucracies create sophisticated divisions of labor that allow for the benefits of specialization: parts of the organization focus on specific movement-related tasks and develop expertise through repeat practice (Polletta 2013). Furthermore, organizations with a more sophisticated division of labor can create a broader diversity of internal programming, allocating set resources and time to a wide range of capacity-building activities for members (Andrews et al. 2010).

The ability to specialize also creates advantages in simultaneously managing multiple complex projects. Sustaining campaigns requires an organization capable of simultaneously generating resources, interfacing with external actors and consistently mobilizing constituents (Cress and Snow 1996, Minkoff 2008). Even internally-facing programs or the routine operations of an organization require complex

multitasking: organizing, accounting, fundraising, offering political education and leadership development, etc. An effective division of labor allows organizations to delegate decision-making to relevant sub-committees, increasing efficiency by creating procedures that don't necessitate the entire organization's involvement in specific tasks (Guigni and Nai 2009). In addition to a sophisticated division of labor, centralized movements have additional structural advantages in efficiency due to centralized, routinized decision-making by professionalized leadership. Meanwhile, more independent communities may not have the human or material resources to specialize, forcing a small number of leaders to fulfill a wide range of tasks (McCarthy and Zald 1977, Polletta 2002).

Second, I argue that increasing regional integration allows groups of communities to more fluidly act collectively with a cohesive strategy and vision, through specific advantages in coordination, communication, rule enforcement and conflict resolution.

Collective action across many communities requires active, strategic coordination. Regional integration provides distinct coordination advantages by providing a structure for internal linkages and communications (Gerhards and Rucht 1992) and by creating a clear hierarchy and routinized procedures that reduce ambiguity and promote efficient decision-making (Caniglia and Carmin 2005, Staggenborg 1989). Fox (2016) argues that formalizing connections between leadership is especially critical for dispersed populations in rural contexts, "since they have the greatest difficulty defining common interests and are the most vulnerable to "divide and conquer" efforts from above" (p. 1091).

Meanwhile, groups of independently organized communities face severe coordination problems that may result in more limited mobilization. Shawki's (2011) on transnational networks against the light weapons trade and Smith's (1992) research on the Chinese student movement found that in the absence of clearly designed leadership, these coalitions of formally independent groups were unable to develop a cohesive strategy or clear messaging.

In the absence of a "unity of command", more decentralized movements may find themselves pursuing competing tactics, creating counter-productive outcomes. For example, during the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations, the chairman of the Beijing Autonomous Student Union, urged

strikers to end the sit-in while negotiations were underway; his calls went unheeded, undermining the students' bargaining position (Smith 1992). This example reflects the specific challenges that groups of more independent organizations face in negotiations. Without a central command, no one group or person can represent the interests of the movement, nor can they deliver on compromises that would require cooperation from the membership (Smith 1992). Second, internal disagreements without an organizational infrastructure capable of resolving disputes across disparate factions can lead to movement fragmentation and potential collapse (Reger and Staggenborg 2006).

Effective communication is a similarly vital movement task. Reliable information flows across groups within a movement enables groups to share knowledge and experiences, promoting diffusion of tactics and other movement innovations as well as keeping leadership at multiple levels informed of opportunities and threats to the movement (Morris and Staggenborg 2004, Soule 2013). Shared information about opportunities and threats is a precondition to collective mobilization (Fox 1996).

I argue that increasing regional integration creates increased opportunities for information sharing among local groups. Integration creates formal movement infrastructure for information sharing, serving as a clearinghouse for communications and a bridge between otherwise disparate groups. Fox (1996) argues that regional organizations frequently serve as the only means for sharing and spreading reliable information in violent contexts. Integration regularizes interactions among communities through annual membership meetings or other venues for communication, strengthening informal communication channels between local leaders (Soule 2013). Banaszak (1996) found that such integrated platforms promoted the spread of tactics in the U.S. suffrage movement.

The formalization of linkages between communities, the creation of a centralized decision-making structure and the bureaucratization that typically accompanies those processes generate rules and enforcement mechanisms that facilitate top-down control in the communities. As such, I argue that regional integration creates advantages in the formal capacity to monitor and enforce rules and resolve conflicts within the communities (Den Hond et al. 2015). Martin (2007) found that highly integrated unions could enforce their rules through denying local financial support or even removing local leaders suspected

of rule breaking; in contrast Smith (1992) found that the decentralized leadership of the 1989 Chinese student movement had no mechanisms to encourage or enforce agreements on tactics.

The same rule-generating capacity of bureaucratic structures grants an advantage in conflict resolution. In her study of the approaches to conflict in feminist organizations, Mueller (1995) suggests that formalized rules defuse common sources of destructive internal conflict such as specifying criteria and timeframes for leadership succession, guaranteeing representation of movement factions in leadership and oversight in decision-making procedures. Staggenborg (1988) argues that bureaucratization can serve as a check on leaders by formalizing decision-making procedures. In contrast, more independent communities are likely more subject to control by individual leaders. In the absence of formal structure, authority can assert itself in opaque ways: through charismatic leadership, privileged identity groups or through cliques and stronger networks (Den Hond et al. 2015, Sutherland et al. 2014).

Finally, I argue that the benefits of organizational capacity and regional cohesion are compounded by the external legitimacy granted towards more regionally integrated communities. The size of an organization, its professionalization and its level of formalization are signals to outside actors - in particular, to actors such as foundations, international organizations and governments, who happen to share those traits - of a movement's legitimacy (Andrews et al. 2010, Minkoff 1993). Legitimacy confers tangible benefits: more funding, positive media attention, and access to state institutional spaces.

Numerous studies have shown that funders prefer formalized, centralized, professionalized movement organizations both because funders are more comfortable and familiar interacting with these more traditional structures and because hierarchical chains of command and strict financial reporting mechanisms better fit with the culture and expectations of grant-makers (Everett 1992, Jenkins et al. 2017, Minkoff 1993, Walsh 2014). Professionalized staff are likewise more familiar with IO discourse and customs and know better how to articulate projects that fit with funders' modes of operation (Brulle and Jenkins 2005). Fisher (1994) found similar patterns in the global South, arguing that, "International donors tend to concentrate their assistance on the more formal, easily recognizable networks" (p. 135). Barker-Plummer (2002) found that as NOW increased in size, it became a more newsworthy phenomenon

worthy of media coverage; likewise, its formalization and professionalization made it appear to be a more trustworthy, legitimate source of information, creating more favorable coverage.

These legitimacy advantages also translate to increased access to formal institutional channels of state power. Caniglia and Carmin (2005) argue that formalized organizations are more likely to be recognized as legitimate movement representatives by the state. Fogarty (2011) argues that governments tend to judge how 'worthy' an NGO is of political access in part based on the presence of, "traditional bureaucratic structures, especially professional managers and effective and transparent procedures for managing resources" (p. 212). Both Fogarty (2011) and della Porta (2009) in separate quantitative studies find that larger, more professionalized, formalized, bureaucratic organizations are more likely to access institutional strategies regardless of budget, age or ideology.

Independence Advantages

In the previous section, I argued that the decision by communities to create a high degree of regional integration likely confers structural advantages in organizational capacity (defined by their access to resources, professionalization and specialization), regional cohesion (in terms of their capacity for coordination, communication and rule enforcement) and external legitimacy (in terms of funding, external alliances and access to state institutional spaces). These structural advantages confer advantages in organizational maintenance, services and programming for constituents as well as in mobilization, campaigns and negotiations with other actors. I predict that in the context of peace implementation, these benefits allow regionally integrated organizations to mobilize more people and resources, more efficiently, and to channel those resources more strategically into a wide range of programming and activities. Regionally integrated organizations are also less vulnerable to external pressure, more successful fundraisers, have greater access to institutional channels of influence, and are more effective negotiators.

Given the benefits of centralization, what explanations exist for communities to choose independence? This choice is not purely irrational, contingent or expressive: there are serious trade-offs in regional integration. Specifically, integrated organizations suffer participatory deficits and are frequently overly rigid. As such, more independence for communities is likely to lead to greater membership

commitment and offer more flexibility and decision-making control to local actors. I explore these trade-offs more in this section.

Explorations of fundamental trade-offs between bureaucratic efficiency and democratic values in mass organizations date back to Weber (De Bakker et al. 2017), elaborated most famously in Michels' (1911) concept of the "Iron Law of Oligarchy" from his study on German political parties, which this section takes as its starting point. Leach (2005) succinctly summarizes Michels: as organizations grow, they bureaucratize; bureaucracies concentrate power in the hands of a professionalized leadership, which then prioritize preserving their own power above the interests of the membership, creating a staid, co-opted, oligarchic leadership class and disinterested membership. De Bakker et al. (2017) theorize that the oligarchic tendencies linked to bureaucratized movement organizations have three interrelated consequences on the movement: goal displacement, co-option and membership apathy.

First, because leaders prioritize organizational (and self-) preservation over movement goals, they shift their demands and tactics, typically (though not exclusively) in a moderating direction to avoid overt challenges to the status quo that might endanger the organization (Clemens and Minkoff 2004, Edwards and McCarthy 2003, Rucht 1999). Piven and Cloward (1979) saw this threat of goal displacement or deradicalization as a generalizable tendency of formal organizations, which inherently prioritize organizational maintenance and stability over the disruptive tactics that they saw as most likely to generate social change. A number of empirical studies have demonstrated some link between centralization and moderation in tactics and goals, though the evidence seems somewhat tenuous (Rucht 1999, Rucht and Teune 2009, Staggenborg 1988).

Piven (2013) argues that the structure of an integrated, bureaucratized organization, which creates a leadership class isolated from the membership, impedes upwards accountability within organizations and makes them vulnerable to co-option. Fox and Hernandez (1989) write that when regional organizations overly centralize power, they become increasingly vulnerable to co-option, as the organization lacks effective internal counterweights to hold leadership accountable. Della Porta (2009) found that professionalization, centralized structures and greater access to resources all increased the

chances of co-option. In her study of rural development organization in the global South, Fisher (1994) similarly found that formal federations were more prone to corruption and elite dominance.

Finally, over-bureaucratization can easily result in the alienation of the membership from an organization that may no longer serve their interests or respond to demands for accountability (Leach 2005). Membership commitment is a valuable asset: more engaged members contribute more time and resources, recruit others, generate deeper internal solidarity and enhance organizational legitimacy (Andrews et al. 2010). In her study of voluntary associations, Knoke (1981) found that as decision-making power was concentrated into the hands of a few leaders, ordinary members felt increasingly powerless, unable to influence the direction or activities of the organization. Additional studies have repeatedly found that increasing social and physical distance between the membership and the leadership often lead to feelings of apathy and alienation among members (Corrigall-Brown 2012, Ganz 2010, Saunders 2009).

In contrast, smaller, more independent organizations don't face the same time and space constraints on direct participation (Saunders 2009). It is also significantly more feasible for members of the organization to regularly meet face to face and generate personal connections, which della Porta (2009) argues facilitates participatory democracy within organizations. For similar logistical reasons, smaller organizations in decentralized movements are more likely to employ deliberative, consensus-based decision-making (Guigni and Nai 2009). More direct opportunities to participate in decision-making has been shown to generate enthusiasm for the work, attachment and a sense of ownership over the organization (Choi Fitzpatrick 2014, Corrigall-Brown 2012). High levels of participation increases membership accountability over their leaders, and in turn grants leaders greater legitimacy and information (Morris and Staggenborg 2004). High levels of interaction also generate ties of solidarity, friendship, community and trust, strengthening internal unity and generating incentives for continued participation (Corrigall-Brown 2012, Knoke 1981).

In addition to their democratic deficits, centralized, bureaucratic organizations are notoriously rigid (Haveman 1993). Formalization, routinization and rule-making all enhance internal control, but bring specific costs for movements: a loss of local decision-making control and innovation.

When individual communities integrate themselves into a regional organization, they give up some of their independence and decision-making control; that is, they lose some control over goals, strategies and other decisions that directly affect their community. That independence may in itself have intrinsic value for local groups. However, local decision-making power also has significant strategic value. First, it allows for more flexibility to adapt strategies, tactics and goals to the particularities and needs of a specific local context, maximizing the value of local knowledge. Local actors with greater independence can adapt more quickly to rapidly changing situations on the ground, without having to wait for approval for action from a slow-moving bureaucracy (Caniglia and Carmin 2005, Ganz 2010). Finally, local independence enables bottom-up accountability by creating strong countervailing pressure within the organization (Fox and Hernandez, 1989).

Peace Deal Threats

In my literature review chapter, I argue that a peace process creates formal opportunities (as in new legislation and development programs) and informal threats (such as spoilers and new armed groups) for civilians. In this section, I examine the impact of variance in regional integration on civilians' ability to maintain their autonomy in the context of the new threats potentially generated by a peace deal.

Despite the significant hope a peace deal represents, it is also rife with potential to reignite violence for civilians through a variety of avenues: commitment and information problems can lead to failure in a DDR process, causing a remobilization of the main conflict parties. "Spoilers" may seek to deliberately use violence to undermine the peace, either because these actors 'want in' on the peace and its spoils, or because they see the peace as a threat to their interests. Peace processes leave behind power vacuums in the territories and economies formerly controlled by the conflict parties, combined with an abundance of cheap small arms and newly unemployed ex-combattants. Alternatively, the expanding 'post-conflict' state may itself be a threat.

In this section of my theory chapter, I first outline a typology of civilian responses to armed group threat, building on Hirshman's (1970) "voice-exit-loyalty" framework. I dedicate particular attention to civilian voice in articulating a theory of civilian autonomy from armed group violence and control. I then explore in greater detail how variance in regional integration shapes civilian autonomy. Specifically, I

argue that increasing integration offers advantages in collective mobilization for protest, safety in numbers, internal enforcement of neutrality rules, collective institution-building and information sharing for early warnings. However, more independent communities are advantaged in membership commitment, local flexibility and rapid responses to crises.

A Framework of Civilian Responses to Conflict: Voice - Exit - Loyalty

A rapidly expanding literature has emerged to push back on traditional accounts of civil war that limit civilian choices in civil war to mere reflections of armed group control or collective identity. This body of literature has identified that even in extremely limiting circumstances, civilians have real agency in the choices they make during civil wars, with consequential outcomes. Drawing on Hirshman's (1970) classic "voice-exit-loyalty" framework, civilian choices can be usefully categorized as independent resistance to all armed groups (voice), domestic or international flight, ranging from brief displacement to permanent out-migration (exit) or cooperation with an armed group (loyalty) (Arjona 2016, Barter 2014, Kaplan 2017).

This conceptualization is an imperfect depiction of a complex reality. Resistance, flight and cooperation are not mutually exclusive. Communities are not internally homogenous and different individuals will make different decisions. Furthermore, civilians may shift between choices, experimenting with resistance and cooperation and perhaps returning multiple times from displacement (Arjona 2017). As Barter (2014) explains, resistance, flight and cooperation may combine: resistance or cooperation may necessitate flight if an armed group threatens punishment; civilians may be more able to resist or actively support an armed group from abroad. Critically, an under-explored aspect of these choices is that both flight and cooperation allow for significant room for civilian voice and resistance in defense of community autonomy.

There are also definitional challenges: Kaplan (2017) categorizes armed community self-defense groups as an extreme form of independent resistance, while Barter (2014) argues that by arming themselves, individuals lose their status as civilians. Outspoken protest of one armed group or the state may be hard to distinguish from support for the other side (Barter 2014). Quiet acceptance or attempts to 'ride out the storm' by "bending low and cursing inwardly" (Friesen, cited in Barter 2014, p. 25) may be a low-commitment form of acquiescence to armed group control, or itself a powerful form of resistance if

the armed group is trying to provoke displacement. Despite these challenges, I argue that this typology offers a powerful conceptualization of civilian choice-making during conflict. I begin by discussing the under-explored potential for resistance in flight and cooperation before a more extended discussion of civilian voice.

I begin by discussing 'exit', or flight from a war zone, as it is perhaps the most popular conception of civilian responses to conflict. Barter (2014) usefully conceptualizes flight as a series of decisions: whether and when to leave, what to bring and where to go. Masullo (2015) suggests that those with the economic means to leave do so, often very early in the conflict. Flight is not inherently an alternative to resistance: it may itself be a form of resistance or it may serve as a platform for future resistance. The act of leaving may itself be a form of resistance. Similar to the other 'weapons of the weak' by "voting with their feet", civilians deny legitimacy and material aid to the group currently in control of their territories. Refusing to return from displacement may also be a form of resistance if the state is pressuring civilians to return for political or economic reasons (Barter 2014).

Communities may also be able to limit displacements and make better decisions about when and where to displace if they have access to better information through early warning / early response systems (EW/ER) (UNITAR and Nonviolent Peaceforce 2015). Communities then have time to implement pre-agreed evacuation and emergency plans and attempt to dialogue with armed groups or communicate with external allies, who may be able to put additional pressure on armed groups for restraint (Kaplan 2017). Refugee camps with strong leadership can be hotbeds for collective organizing. Masullo (2015) quotes a leader from the San José peace community: "Through displacement we all got closer to each other [as many initially congregated in downtown San José]. Seeing the way they were massacring us here, the conclusion was that there was no alternative [to self-organizing]" (p. 48).

A highly strategic approach to displacement is a tactic I call "organized semi-displacement", in which rural communities congregate together in a central location from which multiple communities are relatively accessible. They thereby balance the benefits of safety in numbers with the need to preserve farmers' access to their lands (Masullo 2015). Through this strategy, otherwise vulnerable, dispersed communities can remain in their territory with relative security even in highly insecure conditions.

Second, civilians may elect to remain in the territory and cooperate with the armed group by abiding by their rules and providing assistance when it is demanded. Under many circumstances, cooperation is a highly rational strategy given the obvious dangers of both flight and resistance. Kalyvas (2006) expects cooperation to be purely a function of armed group control, in that civilians will cooperate with whoever the dominant armed group is. Yet even within cooperation, civilians find ways to express resistance, pursue their autonomy and maximize their security.

As Wood (2003) argues, civilians may support armed groups out of deep ideological conviction for their political project or out of long-held grievances against the other actor, even when that support offers little guarantee of protection. Second, 'loyalty' can amplify voice: complaints and protest by civilians perceived as loyal to the armed group are perceived as more legitimate and worth responding to (Barter 2014). Shared identity is a credibility mechanism that armed groups use to determine which civilian groups will reliably support them; as such, armed groups are more likely to interpret protests from civilians in their same identity group as "sincere demands" for change rather than challenges to their control (Moreno Leon 2017, p. 4). Armed groups that are especially concerned with local legitimacy may even seek out civilian feedback (Kasfir 2005). On the flip side, armed group dependence on civilian cooperation grants civilians leverage in negotiations: in order to maintain loyalty, armed groups may be willing to make concessions to civilian demands. Arjona (2016), for example, argues that rebels limit their impositions on resistant communities in order to not endanger civilian cooperation in the long term.

In the previous sections, I've argued that there is ample space for civilian resistance both in flight and in loyalty. Nevertheless, civilian voice strategies are usually the most direct way to maintaining autonomous, relatively safe communities in place during a conflict. The goal of independent resistance is to avoid participating in the conflict as much as possible, remaining 'actively' neutral from all sides to the conflict (including the state) and pursuing strategies to prevent incursions by armed groups into their communities (Barter 2014, Kaplan 2017). By shifting the cost/benefit analysis of armed groups and/or actively imposing costs on armed groups (instrumental mechanisms) or by persuasion and by reshaping the internal norms of armed groups (normative mechanisms), civilians can increase their autonomy and reduce the violence they face.

If violence against civilians is a joint product between competing armed groups and civilians with their own internal conflicts and private interests, as Kalyvas (2006) argues, then self-reliance, social cohesion, strong conflict resolution mechanisms and a collective commitment to avoiding entanglements with armed groups could dramatically limit violence by reducing the inroads of armed groups into the community (Kaplan 2017).

If possible, armed groups prefer to gain entry and build long-term control through voluntary cooperation, by creating relationships and providing public goods (Arjona 2017, Mamphilly 2011, Moreno Leon 2017, Rubin 2019). Armed groups frequently undertake extensive research on communities before entering to assess internal dynamics and the possibilities for entry (Rubin 2019). Through strong internal institutions for conflict-resolution, self-reliance and norms of non-involvement, communities can credibly signal to armed groups that attempting to force entry will be prohibitively costly: that voluntary cooperation will be impossible and even coercive strategies are unlikely to guarantee enduring cooperation. Under most conditions, armed groups are likely to be cost-sensitive, and elect to limit their demands on or even altogether avoid communities where the cost of entry is prohibitively high (Rubin 2019). I discuss three mechanisms by which communities can raise the cost of entry for armed groups: self sufficiency, a 'culture of peace' and internal conflict resolution mechanisms.

First, I conceptualize self-sufficiency mechanisms as the everyday practices that make life possible in a violent place; the daily acts of meeting the physical, social and spiritual needs of the community in a way that allows people to be rooted, healthy and even hopeful for the future. Active cultural and social practices such as songs and dances, food, games, festivals, worship and invocation of ancestors can create a deep sense of unity, belonging and protection. Such practices that build deep bonds of connection between people and their home and a powerful understanding of the living, organic connection between them and their territory and their history (Ortiz-Guerrero et al. 2017). These bonds tie a community together against outside infiltrators, and are often at the heart of a community's commitment to resist in their territories. However, a community cannot survive for long in a territory if their basic needs aren't met. Furthermore, it is self-evident that desperation and a total lack of opportunity drive cooperation with armed groups; in many places, the armed groups and the illegal economies they create are the only

source of income available (Alther 2006, Velez and Lobo 2019). Communities seek to buffer these pressures by finding ways to cooperatively meet basic needs. For example, Indigenous and Afro communities across Colombia make use of the term “ethno-development” (*etnodesarrollo*) to denote a wide manner of agricultural cooperatives, resource management practices and other economic ventures that are environmentally sustainable, culturally rooted and seek to generate greater economic stability for local people (Ortiz-Guerrero et al. 2017).

A ‘culture of peace’ can be understood as strong within-community norms against all forms of cooperation with armed groups (Kaplan 2017). Armed groups seeking entry into communities for material aid, recruits and information find no assistance forthcoming. Neither threats nor gifts generate cooperation from the community. By refusing to cooperate, communities signal to all armed groups that there are no collaborators for any side within the community. As such, communities minimize their involvement in the ‘cycles of violence’ of armed groups attacking suspected collaborators, which may spark desires for revenge and further violence (Arjona 2016, Krause 2016). The challenge of ‘cultures of peace’ strategies is in successfully generating widespread collective commitment to abide by the rules of non-involvement. While the process of developing a set of norms for non-involvement may deepen feelings of unity and shared agency, individuals have private material incentives to collaborate. These individual incentives can spark what Kaplan (2017) describes as “intra-community security dilemmas” (p. 54). As Kaplan (2017) explains, “Individuals do not want to be the only ones losing out if everyone else is dipping into the benefits provided by armed groups or alternatively may want protection if everyone else has an armed actor patron” (p. 54).

Social pressure is one of the strongest tools available to communities to enforce non-cooperation. In many small communities, collaboration may be difficult to hide and community members can look out for potentially vulnerable young people. Rule-breakers may face shame or social ostracism. Regular cultural and recreational activities within the community generate strong ties among individuals, increasing feelings of unity and the normative pressure towards following non-cooperation rules (Kaplan 2017). Communities may also decide to strengthen their enforcement capacity by codifying a set of community rules and code of conduct (known as *reglamentos* in Colombia). Communities may develop

specific punishments for rule-breaking, from assessments of fines or requirements of work in community projects, to ostracism and expulsion from the community. At the extreme end of enforcement, communities may develop their own policing systems in which they investigate accusations of collaboration with armed groups (Kaplan 2017).

Kaplan (2017) argues that the efficacy of such 'culture of peace' strategies is limited in the absence of strong signaling mechanisms to armed groups of community commitment to neutrality. One widespread signaling mechanism is a 'peace community'. Such communities have used different terminology worldwide, including a 'zone of peace', or 'humanitarian zones' but they share a common approach in designating a certain area as 'off-limits' to all armed groups (including the state's armed forces) (Masullo 2015, Mouly and Garrido 2018). Communities may also use unarmed patrols, known as "guards" (*guardias*) in Colombia, to maintain the boundaries of the community (ABColumbia 2017). While neutrality declarations offer much stronger signals of a community's commitment, they bring higher risk as well, given that this tactic directly challenges an armed group's territorial control. Such communities also offer a strong legitimacy challenge to the state by according to the military and police the same status as any other armed group (Masullo 2015).

In addition to enforcing compliance with 'culture of peace' rules within the community, strong dispute resolution and autonomous justice systems can keep communities safer during a conflict by limiting inroads for armed groups. Communities in conflict zones typically have extremely limited access to the formal justice systems of the state. At the same time, they face the same internal conflicts that one might expect in any community: disputes over land boundaries, debts, fights, romantic disputes, petty crime and domestic violence. Armed groups use unresolved conflicts as an entry point into the community: they offer to resolve issues that civilians were unable to resolve by other means (Arjona interview 2019). By finding effective ways to effectively resolve their own conflicts through traditional dispute resolution or other mechanisms, civilians can thus limit the entry points for armed groups into their communities.

In addition, effective conflict resolution systems contain further 'downstream' benefits for a community's capacity for resistance. Arjona (2016) argues that communities with highly developed

dispute resolution institutions have more capacity and desire to engage in collective action against armed groups. In contexts where corruption is rampant, legitimate and autonomous judicial systems serve as a safeguard against co-option of community leaders by armed groups (Ley et al. 2019). Though Arjona (2016) highlights dispute resolution institutions as particularly important, the same logic can be extended to any elements of local administration: the better communities can autonomously govern themselves, the less dependent they will be on any external groups.

Furthermore, international civilian peacekeepers (in general, white English-speakers from the global North) from organizations like Peace Brigades or Witness for Peace can leverage their de facto semi-immunity to bring additional protection for communities and individual leaders under threat by serving, essentially, as unarmed 'bodyguards' (Carriere 2011). By physically accompanying community members in their daily lives, civilian peacekeepers dramatically raise the costs of victimization. Denouncements by civilian peacekeepers threaten reputational (loss of international and domestic legitimacy), material (loss of international aid and corporate investments, sanctions), legal (prosecution in domestic or international courts) and military (direct intervention) costs (Schweitzer and Carrière 2010, UNITAR and Nonviolent Peaceforce 2015).

Thus far, I have explored how resilient, committed communities can limit the violence and external control they face by raising the costs of entry for armed groups into their communities. This logic dictates that in conditions of limited resources, armed groups will elect to avoid interactions with more challenging communities. However, communities also have more confrontational strategies available to them; these strategies work by directly imposing costs on armed groups, forcing them to shift behavior or continue to suffer consequences. The leverage that communities create through these tactics may also create space for dialogue and negotiation, opening up another avenue for armed groups to commit to shifting their behavior.

How can unarmed civilians impose real costs on armed groups? The literature on strategic nonviolence can be usefully applied in this context: armed groups power, "ultimately relies on dependency relationships outside the power-holders' control" (Svensson and Finnbogason 2019, p. 2). By understanding what "pillars of support" an armed group depends on to maintain its power, civilians can

find vulnerabilities to exploit (Kaplan 2017, Mouly et al. 2015). I explore some of the likely “pillars” that armed groups depend on, and how civilians can undermine these pillars to impose real costs on armed groups. Armed groups almost always to some degree depend on, to use Sharp’s (2005) phrasing, “the consent of the governed”; that is, on some level of cooperation from local communities. Armed groups to varying degrees seek legitimacy, material aid and information from civilians. I discuss here how civilians can impose costs on armed groups by using “everyday resistance” tactics and overt protest to withdraw legitimacy, material aid and information.

Armed groups seeking to rule populations often create a set of rules backed by an ideology in order to regularize their authority. Like any other authority, ruling armed groups depend on regularized obedience: they cannot coerce all of the people, all the time. Civilians have both covert and overt strategies to question and undermine an armed group’s authority, weakening their rule through mass non-compliance. In many or perhaps most cases, civilians will be either unwilling or unable to engage in overt resistance, which is risky and requires significant collective organization (Barter 2014). However, a population can still covertly undermine a group’s legitimacy via “everyday resistance” such as unfavorable gossip (Barter, 2014) or abstaining from mandatory prayers and other religious rules (Svensonn et al., 2019). Civilians also have more overt, collective forms of protest available to challenge an armed group’s authority such as civilian protective rings around sacred sites set for destruction by Islamist insurgents (Svensson and Finnbogason, 2019) or mass boycotts of fraudulent elections (Masullo, 2015).

Even if armed groups don’t have an expansive governance project, they frequently need some level of support from communities for food and supplies, transportation, and labor power. By withholding cooperation, communities can impose significant costs on armed groups. “Everyday resistance” tactics such as foot-dragging, theft, fake ignorance and sabotage undermine the value of the material aid armed groups seek from civilians. Forced recruits can likewise engage in foot-dragging, sabotage or desertion (Moreno Leon 2017). Civilians can also use boycotts, strikes and other forms of direct action to deny material aid and impose material costs on armed groups (Barter, 2014, Velez and Lobo, 2019).

Some armed groups have no governance project and little need for material support or legitimacy from local populations. However, almost all groups are vulnerable to civilian non-cooperation in the

competition for information. “Everyday”, covert tactics like omissions or feigned ignorance or overt, declared refusals to share information can put armed groups in danger by failing to warn them of imminent attacks (Krause 2016).

Of course, armed groups can attempt to use violence to coerce obedience, and often do. However, indiscriminate violence and oppressive conditions can backfire on armed groups, forcing civilians to seek protection from the other side (Kalyvas 2006, Moreno Leon 2017). Similarly, armed groups that are unable to provide even a modicum of public goods and services incentivize communities to seek alternatives (Rubin 2019). Even if civilians refuse to collaborate with any armed group for moral or strategic reasons, armed group violence and refusal to adhere to civilian demands can spark this ‘backfire’ effect by stiffening civilian resistance and refusal to collaborate with information. Indiscriminate or excessive violence lowers the relative cost of resistance: people perceive that there is no safety to be gained in remaining silent, so they have little to lose by becoming outspoken or seeking other forms of resistance (Arjona 2017).

Another source of armed group vulnerability may be their dependence on external benefactors or their desire for external legitimacy. If armed groups are dependent on an external patron, that patron state (or corporation, IO, etc.) can potentially be pressured into disciplining the armed group. Similarly, if an armed group seeks to eventually become recognized as a legitimate ruler internationally, or is seeking international aid or support in its negotiations with the state, it is likely to be sensitive to international pressure. Furthermore, while an armed group may not be specifically sensitive to international pressure, the state in which it operates likely is; therefore communities can find ways to push the state into taking more effective action against the armed group. As such, armed groups can be pressured into exercising restraint out of fear of drawing too much attention (Kaplan 2013).

In order to touch these pressure points for armed groups, civilians use marches, sit-ins, boycotts, demonstrative funerals or other tactics to communicate with the outside world and bring external attention to the activities of the armed group (Masullo 2015). Civilians may also make use of domestic or international formal institutional channels such as petitions, open letters, reports, official complaints to domestic or international ombudsmen and judicial cases before human rights courts to shine a light on

abuses by the state or armed groups (Corredor Villamil 2015). Furthermore, international allies can be especially useful in amplifying civilian voices by accompanying civilians on verification missions, independently documenting abuses and “naming and shaming” responsible actors (Barter 2014, ABColombia 2017).

Beyond direct protection, it is worth noting that international allies provide two key additional benefits to civilian resistance: they create political space for peace movements and provide direct support to civilian organizations. International civilian peacekeepers push armed parties to respect human rights and humanitarian law, bring together armed groups for dialogue, and monitor and verify local or national ceasefires (Carriere 2011). By creating a safer environment for civilian resistance to operate, international allies offer peace movements a greater opportunity to address the causes and consequences of the conflict (UNITAR and Nonviolent Peaceforce 2015).

In the previous sections, I discussed two costs mechanisms, focusing on the ways that civilians can shape armed group behavior by raising the costs of entry or by directly imposing costs. Civilians can also use persuasion and dialogue to get armed groups to shift their behavior. Civilians, as opposed to government officials or outside actors, enjoy a “special credibility” as ‘authentic’ voices of the people and thus their complaints may be accorded more legitimacy by armed groups (Kaplan 2013, p. 2).

The potential for trust in dialogue is enhanced by any existing ties between civilians and the armed group, such as shared ethnicity or religion, or even direct family ties (Mouly and Garrido, 2018). Religious, ethnic or political leaders with high local legitimacy may be especially capable of persuading armed groups (Krause, 2016). Alternatively, external allies such as international NGOs may provide additional weight to civilian demands for respect for basic rights by drawing on the moral authority of international humanitarian norms (Schweitzer and Carrière 2010). If armed groups profess a leftist ideology or are waging war in the name of ‘the people’, civilians can invoke these professed values to demand changes in behavior. Kaplan (2013, 2017) describes this tactic as “rhetorical traps” in which civilians point out the contradictions between an armed group’s ideology and its behavior, seeking to persuade by questioning the legitimacy of the group’s methods.

Integration and Independence Trade-Offs in Managing Peace Implementation Threats

In the previous sections, I examined the persuasion and cost mechanisms that communities use to maximize their autonomy during armed conflict. My research builds on this literature by shifting attention to the specific context of peace implementation and offering variance in rural organizational structures and an under-examined variable.

Resistance strategies are high-risk and create non-excludable benefits for the community, creating what Arjona (2016) calls a “quintessential collective action problem” (p. 101). Multiple scholars across a wide range of conflict contexts point to ‘strong’ organization as the key to overcome these collective action problems and engage in successful resistance. Kaplan (2017) argues that stronger organization within communities creates more certainty about collective intentions for resistances and provides a forum to collectively agree on strategies. Arjona (2016) argues that the effectiveness and legitimacy of community institutions create capacity for coordination, interpersonal trust, reciprocity and cohesion, making them more capable of initiating and sustaining collective action in conditions of conflict. Rubin (2019) argues that “collective action capacity” empowers communities to make demands on armed groups (p. 17). Svensson and Finnbogason (2019) found that the mobilizing infrastructure available to communities determined the emergence and success of resistance to armed groups. Velez and Lobo (2019) argue that communities with a “higher capacity to organise will likely be more apt to resist” (p. 77).

However, this body of work has not explored in sufficient depth what makes community organizing “strong”. Existing literature also does not provide much of a way forward to understanding multiple communities with strong organizing traditions that nonetheless see different autonomy outcomes. Ley et al. (2019) offer a notable exception: in their research on indigenous resistance to narco groups in Mexico, they find that:

By scaling up local accountability practices to the regional level and developing translocal networks of cooperation, indigenous movements have been able to construct mechanisms of internal control and external protection that enable indigenous communities to deter (p. 182).

My research expands on their work to systematically examine the tradeoffs between regional integration and independence for civilians resisting armed groups. Drawing from the literature on

organizational structure in social movements, my research recognizes variation in organizational forms as thoughtful decisions made for instrumental and ideological reasons to respond to a specific set of circumstances facing activists. These decisions, however, create path dependent trade-offs for collective protection: increasing integration offers advantages in collective mobilization for protest, safety in numbers, internal enforcement of neutrality rules, collective institution-building and information sharing for early warnings. However, more independent communities are advantaged in membership commitment, local flexibility and rapid responses to crises.

Integration Advantages

First, regionally integrated communities generate more organizational capacity: defined as an organization's resources and the expertise and administrative capability to implement relevant programs (Zald et al. 2005). Greater organizational capacity offers power in numbers, professionalization and ability to handle task complexity.

Regionally integrated communities can call on a significantly larger number of people, allowing them to raise the costs of entry, impose more costs in their protests and be taken more seriously in their persuasive efforts. First, a larger number of people committing to norms of non-involvement and neutrality across many communities raises the social pressure to conform with the decision and sends a stronger, more credible signal of civilian commitment to non-involvement (Kaplan 2017). A larger number of people involved in a neutrality effort also dramatically raises the costs of entry for an armed group: rather than having to co-opt or coerce a few leaders from one community, armed groups must target many leaders across multiple communities in order to gain a real foothold in a region in resistance. Similarly, denouncements by larger organizations are more difficult to punish than a single community, where it might be very easy to identify a single leader responsible; in short, larger organizations pool risk (Kaplan 2017, Mouly and Garrido 2018). In contrast, isolation, or a community attempting resistance by itself, can be a very dangerous position. Ley et al. (2019) found that even strong internal cohesion was insufficient to protect isolated villages from powerful cartels.

Resistance strategies seeking to impose costs by denying cooperation with an armed group and bringing in third party attention are also likely to be more effective when they draw on more people.

Bigger protests draw more attention and are considered more newsworthy by the media. More people demonstrating active resistance sends a much stronger signal of the armed group's lack of local legitimacy. Furthermore, in their efforts to persuade armed groups, community complaints are seen as more legitimate if they are voiced by many people. Kaplan (2017) writes that leaders with broad support "carry greater weight with armed groups" (P. 46).

Organizations of regionally integrated communities also draw on their advantages in professionalization, specialization and a division of labor to better handle complex tasks. Internally-facing projects like economic development, cultural projects, and leadership training, and externally-facing strategies such as large mobilizations, denouncements and institutionalization strategies require sophisticated administration, regularized coordination and professionalized expertise. Hence the advantages of regional integration are likely to manifest as a wider range of internal and external programs sustained over a longer period of time.

Furthermore, centralized groups' advantages in regional cohesion enable communities across a wide territory to act as a unified body, enhancing their ability to mobilize, share information and enforce rules internally.

As discussed earlier, effective resistance to armed groups is basically a massive coordination problem; meanwhile, a wide number of strategies from protests to commitment to neutrality become more effective if more people are mobilized to participate. Given both the widespread fear created by conflict and the potential selective incentives that armed groups can offer, resistance strategies require significant effort to build internal commitment and consensus about tactics. Regional integration creates a platform to dialogue and build consensus across communities, creating shared knowledge and collective confidence about the commitment of the communities in the region to participate in resistance. A clear hierarchy and routinized procedures reduce ambiguity about who will participate and what tactics will be employed and facilitates rapid decision-making and clearer messaging during moments of protest.

As such, I expect regional integration to generate broader participation in neutrality mechanisms across many communities and to demonstrate more effectiveness in planning and implementing

collective protests. I also expect that such organizations will have more clarity and leadership during high-level negotiations with armed groups or the state, or in boundary disputes with neighboring communities.

Regional integration also creates both formal and informal opportunities for activists to share innovations, experiences and lessons learned across communities, promoting tactical diffusion and organizational learning (Svensson and Finnbogason 2019). In contrast, Ley et al. (2019) report that informal channels of communication between individually organized communities in Mexico broke down over the course of the conflict, creating a “severe lack” of information sharing and cohesion across the communities (p. 196). One additional benefit of this stronger information-sharing capacity should be stronger early warning systems, given that regional integration creates a shared platform to exchange information across a broad geographic area.

Finally, the bureaucratization process that likely accompanies regional integration creates formal systems of rule enforcement. Ley et al. (2019) found that broad regional organizing allowed for oversight mechanisms and internal checks against local institutional capture, and enhanced enforcement of neutrality rules within the organization. They detailed a bi-directional accountability system in which communities elect and monitor police and their commanders; commanders oversee police who in turn enforce rules against individual collaboration with the narcos. In contrast, they found that individual community organizations lacked oversight mechanisms, leading to co-option of the local police.

Finally, regionally integrated communities are granted more legitimacy by other actors. The size of a movement organization, its resource pool and its level of formalization are signals to outside actors of a movement’s legitimacy and confer tangible benefits: more access to funders, media attention and state institutional spaces.

Earlier this chapter I discussed the massive advantages that external allies, from domestic human rights organizations to big international organizations like the UN, confer to civilian autonomy movements: specifically, funding, visibility, training, access and accompaniment. Money is a crucial resource that organizations require for cultural programming, economic projects, training workshops, etc. Alliances with well-respected organizations further raises the organization’s legitimacy, both within member communities

and externally. Allies offer trainings on essential issues like human rights law and access to institutional channels to denounce armed groups. Finally, allies can offer direct protection through physical accompaniment and interposition. The other aspects of external legitimacy are similarly advantageous: media visibility can put pressure on the state to listen to local demands and grant high-visibility activists some measure of protection. Being taken more seriously by the state creates negotiation advantages and the possibility of placing movement leaders in powerful institutional positions.

Independence Advantages

Despite these advantages, regional integration creates serious trade-offs for a movement. Specifically, such organizations suffer democratic and participatory deficits and are frequently overly rigid. As such, more independent communities are likely to generate more commitment and stronger social ties as well as benefit from increased local decision-making control and flexibility. I explore these trade-offs in this section.

In more independent communities, individuals have more direct opportunities to participate in decision-making, generating a sense of agency, enthusiasm for the work, attachment and ownership over the organization (Choi Fitzpatrick 2014, Corrigan-Brown 2012). Enthusiastically engaged membership is itself an extremely valuable resource: engaged members dedicate time, resources and passion into building the organization, breathing life into cultural, social and economic programs that form the bedrock of community resistance to violence. Furthermore, highly engaged members are a check against corruption and co-option in the organization: leaders and members have dense ties and regular interaction, promoting social accountability. Engaged members are also more likely to find out about violations of neutrality rules and take action (Ley et al. 2019).

The high levels of interaction generated by consistent participation across a community organization generate ties of solidarity, strengthening internal cohesion and generating incentives for continued participation (Corrigan-Brown 2012, Knoke 1981). Communities with greater cohesion and trust will have fewer divisions and conflicts, and will be more able to amicably resolve conflicts, reducing inroads for armed groups into the community. Cohesion also provides the basis for further resistance strategies by facilitating agreement on tactics, reducing fear and creating assurances of collective

commitment (Kaplan 2017, Mouly and Garrido 2018). Strong internal cohesion also gives teeth to informal sanctions within a community to respect neutrality norms (Arjona 2016).

Independent communities are also more likely to feature consensus-based decision-making; both participatory and consensus-based decisions are seen as highly legitimate and generate a high level of commitment to mutually agreed-upon decisions (Andrews et al. 2010, della Porta 2009). Thus I expect to find more commitment to internal decision-making in independent communities. Community unity behind neutrality norms is key to their effectiveness: an ex-commander of the FARC explained that the unified support of a community in Nariño to its local peace initiative was a main reason for its success (Mouly and Garrido 2018).

In independent communities, leaders at the local level have significantly more independence of action and decision-making control, given that they do not need to seek the approval of regional-level leaders for community decisions. Much of the key work in civilian autonomy strategies happens at the micro-level, in real time: interacting with the young people in a community, resolving a conflict between neighbors, reacting to the news that a community member has been accused of cooperating with one of the armed groups. Communities with more independence from central structures can shape their strategies to fit the specifics of the local context and adapt more quickly to rapidly changing situations on the ground, without having to wait for approval for action from a potentially slow-moving bureaucracy.

Local leaders in independent communities may be more capable of making these consequential decisions than their counterparts in communities that are members of a regional organization: their greater experience with organizational decision-making may make them more comfortable with taking action. In general, I expect the community level to be a much more active decision-making space in decentralized structures, whereas communities in centralized organizations are likely to be much more reliant on regional leadership to make and implement resistance strategies. Furthermore, their greater freedom to experiment may generate greater local tactical innovation. Decentralization and informality have been shown to promote tactical innovation by allowing organizations more flexibility to generate and experiment with alternatives and by encouraging broader participation, which allows more voices to articulate different approaches to movement goals (Smith 1992, Staggenborg 1989).

Finally, maintaining a healthy regionally integrated organization is extremely challenging, particularly in rural areas where travel and communication are difficult. Fissures emerge between different factions within the organization, threatening organizational splits. Community leaders chafe at the limitations of their power and complain that the central leadership has bureaucratized and urbanized, falling out of touch with the interests at the grassroots. Regionally integrated organizations may also face oligarchic tendencies, with leaders more invested in maintaining its relationships to power than enacting real change, resulting in stagnant leadership and overly safe tactics. Independent communities do not face the same degree of logistical challenges of coordinating many communities with disparate interests across a large geographical area. For that reason, compared to regionally integrated organizations, the increased independence of these communities should lead to less intra-organizational conflict.

Peace Implementation Opportunities

While the changes generated by a peace deal can be destabilizing and violent, contemporary peace deals also almost always represent 'windows of opportunity' to generate shifts in existing political settlements in favor of poor and marginalized people victimized by the conflict. The mainstreaming of participation and inclusion norms in peace accords have created the expectation that contemporary peace deals include new policies, rule changes and government programs that aim to address the structural causes of the conflict, oriented towards building an 'inclusive state' (Dudouet & Lundström, 2016). However, new policies are by themselves no guarantee that communities will see tangible benefits on the ground; corruption, violence, spoiler group interests, low state capacity and a lack of political will create serious obstacles towards implementation. Building on the previous explorations of the trade-offs between integration and independence, in this section, I seek to answer how communities influence state-led peacebuilding interventions.

Furthermore, communities frequently engage with peace implementation on uncertain ground: they seek to benefit from badly needed economic and political reforms but may not trust the state and have little desire to participate in its statebuilding project. As such, in addition to seeking to understand how communities influence state projects, I use the concept of autonomy again to frame civilian interaction with peace implementation, in order to understand how communities can benefit from a peace

deal on their own terms. Given its focus on civilian bottom-up monitoring and sanctioning of state failure to deliver on entitlements and rights, the field of social accountability offers a sound starting point. Social accountability can be understood as civilian-led actions to demand accountability, “other than the traditional vertical channels (elections) and horizontal channels (legislatures and institutional checks and balances) of formal political accountability” (Schouten 2011, p. 1). Thus, social accountability encompasses a range of tactics, from ‘outsider’ approaches such as mass protest to ‘insider’ approaches such as direct participation in invited spaces (Schatz 2003).

This section builds on the social accountability literature to construct a theory linking variance in rural organizational structure to community capacity to shape state-led peacebuilding interventions. I begin by explaining the key mechanisms by which social accountability mechanisms build bottom-up civilian leverage in negotiations with the state. I then focus specifically on variance in regional integration. I argue that integration likely offers advantages in mobilization and scale-shift, resilience to state pressure, professionalized negotiation, access to institutional spaces, and third party support. However, I argue that independence offers communities relative advantages in collective decision-making, internal accountability and smoother communications between membership (the principals) and the leadership (the agents).

Social Accountability

I adopt Joshi’s (2008) categorization of accountability approaches into three categories: vertical (elections), horizontal (institutional checks and balances) and social (civilian-led mechanisms beyond elections). As social accountability is mostly defined by what it isn’t—not electoral or intra-governmental—it is inherently wide-ranging and difficult to define. Social accountability mechanisms may be focused on processes or outcomes, retrospective (as in audits) or prospective (as in budgeting), operate through institutional or non-institutional channels, focusing on any range of civil, political, economic and social issues (Joshi 2008). I argue that what unites all social accountability approaches is that they are civilian-led efforts seeking to shape state delivery of rights and entitlements already sanctioned by the law (Joshi 2008). Broadly, I argue that social accountability mechanisms work either by imposing costs on state actors or by institutionalizing civilian power; often a combination of both is necessary to generate true

“countervailing power”. I provide a brief overview of the ‘traditional’ mechanisms and their limitations before exploring the costs and institutionalization mechanisms of social accountability in greater depth.

Elections are perhaps the most obvious tool that civilians have to sanction state actors (in a democracy) for failing to deliver on their promises. If an elected official does not meet the expectations of the majority of their constituents, the expectation is that civilians will punish that official by voting them out of power (Ackerman 2004, Grimes 2008). Thus, the threat of losing power is expected to incentivize responsiveness to citizen demands (Fischer 2016, Schatz 2013). However, Ackerman (2004) points to “structural problems” with relying on elections as accountability mechanisms: they only hold elected officials accountable; they only take place every few years; politicians’ “winning coalitions” are only a small percentage of the public. These issues are further compounded by issues of clientelism, corruption, private funding for candidates and private control over mainstream media (Ackerman 2004).

Elections have traditionally been complemented by “horizontal mechanisms”, that is, internal oversight mechanisms within the state. Examples of horizontal accountability mechanisms include human rights ombudspeople, anti-corruption legislation or agencies, legislative investigative commissions, public prosecutors, etc. (Ackerman 2004, Grimes 2008). Grimes (2008) describes horizontal accountability as the “most direct and effective” form of accountability, since government agencies at least in theory have access to resources and significant sanctioning power. Ackerman (2004) writes that in practice, however, such mechanisms often lack adequate funding and access to information, are stripped of effective sanctioning power and may themselves be corrupted or co-opted.

Social accountability mechanisms can impose costs through institutional or informal mechanisms. First, I explore the ways in which social accountability imposes institutional costs, by activating and supporting the horizontal intra-state mechanisms discussed above. Civilians may act in a monitoring capacity, “sounding fire alarms” to activate state horizontal accountability institutions (Grimes 2008, p. 16). By forming relationships with higher-level government actors, civilians can circumvent local accountability blocks (Das Gupta and Romani 2004). Meanwhile, state institutions may themselves not have sufficient monitoring capacity to effectively police other state actors, and thus rely on civil society to serve as their, “eyes and ears on the ground” (Fox 2016, p. 21). The relationship may also be less

collaborative: attention from civil society and/or the media can force public scrutiny on inactive or ineffective state accountability mechanisms, forcing them to take bolder actions. Once these horizontal mechanisms are in motion, social mobilization can generate space and political cover for reformers to take otherwise risky actions imposing sanctions on powerful people (Citizenship DRC 2011).

Beyond horizontal sanctioning, 'insider' allies provide significant value to civilians: government actors can offer information, access to institutional channels, advice and technical support (Beyerle 2011). Following agreements or new policy from the state, government allies help monitor and sustain implementation and protect the legitimacy of the movement (Citizenship DRC 2011). As such, citizens that develop formal or informal partnerships with government allies with sanctioning capacity dramatically increase their 'countervailing power'. Either through explicit partnerships or implicit cooperation, state and society partners can, "offset anti-accountability forces that are also often embedded both in state and society", an approach Fox (2007, 2014, 2015) describes as the "sandwich strategy".

However, civilians may frequently encounter situations in which they do not have access to government allies or redress mechanisms. Beyerle (2011) argues that civil resistance has a strategic advantage in such circumstances since it imposes costs through extra-institutional methods. Drawing from Beyerle (2011, 2014) I argue that extra-institutional resistance strategies for accountability function either by directly disrupting or impeding unaccountable systems, or by rebalancing unequal power relationships.

First, civilians can directly disrupt or impede the regular functioning of unaccountable systems. As with any other social system, program implementation, everyday corruption or bureaucratic indifference rely on mass civilian compliance for their smooth functioning (Sharp 2005). Civilian disruption can occur on the most quotidian of levels, using such weapons of the weak as "rude accountability" (Hossain 2010) or mockery and badmouthing (de Heredia, 2012). Civilians can impose more serious costs on bureaucracies through overt protest strategies: boycotts, walk-outs, organized refusals to pay bribes (Beyerle 2014, Keranen 2013).

Second, civilians can attempt to rebalance power asymmetries both by drawing in new supporters and weakening key supporters of the regime. Beyerle (2014) describes the process of pulling in new supporters as “engagement”: finding ways to win the support of important sectors, institutions and allies inside the government. As a movement’s visibility increases, so does the riskiness of state coercion: attacking an organization or movement with high legitimacy can backfire by shifting more people away from the state position. Civilian pressure can stoke defections from a regime’s supporters, further balancing the power dynamic by removing the target’s key “pillars of support”. Prompting defections from within the regime, especially from security forces, makes a government extremely vulnerable (Beyerle 2014).

International audiences represent an especially valuable public that movements seek to draw in. The support of the international community can be a powerful counterbalance during asymmetric negotiations, as international actors can mobilize both hard and soft power against a non-compliant state (Dudouet and Lundstrom 2016). Accompaniment amplifies local voices and signals to the target government that the world is watching and standing with the civilians, increasing the costs of repression (Halloran and Flores 2015). International allies can further strengthen accountability movements by facilitating ‘scale shift’, putting local actors in contact with international decision-makers and deep-pocketed donors (Schouten 2011).

As an alternative to the ‘costs’ mechanisms above, civilians can also generate accountability through institutionalization mechanisms, that is, through direct participation in governance. Governments may bring civilians into decision-making spaces in response to movement or international pressure, out of a desire to reform state bureaucracies or to improve the image of government by branding it as ‘democratic and participatory’ (Wampler 2008). Once inside governance spaces, civilians can push for accountability through collaboration and collective problem-solving or by exercising formal and informal powers allotted to them.

In theory, institutionalization and civilian participation in governance is supposed to be a primarily collaborative exercise based on shared interests in improving governance. In contexts of extremely low

state capacity, the state may be unable to implement programs without support from civil society (Abers and Keck 2009).

However, in many cases, civilians and leaders in invited spaces find that they need to employ adversarial as well as collaborative strategies to advance their interests. In such cases, participants can draw on both formal and informal powers to push for accountability. Activists who have taken institutional positions within the state may have formal decision-making and sanctioning power, depending on their position. Additionally, depending on the design of the participatory program, participants may be allocated direct power within the space, enabling them to manage services or make budgetary decisions themselves and “eliminate the middleman” (Grimes 2008, p. 4). Furthermore, participation builds more transparency into government decision-making, serving as a potential check on corruption (Grimes 2008).

However, intra-institutional mechanisms alone are only likely to be effective if government officials demonstrate the willingness and capacity to cede sufficient power to civil society participants (Grimes 2008, Wampler 2008). Wampler (2008) argues that civil society participants have to make up for shortfalls in political will with a willingness to engage in the kinds of contentious action discussed earlier in this section: protests, rallies, sit-ins, boycotts, etc. Beyerle (2011) argues that in contexts where corruption is endemic, participation without a meaningful threat of extra-institutional pressure is likely to end in “mismanagement and graft” (p. 68). Beyond the risk of corruption, institutional strategies carry the risk of undercutting a movement by diverting its energies from resistance and rights claiming into co-opted management structures that pose little risk to the state (Shankland 2010). Extra-institutional strategies can act as a check against this co-optive tendency by maintaining clarity in accountability relationships.

Both the advantages (access, resources, information, decision-making power) and disadvantages (co-option and ineffectiveness) of institutional strategies illustrate why accountability scholars argue that institutional and extra-institutional approaches are complementary: in challenging accountability contexts, civilians typically have to draw on both to be successful (Beyerle 2011, Grimes 2008, Wampler 2008). Schock (2015) argues that challengers must rely on, “a combination of legal tactics and grassroots mobilization...since reliance on solely institutional political procedures or legal protest is insufficient for

closing the gap between state or central government policies or laws and their local non-implementation or violation” (p. 494).

Organizational Variance and Peace Opportunities

A “strong” and “organized” civil society is almost always cited as a precondition to success in accountability. In her macro-review of cases, Speer (2012) argues that examples of successful participatory governance were characterized by well-organized, high capacity, motivated civil society. Citizenship DRC (2011) conclude from a similarly broad review that organized, empowered and mobilized civil society can make a difference in demanding accountability; and that a strong associational life made participatory forums more representative. Though social movements have historically been under-examined in accountability research, increasingly academics make similar claims about their value. Halloran and Flores (2015) argue that government accountability requires, “capable, autonomous and representative grassroots organizations and movements” (p. 1). De Wit and Berner (2009) argue that the “power of organized numbers” is the only way the urban poor stand any chance of demanding improvements from the state (p. 927).

The emerging literature on accountability in peacebuilding makes similar claims to the necessity of collective organizing. Strong civil society can “act as a bulwark” against anti-democratic tendencies in post-conflict states (Mac Ginty 2011, p. 183) and allows “resilient institutions to take root” (UNITAR and Nonviolent Peaceforce 2015). Dudouet (2017) argues that collective mobilization and civil resistance is essential to, “to put pressure on all stakeholders to implement their commitments to progressive state reforms and social justice” (p. 2). My work builds on this advancing literature by offering a specific focus on internal variance within movement organizations beyond their ‘strength’, broadly defined. Specifically, focus on variations in organizational structure between regional integration and independence offer insights into the trade-offs that movement organizations face in demanding state accountability in the fragile context of peace implementation.

Integration Advantages

First, regionally integrated communities have more organizational capacity: defined as an organization's resources and the expertise and administrative capability to implement relevant programs (Zald et al. 2005). Greater organizational capacity offers power in numbers, ability to handle task complexity and organizational endurance.

Such organizations can call on a significantly larger number of people, allowing them to be more disruptive and draw significantly more attention from the state and third party actors, increasing the costs of repression and allowing them to more easily 'scale shift', accessing higher-level decision-makers. Protests become increasingly effective with more participation: they demand more media attention, raise greater public awareness, are perceived by third parties as more legitimate and send a significantly stronger message to elected officials of the importance of the issue (Chen et al. 2007). Grimes (2008) argues that larger organizations with more people are more successful in activating horizontal accountability institutions. Beyrele (2014) likewise finds that movements that mobilize more people are more successful in prompting defections and winning state allies.

Furthermore, campaigns that mobilize more people are more resilient to state pressure. Individual communities demanding state accountability are fairly easy for powerful anti-accountability actors to repress, co-opt or simply ignore (Beyerle 2011, Fox 2016). Individual communities taking stock of the wide array of resources arranged against them may conclude that it is simply safer to stay quiet (Halloran and Flores 2015). Meanwhile, larger movements are generally more costly to co-opt or coerce, because there are more leaders that need to be removed for a movement to lose force (Grimes 2008). Violence against larger numbers of people is more likely to backfire, creating dramatic shifts in public opinion, further strengthening the legitimacy of the cause, and bringing in unwanted international attention (Beyerle 2014).

Finally, the greater numbers and tiered structure of more regionally integrated organizations allows them to expand their reach vertically, accessing power holders and coordinating with allies at scales beyond the individual community to the regional, national and international levels, a process known as "scale shift" (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001, Fox 2016). State power operates fluidly across

multiple scales and, as Fox (2016) writes, “the forces of impunity are usually already vertically integrated”, spurring the necessity for civil society pressure across multiple scales. The idea behind ‘scaling up’ is to discover and address accountability blockages simultaneously at many levels and to push forward more transformative changes, thereby addressing the symptoms rather than the causes of accountability failures (Fox and Acheron 2016, Halloran and Flores 2015).

Regionally integrated organizations are at a significant advantage in their ability to scale shift: by grouping together many individual communities, movements gain the leverage, economies of scale and division of labor necessary to shift attention ‘upwards’. Fox (2016) offers the hypothetical example of bringing together tens or even hundreds of communities together to address health accountability issues. He argues that by forming a centralized platform, communities gain the clout and information-gathering capacity to push policy-makers at the regional scale. The regional-level platform created by more regionally integrated groups of communities also serves as an essential node connecting the ‘local’ and ‘national’. As Fox (2016) explains, the challenge is not solely grassroots initiatives failing to access higher scales: national or international initiatives often lack grounded linkages to the grassroots, undercutting their legitimacy, power and access to information. Regional integration facilitates linkages between local, national and international actors by serving as an aggregator and collective representative of local voices.

Beyond power in numbers, successful accountability campaigns generally require a diversity of tactics, a number of complex tasks to be performed simultaneously across multiple scales in the service of a cohesive campaign (Fox 2016). As such, the challenges of an accountability campaign favor organizations with a sophisticated division of labor and significant expertise, both of which are structural advantages of regionally integrated organizations. Accompanying an entire policy process, from agenda-setting through implementation not only requires a number of different skills and expertise, but also dedicated organizational resources to maintain focus on a multi-year process (Fox 2016). Accountability efforts that involve monitoring state implementation require that organizations gather, manage, process and analyze a significant volume of information (Schouten 2011). As Fox and Acheron (2016) illustrate, simply gathering information is not in itself likely to be impactful: organizations must also develop a

dissemination and action strategy in coordination with coalitions of other organizations, insider allies and the media.

Organizations with professionalized expertise have further advantages in campaigns for accountability. All of the tactics mentioned, from collective organizing to interacting with the media, litigation, monitoring and information requests, etc. require their own sets of expertise. O'Meally (2013) argues that activists will be better positioned to form alliances within the state depending on their skills in networking, coalition-building and negotiation. Grimes (2008) argues that professionalized organizations have advantages in compiling information and filing legal claims. Policy budgeting and implementation are often extremely technical exercises: knowing how to track budgets, expenditures and procurements and knowing what to look for requires considerable expertise. Litigation and other legalistic sanctioning processes require similar levels of expert training.

Furthermore, highly professionalized policy-making or state bureaucratic spaces tend to privilege technical expertise and jargon, intentionally or unintentionally marginalizing civilians who cannot 'speak the language' (Davies 2007). To further add to the complexity, these discursive repertoires may shift across scale: the right 'language' in municipal planning meetings is likely to be different from meetings with international actors. Yet in order to be successful, organizations must find ways to simultaneously speak to these multiple audiences as well as their own constituents (Fox and Aceron 2016).

Looking at the multitude of tactics deployed across the range of accountability efforts, Fox (2016) asks, "can the whole be greater than the sum of the parts?" (p. 5). I argue that the cohesion advantages of regional integration—coordination, communication, internal accountability—allows them to think more strategically and move more cohesively towards a well-defined goal.

Mass mobilization may not itself be useful if it isn't backed by strong internal coordination offering direction and negotiating capacity. Fox (2016) argues that mass street protests can turn out to be ephemeral; I argue that the coordinating capacity of regionally integrated communities can help sustain accountability movements over time. Halloran (2015) argues that isolated accountability tactics have little potential for impact; I argue that regional integration creates a platform to coordinate tactics across a

wider region. A similar kind of problem may present itself in participatory spaces: asking a number of communities for their input on development priorities may result in a 'laundry list' of projects with no clear path to implementation; greater coordination can create more focused input across communities.

Furthermore, regional integration can promote effective communication across a region, allowing for better information gathering and tactical diffusion. Fox and Aceron (2016) write that credible policy monitoring, "requires broad geographic coverage to document large patterns of government actions, decisions, and non-decisions" (p. 24). Second, intra-organizational communication facilitates knowledge-sharing and tactical diffusion, allowing communities to compare notes on effective strategies within participatory spaces, and educate each other on how to make information requests or file complaints. Sharing experiences can build institutional knowledge over time, facilitating better strategies in approaching accountability challenges (Halloran 2015).

The bureaucratization process that accompanies regional integration also generates rules and monitoring and enforcement mechanisms that facilitate internal control. As a result, regionally integrated communities are likely to take a highly formalized approach to internal accountability, using internal investigatory mechanisms and formal sanctions to weed out corruption. More formalized organizations may also be more likely to follow transparent documentation procedures such as meeting minutes and formal documentation of organizational assets. However, the extent to which transparency in documentation alone increases accountability within organizations is itself a topic of significant debate within accountability studies (Joshi 2013, Kosak and Fung 2014).

Regionally integrated organizations, which tend to be bigger, more formalized and professionalized, are more likely to be perceived as legitimate by external actors. As a result, such organizations are more likely to draw favorable media coverage, international support and funding, and access to institutional spaces. As discussed earlier, media coverage is an essential tool to exert pressure on government officials. Better-resourced and supported organizations can sustain campaigns over longer periods of time, pursue formal expertise and run more internal projects.

Regionally integrated organizations are also more likely to possess the 'political literacy' to effectively operate in institutional spaces, and thus more likely to be perceived as credible and legitimate in negotiations with the state (O'Meally 2013). Grimes (2008) similarly argues that larger and better-established organizations are more likely to get an effective response from horizontal accountability institutions than smaller local organizations. As a result, I expect regionally integrated organizations to place more activists in institutional positions and be more effective in their interactions with state officials.

Independence Advantages

Although regional integration creates advantages in organizational capacity, internal integration and external legitimacy, it also creates serious trade-offs for internal participation and local decision-making control. I argue that the advantages of independence are likely to lead to more representative organizations and greater responsiveness from organizational leadership to the interests of its members.

More independent communities create greater opportunity for the direct participation of membership in decision-making. I argue that this tendency creates two consequences for accountability movements within communities: higher commitment in localized mobilization and reduced principal-agent problems in negotiations with the state.

As has been discussed earlier, direct participation creates a sense of shared ownership, unity and collective commitment within an organization. Collective deliberation allows communities to agree on a shared set of issues to prioritize in engagement with the state. A highly engaged membership that consistently has a strong presence in local meetings or participatory spaces can demonstrate to bureaucrats and officials the level of commitment and importance that the community attaches to the issue. As Beyerle (2014) notes, more important than counting raw numbers in determining the impact of a protest is the size of mobilization relative to the scale of the 'struggle arena': in some instances, a highly committed and mobilized community can be more effective than disparate activists or bigger protests located further away from the target.

Organizations that are representative of and accountable to their membership are more effective in demanding accountability of the state: they are more credible negotiators, less vulnerable to co-option

and more effective in ensuring the delivery of goods and services to their membership (Halloran and Flores 2015, O'Meally 2013).

Community independence reduces the principal-agent issues that occur when communities trust their leaders to accurately represent their interests to the government: higher levels of participation and deliberation as well as reduced physical and social distance between members and leaders increase the effectiveness of intra-organizational social accountability mechanisms. Accountability scholars argue that participation reduces principal-agent problems by improving information flows and transparency between principals (membership) to agents (leadership) and by involving principals directly in decision-making, reducing the discretion of leaders (Speer 2012). To illustrate this point, Díaz-Cayeros et al. (2013) compare participatory and representative decision-making at the municipal level in Mexico. They find that participatory systems create more public goods for civilians, with less 'leakage', by increasing engagement in decision-making, information about the actions of the leadership, credible risks of social sanctions and the social embeddedness of leaders.

In a closely related point, the reduced physical and social distance between members and leaders in decentralized movements facilitates internal accountability. Examining the logic of decentralized governance, Boko (2008) argues that physical proximity generates responsiveness. Tsai (2007), in a deep examination of informal accountability in rural China, argues that the social embeddedness of leaders in the same community-level institutions creates accountability through social pressure because acting in the interest of the community confers moral standing. Das Gupta and Romani (2004) argue that the close, longstanding interpersonal ties that shared life in rural communities likely generate give social sanctions their teeth.

When decision-making power is centralized in a regional platform, local actors give up some of their independence. Independent communities have much more control over the demands they make on the state during peace implementation. One could imagine that even if regionally integrated platforms are faithfully representing the aggregate interests of the communities they represent, they are forced to make compromises and choices in prioritizing between demands. Regional organizations are political institutions, riven by the same kinds of factions and internal power struggles common to any political

body. These problems are exacerbated for organizations that have been forced to survive a war, with its profound consequences on social trust, internal unity and organizing capacity. As such, it is very possible that decisions by regional organizations over what demands to prioritize in negotiations with the state are likely to be driven by clientelism and individual interests. Depending on the severity of these fractures, independent communities might be advantaged in directly representing to the state their own interests in peace implementation.

Independence also allows for greater flexibility, localization of strategies and rapid local adaptation to changing situations on the ground. These advantages are likely to manifest as an increase in innovation and adaptability at the local level to counter accountability failures. Beyerle (2011) argues that creativity and 'local fit' are essential in successful tactic selection. Halloran (2015) writes that, "Pro-accountability actors must be ready to seize opportunities or adapt to new constraints, rather than following pre-defined, linear prescriptions" (p. 13). Fung and Wright (2003) argue that local groups are more flexible in shifting between adversarial and collaborative relationships with state officials as opposed to larger organizations, which tend to frame the state as the enemy. Locally organized groups also have deep knowledge of the specific state and society-based obstacles to accountability and service delivery in their communities, and thus are well-positioned to support collaborative implementation.

Theory Chapter Conclusions

In the mid-1990s, a landmark new law, the Ley 70, opened the possibility for Afro communities in the Colombian Pacific to shape collective titles guaranteeing community ownership over their lands. In the wake of this landmark legislation, activists and community leaders were faced with a key decision: what kind of territorial demarcations should they create? Afro leaders in Chocó generated three different approaches to titling: by *cuenca*, integrating many communities along a river basin into a single title, by *vereda*, creating individual titles for each community, and hybrid federated structure, which brought together individual vereda-level titles into a collective association. I argue that the decisions they made generated path-dependent consequences that have shaped communities' ability to pursue peacebuilding objectives twenty-five years later. Thus, I focus on this variations in organizational forms to answer my

dissertation question: “What explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation”.

Building from the social movement literature, I have argued that there are a specific set of tradeoffs between regional integration and independence. Specifically, I expect that increasing regional integration among groups of communities should generate three kinds of advantages: increased organizational capacity, regional cohesion and external legitimacy. These advantages are likely to manifest in comparison to more independent communities as more extensive and better-resourced internal programs and external-facing campaigns, more unity and information sharing across communities, stronger capacity for formal accountability and conflict resolution, more responsiveness in their demands on state and non-state actors, and stronger external alliances. I predict that in the context of a peace deal, community self-protection against new threats and movements for social accountability will be advantaged by regional integration in collective mobilization for protest, safety in numbers, internal enforcement of neutrality rules, collective institution-building and information sharing for early warnings. However, more independent communities are advantaged in membership commitment, greater responsiveness from organizational leadership to the interests of its members, local flexibility and rapid responses to crises.

The combined advantages of regional integration — power in numbers, expertise, coordination, external legitimacy — should enable a key advantage: such organizations are likely to be able to ‘scale shift’ far more easily. The concept of scale shift specifies how movements can be translated across different spatial scales, in order to broaden their claims and access elite power-holders in order to expand their impact (Soule, 2013). As the peacebuilding literature itself has already richly explored, the obstacles to grassroots peacebuilding are rarely located exclusively at the local scale. These problems mirror the challenges of localized mobilization that Fox (2016) explores, in which the sources of accountability failures are interconnected across multiple scales, forcing communities that seek to build countervailing power to do the same. Individual communities alone rarely have the resources, expertise or respect to contend with well-resourced and well-armed interests that may be competing for land or resources.

As such, the accountability literature, much like the vertically integrated peacebuilding literature discussed in the literature review section emphasizes the importance of connections across scales as a way for communities to target higher-level political players, build real power and address the “vertical gap” discussed in the previous chapter (Fox and Aceron, 2016; Halloran and Flores, 2015; Schock, 2015; Wampler 2008). Despite the importance of the scale shift mechanism, neither the accountability nor peacebuilding research has richly investigated precisely how movements can scale shift. Esman and Uphoff (1984, 26–30) made an important contribution to this question, focusing on meso-scale ‘2nd-level’ local organizations as a way to more efficiently bring together the demands and resources of individual people. Such organizations function as a powerful intermediary between state and society, enabling rural communities to escape isolation, build leverage and make credible demands on their governments. Fox (2016) refocuses attention on these arguments. Specifically, he argues that communities successfully scale shift by strengthening their horizontal connections among each other, in the form of regional-scale collective organizations of 50 or 500 communities. These are the kinds of platforms that can credibly “project voice upwards” (Fox, 2016, p. 13).

This dissertation builds on those arguments by focusing on rural organizing at the meso-scale as a key advancement in understanding how to understand the “vertical gap” in peacebuilding. Peacebuilding thus far has explained this gap as a “disconnect” between national peace processes and local peacebuilding (Lederach, 2012). I reframe the gap as the challenges that communities face in building countervailing power in a peace process, and point to scale and organizational structure as two key factors in understanding how communities build power. I argue that the increased organizational capacity, regional cohesion and external legitimacy of highly integrated regions enables them to meaningfully reduce the power asymmetries that civilians otherwise face at the local scale. As such, I argue that regionally integrated organizations are more likely to be able to generate positive impacts both in community self-protection and in movements for social accountability. The benefits of highly coordinated numbers with sophisticated divisions of labor and accumulated expertise, acting horizontally across a wide region and vertically operating across multiple scales simultaneously has the opportunity to create a much deeper impact.

However, as discussed above, regional integration creates serious tradeoffs for the internal democracy and independence of communities. As Fox (2016) argues, the effectiveness of scale-shift is contingent not only on the ability of communities to build regional organizations, but for those organizations to be internally democratic, legitimate and representative. As I have discussed above, the bureaucratization that accompanies regional integration has serious potential to undermine the internal democracy of organizations. I also believe that the consequences of war on social trust and the freedom of movement are likely to have enormous impacts on the specific vulnerabilities of regionally integrated organizations, which require smooth communication and coordination across a wide number of communities in order to be effective. These impacts and their consequences are examined in the empirical chapters.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN: INVESTIGATING REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN CHOCÓ'S CONSEJOS COMUNITARIOS

My previous chapter outlined a theory of civilian influence on local peace implementation, focusing on variance in the level of regional integration of peasant organization. This dissertation asks the question: what explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation? In response, I examine the explanatory variable 'regional integration', defined as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. In order to test this theory, I develop a research design that includes two controlled comparisons of three cases each, ranging from 'independence' to 'partial integration' to 'full integration'. This variation in regional integration serves as my independent variable; I test the impact of this regional integration against two outcomes: post-conflict violence and state-led peace implementation.

In this chapter, I outline my research design. I begin by explaining and justifying my approach to the method of controlled comparison, giving specific attention to developing subnational cases and three-way comparison. Then I introduce my cases: *consejos comunitarios* in Baudó and Atrato, two major river systems of the department of Chocó. I justify my focus on a single peace process (the 2016 Colombian peace process) based on practicality, relevance and methodological leverage. I explain what a consejo comunitario is and how it functions, outline the differences between 'independent', 'partially integrated' and 'fully integrated' regions, and briefly acquaint the reader with the geography of Baudó and Atrato. I then define, operationalize and justify my two outcomes and explore possible alternative explanations. I finish by discussing my approach to data collection. I offer particular attention to the ethical challenges of fieldwork I have faced in Chocó, working in partnership with a movement of marginalized people who face structural racism and direct violence from both the state and non-state actors. These challenges have only been multiplied by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Controlled Comparison

To test my research question, I develop two controlled comparisons of three cases each. In this section, I discuss my approach to controlled comparison: first, I discuss the method of controlled comparison generally, then I explore two specific elements of my research design: applying process-tracing strategies to cross-case comparison and expanding from the traditional two to six cases (two comparisons of three cases each).

Following Slater and Ziblatt (2013), I define controlled comparison as a methodological strategy in which a researcher strategically selects two or more cases for analysis that either demonstrate varying outcomes despite many shared characteristics (most-similar approach) or a shared outcome despite many differences (most-different approach). I adopt a most-similar approach: for each of my controlled comparisons, I select three geographically proximate cases over the same time frame (2016-2021) that are as similar as possible in every way except for variation in my independent variable: the degree of regional integration.

I select the controlled comparison method based on the method's relative advantages over both single-case studies and large-n studies. Relative to large-n studies, controlled comparisons offer a level of detail, density of observations and overall analytical richness per each case that would be impossible in larger studies. This fine-grained analysis is necessary for research on civilian autonomy and influence in peacebuilding contexts, which often manifests in ways that are subtle or difficult to measure; large-N studies might not be able to capture this effect. Relative to single cases, comparison potentially has the ability to more effectively evaluate the impact of a given causal mechanism, providing additional analytical leverage by generating a quasi-counterfactual (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; S. Tarrow, 2010). As such, controlled comparisons generate rich insights into causal effects and help account for competing hypotheses while still providing analytical space to dig deep into the details and causal processes of each case. This project also responds to a call within social movement research for increased attention to comparisons, given that outcomes related to 'success' and 'failure' are always relative and relational, and thus best evaluated through comparison (Bosi et al., 2016; Fishman & Everson, 2016; Kolb, 2007).

It is also worth noting that I invested significant time into attempting to build a large-N statistical test to make use of a 'nested' approach to analysis, but the necessary data simply wasn't available: the vast majority of data on violence, for example, is only differentiated to the municipal level, whereas my cases operated within (and at times, across) municipalities. Furthermore, my fieldwork revealed that the official data is fraught with absences and reporting gaps.

Case selection is absolutely crucial to the validity of a controlled comparison. The challenge with controlled comparisons is that they replicate experimental designs (comparing a treatment and control group), but without two critical advantages of experiments: randomly assigned treatment and a sufficiently large N to implement statistical controls. These disadvantages of controlled comparison generate potential endogeneity issues either through non-random assignment of treatment (the assignment is linked to the outcome) or through omitted variable issues (significant differences between treatment and control groups cannot be accounted for). We attempt to overcome these issues through strategic case selection, building both on deep knowledge of theory (what are potential confounding variables and competing explanations?) and of our cases (which cases are similar enough to warrant possible comparison?). Blatter and Haverland (2012, p. 25) outline two rules to case selection: the cases "must express strong differences with respect to the main independent variable of interest, and they must be as similar as possible with regard to variables associated with other potential explanations".

I take another moment to address the issue of finding cases that match "as similarly as possible" along a range of control variables, as it is evidently impossible to find in the world two cases that match perfectly along every dimension. Rather than searching for a chimeral 'perfect' comparison (or abandoning the method altogether), Slater and Ziblatt ([2013](#)) emphasize deliberate selection of cases in which variation cannot be explained by competing hypotheses, thus requiring further theoretical intervention. Gerring (2007, p. 133) furthermore notes that dissimilarities in control variables are acceptable, "if the deviation runs counter to the predicted hypothesis".

A final concern in case selection is generalizability. Comparisons provide a much stronger basis for generalizability if they reflect the relevant features of the universe of cases (Gerring, 2007; Seawright & Gerring, 2008; Slater & Ziblatt, 2013). Thus, my case selection attempts to reflect what I understand as

the most relevant features common to peace process contexts, as I will discuss in greater depth in the following section: poverty, a fragile, uneven and corrupt institutional presence, illegal economies and the ongoing presence of other armed groups.

Finally, my case selection is also built on what Seawright and Gerring (2008) describe as “pragmatic considerations”: time, money, expertise, and access. I also acknowledge the role of chance in the connections and relationships I formed and how that guided my case selection, an issue I explore later in this chapter.

The logic of causal inference in ideal-typical controlled comparisons, that is, in comparisons that match nearly perfectly along all relevant controls, is extremely simple. Since we are theoretically reproducing the experimental model and controlling for confounding factors, the difference in outcomes between the treatment and control cases can be interpreted as the causal effect of our independent variable (Seawright & Gerring, 2008).

However, as explained above, it is virtually impossible for controlled comparisons to meet the standards of an ideal-typical case, bringing to the fore the limitations of controlled comparison: too-small N, non-random assignment and unknown variables. From this perspective, a comparison is essentially correlational analysis but with an insufficient sample to build in adequate statistical controls (Brady & Collier, 2010; Seawright & Gerring, 2008). As such, even if our controlled comparison reflects a correlation between x and y in the theorized direction, two possible sources of indeterminacy remain: either an endogeneity issue or other omitted variable is actually responsible for the variation, or there is a ‘true’ link between x and y but through a different mechanism than the one we proposed (Rohlfing, 2012).

However, in line with a host of qualitative methodologists, I argue that these problems can be meaningfully addressed by complementing careful case selection with process tracing within the individual cases under study (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Brady & Collier, 2010; Slater & Ziblatt, 2013; S. Tarrow, 2010). As Blatter & Haverland (2012) argue, after a comparative approach establishes covariance between the independent and dependent variable, a researcher can apply process tracing to establish that the mechanism functioned as predicted, building a narrative of the causal process. Bennett

and Checkel (2015) argue that augmenting comparison with process tracing can help address the issue of equifinality (multiple paths to the same outcome) by examining the exact path connecting cause and effect. Furthermore, applying process tracing methods potentially resolves the issue of omitted variable bias: differences in the control variables and other potential alternative explanations can be explored in detail (Bennett & Checkel, 2015; Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Lyall, 2014). Finally, process tracing can support claims to generalizability by demonstrating the impact of scope conditions (Bennett & Checkel, 2015).

I define process tracing here as the process of accumulating evidence to analyze how empirical reality matches a hypothesized causal process linking independent variables to outcomes (Bennett & Checkel, 2015; George & Bennett, 2005). Prior to analysis, a researcher lays out in detail a proposed causal narrative and potential alternative explanations and generates case-specific predictions of what we should expect to observe if our hypothesis is true (Beach & Pedersen, 2013; Bennett & Checkel, 2015). Thus, the heart of my case analysis will be applying the causal chain I lay out in my theory chapter and applying it to the empirical evidence. As a rough example: regional integration → bureaucratization → specialized dispute resolution mechanisms → lower rate of conflict across communities. Each step in this causal chain can be thought of as a “hoop test”, i.e. a necessary condition for my hypothesis to be true: for example, does regional integration actually lead to bureaucratization (formalized rules, sophisticated division of labor, etc.)? More direct evidence may constitute a “smoking gun”: strong support for my hypothesis, though its absence does not necessarily undermine my hypothesis. For example, a member of an independent community may explain to me that their more integrated neighbors experience less conflict (Mahoney, 2015).

Finally, I discuss my decision to incorporate six cases; two controlled comparisons of three cases each. Following Rohlfing (2012), I argue that while there are trade-offs in depth as you expand cases, additional cases reduce possible causes of indeterminacy, provided that the researcher can still undertake careful process tracing. As such, I argue that an expanded set of cases contributes to internal validity by offering me an additional chance to examine possible alternative explanations, and to external validity, by demonstrating how the theory travels to a different region with different political actors and

organizing traditions. Furthermore, I argue that the shift to comparisons of three, rather than two, cases fits my research question better: as my independent variable focuses on a variable with degrees of differentiation – the level of regional integration – I wanted to include a ‘middle ground’ case between independent and integration.



Independent Variable: Regional Integration in Chocó

In this section, I introduce the reader to my cases: the consejos comunitarios of six tributary rivers in the Atrato and Baudó regions of Chocó, a department in the Pacific region of Colombian (illustrated in the map below). I proceed as follows: first, I discuss my decision to focus on a single country (Colombia) and within that country, a single department (Chocó), examining the advantages this offers for my project as well as the potential consequences to generalizability. I explain for the reader what a consejo comunitario is and outline the specific variation I focus on before examining the geography of the six cases in the Atrato and

Baudó regions of Chocó. I finish by discussing my approach to case selection and its implications for the internal and external validity of my study.

Here, I discuss my decision to focus on the department of Chocó, in the Colombian Pacific. I focus on two components: the general trade-offs of narrowing my focus to a single subnational context, and the relative advantages and disadvantages of focusing on Chocó specifically. Focusing on a single region in Colombia was a decision made for methodological leverage, relevance and practicality. Narrowing my universe of cases to a specific subnational regional allows me to hold relevant variables including history, culture and institutional configurations constant (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). The ability

to hold these factors constant is especially relevant for controlled comparisons, increasing the probability that we can match cases sufficiently to make valid causal inferences (Snyder, 2001). Additionally, subnational research attunes us to the internal heterogeneity within countries (Giraudy et al., 2019; Lankina, 2012), which is the specific goal of my research — to demonstrate the broad variance both in local peace outcomes and in rural organizational forms, and the relationships between the two (Giraudy et al., 2019; Lankina, 2012).

Furthermore, Colombia, and especially the region of Chocó, is a highly relevant case for post-conflict grassroots mobilization. Given the length of the conflict and the robustness and innovation of grassroots organizing for peace in Colombia, the country has always served as a crucial laboratory for grassroots peacebuilding, which is reflected in the breadth of research on the subject (Alther, 2006; Aponte & Benavides, 2016; Arjona, 2017; Idler et al., 2015; Kaplan, 2017; Mouly & Garrido, 2017). On a related note, the Colombian peace process is one of the newest peace processes in the world, offering a unique opportunity to investigate how rural organizations manage the transition process of a peace deal while that process is actively in motion.

Finally, there is an element of practicality. Focusing the universe of cases to one department in Colombia is more cost-effective for me as a grad student, plays to my language strengths in Spanish, and allows me to develop a much deeper contextual knowledge about my cases.

The Colombian Pacific and more specifically the consejos comunitarios of Chocó offer a compelling space to undertake this research. As will be discussed in greater detail below, the consejos comunitarios offer community-based territorial units that are well adapted for comparisons among each other, and have rich variation along my key variable of interest, regional integration. The consejos



Figure 5: Consejos Comunitarios of the Pacífico

comunitarios have also been strong sites of resistance to the conflict, thereby improving the chances that I would find meaningful variation in my outcomes of interest.

Beyond these methodological reasons, I found that I held a deep curiosity to better understand the organizational figure of the *consejos comunitarios*. The titling of the *consejos comunitarios* guarantees the collective ownership of the large majority of an incredibly rich region, the Colombian Pacific, in the hands of the black communities who have lived there for generations, into perpetuity. In developing this project, I was deeply influenced by visions of collective land and housing ownership emerging in the racial justice spaces I was involved in Washington, DC, a city in which black people have been violently dispossessed from their communities because of shifting capital valuations of the places they lived. I was deeply interested in learning how these collective projects were able to survive and grow despite unbelievable violence, a brutal attempted counter-reform to undermine the success of rural Black people to win recognition for their land. I believed and continue to believe that their story offers rich lessons as part of a hemispheric and global movement for racial justice, reparations and peace.

However, there are trade-offs to generalizability in only focusing on communities within Chocó. First, overall Colombia is a middle-income country with a long history of democratic rule and relatively effective institutions (compared to other countries emerging from civil war) making it an arguably unrepresentative post-conflict case. I attempted to balance this fact by focusing on the Colombian Pacific, where conditions of persistent poverty, state absence, marginalized ethnic minorities and heavily over-exploited natural resources closely represent many other post-conflict contexts. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that narrowing my focus on a single region in Colombia introduces challenges to generalizability in my study. This issue can be rectified in future research by applying this theoretical framework to other contexts.

In this section, I introduce my cases: six groups of communities in *consejos comunitarios* in the Atrato and Baudó river basins. The population of cases I select from are the 58 *consejos comunitarios* that exist in Chocó. *Consejos comunitarios* are an ‘ethno-territorial’ organization, the legally recognized

non-state governance institutions that administer the collective land titles of black communities¹⁴. These institutions were created by the Law 70 of 1993, a law that emerged from Article 55 of the 1991 Constitution. The 1991 Constitution officially recognized Colombia as a pluri-ethnic state and extended ethnic rights to include Afro-colombian people. The central component of this ethnic recognition was a virtually unprecedented commitment by the state to award collective land titles for black communities in lands the state designated as *baldíos* (i.e. empty lands belonging to the state). In reality, Afro-colombian communities had been living in these lands since at least the abolition of slavery in 1851, and in many cases hundreds of years prior (Vélez, 2014; Villa, 2013).

A collective title creates a demarcated property collectively owned by the people living within its boundaries that is, “inalienable, immune from seizure and not subject to the statute of limitations” (*inalienable, inembargable e imprescriptibles*). Put simply, the lands cannot be bought or sold outside of the community, guaranteeing that they belong to the community into perpetuity (Moreno & Palacios Blandón, 2016). There are currently 232 formally recognized land titles covering 5.7 million hectares; the vast majority of which are in the four departments along the Pacific coast: Chocó, Valle del Cauca, Cauca and Nariño, with a few others scattered in Risaralda, Antioquia and along the Caribbean coast.

Some basic counting stats of the consejos comunitarios in Chocó is offered below to present a snapshot of the wide variation per consejo comunitario in terms of territory (in hectares), communities contained within the title, and population:

¹⁴ The legal definition under the Law 70 of a black community is a “set of families of Afro-Colombian descent that have their own culture, share a history and have their own traditions and customs in relation to the lands they live in, and which conserve an identity consciousness that distinguishes them from other ethnic groups”, adapted from article 2, numeral 5 of Law 70 of 1993, cited in: (Hinestroza Cuesta & Cuesta Rentería, 2017, p. 164).

Table 1: Consejo Comunitarios: A Range of Territorial and Population Sizes

	Total	Mean	Median	Range
Territory (in Hectares)	3,039,000	52,400	22,890	32 - 683,591
Communities (Veredas)	683	11.8	4	1 - 91
Population	169,763	2927	831	80 - 30,635

Within these collective land titles, the consejo comunitario is the “maximum internal authority” charged with a specific set of functions: administer the territory within their collective title and manage the natural resources therein; represent the interests of the communities to external parties, defend the rights of the communities and preserve their culture; mediate and resolve internal disputes (Hinestroza Cuesta & Cuesta Rentería, 2017; Rolland, 2005).

All the consejos comunitarios are legally mandated to share the same basic structure, consisting of a general assembly (*asamblea general*), a board of directors (*junta directiva*) and a legal representative (*representante legal*). The asamblea general is the highest authority in the consejos comunitario; all adult members are legally entitled to participate in the assembly, which meets normally on an annual basis and at least every three years to elect the representante legal and the junta directiva. The junta directiva includes an auditor (*fiscal*), treasurer (*tesorero*), secretary (*secretario*) and spokesperson (*vocero*); the representante legal also normally participates in the junta directiva as its president. The juntas serve three-year terms as the day-to-day authorities and administrators for the consejo comunitario. The representante legal has the additional function to serve as the legal representative (*persona jurídica*) in contractual relations with outside parties and the state (Hinestroza Cuesta & Cuesta Rentería, 2017; Rolland, 2005).

It is furthermore worth noting that all consejos comunitarios share two interrelated challenges: their official functions are vaguely defined and they receive no regular funding from the state. As I have briefly touched on, the consejos comunitarios are assigned a massive mandate, from resource administration to the defense of human rights and afro-colombian culture; however, the state has never attempted to define how these functions should be carried out. Furthermore, unlike indigenous

resguardos, the consejos comunitarios receive no regular *transferencias* of money from the state, leaving them with no realistic way to perform the full scope duties. As such, the consejos comunitarios exist in somewhat of a liminal space between state and society: they perform a public function and have recognized legal status, but are best understood as an authority structure that exists outside the state and without consistent state support or resources (Vélez, 2014)

Despite these complications, the consejos comunitarios offer me a fairly ideal unit in that they are all comparable among themselves: they are legally mandated to have the same structure (in terms of an *asamblea*, *junta directiva* and *representante legal*), and share a high degree of cultural and political similarities (as they are all Afro-colombian communities who received political recognition at the same time). As such, adopting the consejo comunitario as my unit of study allows me to partially overcome a key challenge to subnational research: generating a degree of unit homogeneity (Monkada & Snyder, 2012). Yet, as reflected in the table above, there is enormous variation in their size, reflecting differences in regional integration that I take as my independent variable. I describe this variation in the following section.

I explore the independent variable ‘regional integration’, which I define as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional-scale organizations. Thus, my project takes a multi-scalar approach to the level of analysis, looking at the interactions between ‘community’ and ‘region’. Analyses of scale in the peacebuilding literature have built out of Lederach’s (1997) ‘peacebuilding pyramid’, which emphasizes the need to build linkages across the grassroots, meso and elite-level scales.

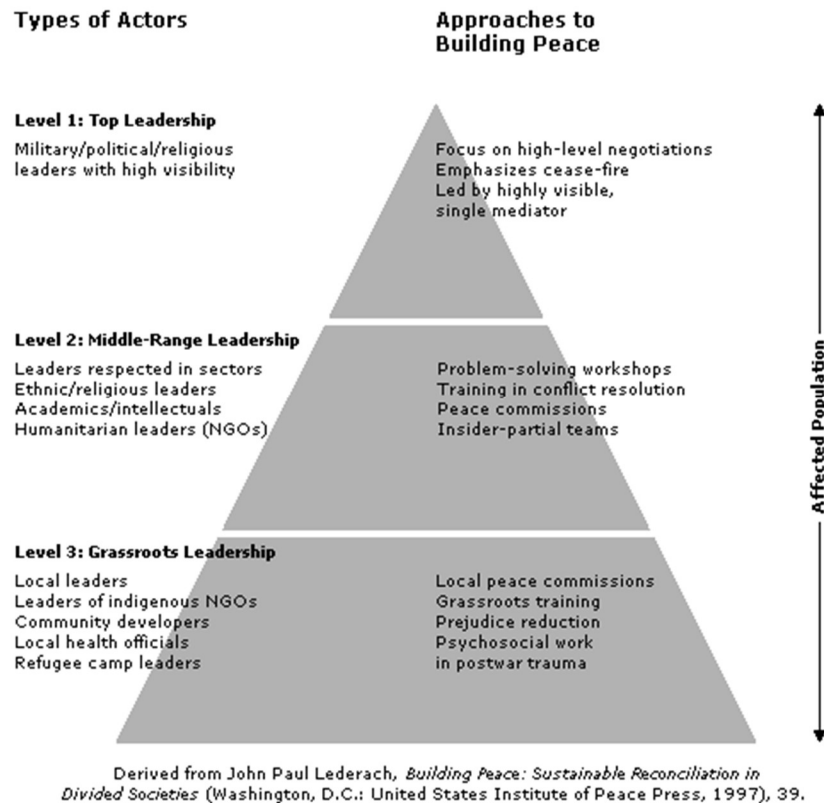


Figure 6: Lederach's Peacebuilding Pyramid

Lederach recognizes the limitations of grassroots actors in effecting broader change; for that reason, he places special emphasis on meso-scale or 'middle-range' actors, who have more freedom of movement and linkages to other scales as compared to grassroots and national leadership. As such, these actors are well-positioned to address peacebuilding's "most significant weakness: the 'vertical gap', "the lack of connection between community and political processes of negotiation" (Lederach, 2012, p. 9). From his work, scholars have built an 'infrastructure for peace' research agenda through which peacebuilders, generally in partnership with the state, intentionally build coordination platforms at each scale to create 'vertically integrated' peacebuilding (Donais & Burt, 2014; Kamatsiko, 2015; van Tongeren, 2013). However, the nature of the relationship between scales, especially given the vertical power asymmetries that grassroots actors face and the possibilities for elite capture of state-mandated spaces, remains under-explored. This project offers a different perspective, examining how grassroots actors themselves understand and define scale, and how they seek to understand the 'vertical gap', and successfully 'scale shift', through different 'meso-scale' organizing strategies.

So how do these issues of scale map onto the consejos comunitarios of Chocó? Despite the degree of unit homogeneity afforded by focusing on consejos comunitarios, there's nevertheless a methodological challenge of defining the informal and variable spatial concepts of 'communities' and 'region'. Consejos comunitarios officially record 'veredas', which offers a rough approximation of communities; however, at the granular level, there's still some degree of uncertainty - for example, within one vereda, there may be multiple small collections of residences within fairly close proximity.

In order to build more clarity, I turn to the social geography of Chocó, building out of the understandings of scale expressed to me by rural Chocoan people. This approach reflects approaches to subnational research that stress deep case knowledge in selecting and defining units and scales of analysis (Giraudy et al., 2019; zuo, 2015). For rural black communities in Chocó, as in the rest of the Pacific, life takes place along the banks of the rivers that carve through the dense rainforests of the Pacific lowland. Given both the challenges presented by the geography and the long-running history of state under-investment in the region, rivers are both the main modes of transportation and the source of people's livelihoods. Thus it is perhaps not surprising that rivers dominate the social geographies of the region, and people's identities are built around the rivers and tributaries that they grew up in (Oslender, 2016).

In my fieldwork, I noticed that rural people expressed a scalar conception of their identity: at the most localized level, they identified with their village of birth, to the tributary river they were from, to the section of the broader river basin that tributary river feeds into; beyond that, they also identify as Chocoans and as Colombians. To explain with reference to Chocó, three main rivers define the geography of Chocó: Atrato, Baudó and San Juan (see map, below). Due to the size of the rivers, people colloquially define the region they belong to as a section of the main river (Upper, Middle, Lower), which somewhat coincide with the municipal divisions within Chocó. Thus, for example, someone from Pogue, a community in the municipality of Bojayá, might express that they were from the tributary river Bojayá, located in the Middle Atrato region of Chocó.

There is massive variation in the size of consejos comunitarios; this variation reflects the main titling strategies in Chocó: with some exceptions, communities either sought titles that corresponded to

their individual community, or else they formed large titles that included all of the communities along an entire section of a major river basin. Some groups of communities have taken a middle road between these two approaches, opting for individual community titles but forming associations of *consejos comunitarios* in the same river basin to collectively represent their interests. This variation forms the basis of my independent variable: regional integration.

I define regional integration as a two-part typology of representative functions and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. By representative functions, I mean: is there a formal regional body that has recognized authority to represent the communities in negotiations with external parties? An example would include negotiating an economic project

with a corporation or representing the needs of the communities to state institutions; however, final decision to go ahead with any specific project would still require the approval of the individual communities. By legal authority, I mean: does the regional body have the power to make legally binding decisions for the communities? As opposed to representative functions, in this instance, the regional organization has the legal authority both to represent the interests of communities and the final authority to make decisions and approve projects within its territory.

This classification system generates a three-part typology of regional integration, ranging from **independent communities**, which retain all legal authority over the territory as well as representational duties at the community level, to **associations of consejos comunitarios**, which retain legal authority at the community level, but participate in an associations which represent their interests externally, to highly



Figure 7: Rivers of Chocó

integrated **consejos comunitarios mayores**, which concentrate both legal authority and representational functions at the regional level.



Independent communities - no linkages to a formal regional organization, communities represent their own interests



Association of consejos comunitarios - each community has legal control of their own land title, but the association represents their interests externally



Consejo Comunitario Mayor (CCM) - the regional organization has legal control of the land and represents the collective interest of the communities

Dependent variables: Post-Conflict Violence and Peace Implementation

This dissertation is interested in variance in the diverging outcomes and strategies of communities in shaping the local impacts of a peace process. I conceptualize these diverging outcomes through the related concepts of autonomy and influence. By influence, I mean the capacity of communities to direct the outcomes of broader political processes: the implementation of a government policy; the decision-making of an armed group. By autonomy, I mean the capacity of communities to maintain free and independent control over the internal decision-making in the community – over local natural resource use, cultural and social norms, justice administration within a community – which may also be understood as a form of limited self-rule within the context of a broader state. While *influence* points to the direct impact of community organizing on the peace process, I include autonomy to capture

the ways in which the communities seek to protect themselves from the potentially harmful impacts of the peace deal. The concept of autonomy is widely used in the civilian agency literature as well as by the Chocoan community organizations themselves to discuss the key goals of their movements (De la torre, 2000; Kaplan, 2017; Ortiz-Guerrero et al., 2017; Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019). In essence, these two concepts are two sides of the same coin: influence is external-facing, seeking to advance community interests by way of negotiations with outside entities. Autonomy is internally-facing, seeking to minimize external interference with the affairs of the community.¹⁵

In my literature review chapter, I argued that a peace process presents communities with two key challenges: new threats from violent groups and obstacles to state-led peace implementation. I define 'new threats' as new potential sources of violence to community members, as well as threats to their autonomy generated by the peace deal. I define obstacles to peace implementation as state failures to implement any aspect of the peace deal that members of the community see as within their interests.

While both of these definitions are fairly straightforward, operationalization, by which I mean the process of translating these conceptual definitions into measurable values (Adcock & Collier, 2001), proves to be a bit trickier. I address two potential challenges to measurement validity¹⁶: First, definitions of violence, and especially of political interests, are at least partially subjective. And second, on a related point, communities do not have a homogenous or unified set of interests (or subjective perceptions of their interests) (Hirblinger & Simons, 2015). For example, while virtually any rural Chocoan would agree that the region needs 'development', one of the central promises of the peace deal, there are deep schisms among people in how they envision both the process and end goals of development. As another example, while some within a community might perceive more Colombian military presence as improved security, others might perceive that same military presence as a direct threat to their security.

¹⁵ H/t Prof. Wanis-St. John

¹⁶ I follow Adcock and Collier's (2001, p. 529) definition: "Measurement validity is specifically concerned with whether operationalization and the scoring of cases adequately reflect the concept the researcher seeks to measure"

There are no perfect indicators that can encapsulate the heterogeneous and subjective definitions within the communities in this study either for violence or for their desired outcomes from state-led peace implementation. My approach to this issue is to build indicators from participatory processes involving the communities under study, in which members of the communities debated and generated their own collective understandings of these two concepts. For the violence indicator, I look to the *Acuerdo Humanitario ¡Ya! para el Chocó* (Humanitarian Agreement Now! For Chocó, AHY), a grassroots peace effort that sought to advance an ethnic perspective in peace negotiations in 2017 with the ELN. To define community interests in state-led peace implementation, I focus on the *Programa de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial* (Territorially-Focused Development Plans, PDETs), a participatory development program agreed to in the peace deal, in which the communities under study worked with government representatives to develop a wide-ranging set of initiatives for the state to address the multi-faceted harm to rural areas caused by the conflict. I explore both programs and the indicators that emerge from them.

Acuerdo Humanitario ¡Ya!

In 2017, despite the recently signed peace deal and the relatively successful demobilization of the FARC, Chocoan leaders nevertheless anticipated a new wave of violence threatening Chocó. In the absence of the FARC, the ELN guerrillas and AGC paramilitaries sought to expand their control in Chocó, sparking violent competition between the two groups, a history I explore in significant depth in my empirical chapters.

In response to the reactivation of armed conflict, Chocoan organizations came together to launch the AHY, which presents a set of humanitarian demands to overcome the conflict in Chocó, with a specific focus on advancing an ethnic perspective in the then-ongoing negotiations between the ELN and the Colombian government.¹⁷ The initiative was collectively shaped in August 2017 by 90 Chocoan civil

¹⁷ The talks between the ELN and the government started in January 2018 under the presidency of Juan Manuel Santos and were interrupted in January 2019 by current President Iván Duque right following an attack on a police station by the armed group.

society and ethno-territorial organizations representing diverse voices in Chocoan society.¹⁸ The AHY is a set of 11 demands on behalf of the Chocoan communities calling for an immediate ceasefire and demobilization by all armed groups (points A, B and E), respect for the territorial autonomy of the communities (point C), as well as an end to violence, displacement, confinement, recruitment and illegal economies affecting communities, recognizing the specific impacts of violence against minors, women and LGBTQ people (Points D, F, G, H, I, J). The final point asks for accompaniment and monitoring from international partners (point K).

From this set of 11 collectively defined demands for peace, I build my indicators for violence, specifically: 1) any violation of the territorial autonomy of the communities (establishing any military installations inside the community's borders, demanding support or aid from the communities, interfering in the community's decision-making, imposing rules on the community, desecrating sacred spaces, planting any mines in the community's territory), 2) establishing any illegal economies within the borders of the communities, including mining or coca crops, and 3) any form of direct violence against community members, including physical violence, displacement, confinement, recruitment, and sexual violence).

PDETs

The Territorially Focused Development Plans (*Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial*, PDET) are a national-scale participatory development plan that form the heart of the first¹⁹ of the 2016 Peace Accord: Comprehensive Rural Reform. Beyond the fact that the participatory structure offers a convenient approach to proxying for community interests, I select the PDETs because they are seen by a wide range of actors as the central mechanism offering tangible benefits to rural people most impacted

¹⁸ A full list of signatories can be found here:

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Acuerdo-Humanitario.pdf>. Especially notable was the role of women's and LGBTQ organizations that worked to expand the platform to include and account for a recognition of the specific impacts the war has had on women, gay and trans people (Primer Informe De Seguimiento Al Acuerdo Humanitario ¡Ya!, 2019).

¹⁹ The 2016 Accord comprises six main points: 1) Comprehensive Rural Reform, 2) Political Participation, 3) End Of The Conflict, 4) Solution To The Problem Of Illicit Drugs, 5) Agreement Regarding The Victims Of The Conflict, 6) Implementation And Verification Mechanisms.

by the conflict.²⁰ On top of that, they are one of the few aspects of the peace process that have shown at least some (haggard) forward progress, making it one of the only elements of the peace deal that would be viable for such a study (*Séptimo Informe Del Acuerdo Final*, 2020)

Conflict over rural inequality and the economic model for Colombia's rural peripheries has been perhaps the central driver of the Colombian conflict and the main stated motivation of the FARC rebels. Rural reform proved to be the single most contentious aspect of the negotiations; the PDETs emerged as a compromise, or perhaps as a displacement of the negotiation failure. Because the two parties could not generate consensus on what 'rural reform' should look like, they agreed to create a massive participatory space, the largest participatory program in Colombian history, in order to allow Colombia's rural population to articulate for itself its own vision for rural reform.²¹

The goals of the PDETs reflect this uneasy compromise between the vision of revolutionary agrarian change as demanded by the FARC and the state's recognition of the need to develop a 'holistic' presence in the rural areas in order to integrate (or pacify) its violent peripheries. Thus, the PDETs seek to overcome the gaps (*superar las brechas*) between urban and rural Colombia, repair the damage done by the armed conflict and address key drivers of conflict, focusing on poverty, a lack of infrastructure and fragile state presence (Camilo Vargas, 2017; Junieles, 2017; Oyaga Moncada, 2018). This is to be achieved by centering the visions of the communities most affected by the armed conflict to define their own future from the specific point of view of their own region. Sergio Jaramillo, the key architect of the PDETs, argued that centering citizen participation would generate innovative, locally adapted and highly legitimated approaches to build the state in the peripheries (Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019). Mariana Escobar Arango, the first head of the ART (Agency for Territorial Renewal, Agencia para la Renovación del Territorio), similarly emphasized the centrality of civilian participation as a way to create horizontal

²⁰ Fundación Ideas Para La Paz staff, Personal Communication, 04/2019, Procuraduría Étnica staff, Personal Communication, 04/2019, Marino Córdoba, Presentation: Colombian Peace: Opportunities and Challenges, Wilson Center, Washington, D.C. 10/7/2019

²¹ UniAndes Professor 1, Personal Communication, February 2020

dialogue between the state and its people, recognizing that communities, “are capable of managing their own development” (Escobar Arango, 2017).

To that end, the PDETs selected 170 municipalities for the program, grouped into 16 subregions.²² The municipalities were (officially)²³ selected according to the following criteria: high poverty, presence of illicit crops, weak state presence and historical presence of the armed conflict (Camilo Vargas, 2017). In total, some 220,000 people in over 11,000 communities participated in formulating 16 regionally-focused PATRs (Action Plan for Regional Transformation, *Plan de Acción para la Transformación Regional*), a development plan guiding state investment for the next 15 years. The PATRs were developed in a three-tiered structure: community assemblies generated a local diagnostic and elected representatives to participate in a municipal assembly, who in turn elected representatives to participate in a regional-level assembly to create the PATRs based on the diagnostics of the communities (Guarín et al., 2018).

Given that these priorities emerged out of internal discussions within the community,²⁴ I take the development priorities as expressions of the interests of the communities; a reflection of what the communities under study hoped to gain from the peace deal. To give the reader a sense of what these initiatives look like, I offer a few from the Bojayá, Chocó municipal PDET plan:

²² The 170 PDET municipalities include 6.6 million people (24% of Colombia's rural population), of which more than a third are officially recognized as victims of the conflict and more than half live below the poverty line (Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019). The regions are: Alto Patía, Norte del Cauca, Arauca, Bajo Cauca and Nordeste Antioqueño, Catatumbo, Pacífico Medio, Pacífico y Frontera Nariñense, Putumayo, Sierra Nevada – Perijá, Sur de Bolívar, Sur de Córdoba, Tolima, Urabá Antioqueño, Chocó, Cuenca del Caguán and Piedemonte Caqueteño, Macarena-Guaviare, Montes de María.

²³ Many municipalities self-evidently meet these criteria but were not selected. Many suspect that the municipalities were in fact prioritized based on previous FARC control, as an attempt by the state to ‘recuperate’ these territories (“En Chocó dudan de efectividad de PDET,” 2020)

²⁴ One could argue that these priorities were potentially diluted by either state or corporate interests, who were allowed to participate in the municipal and regional bodies. However, as I explore in greater depth in my PDET chapter, corporate actors and other elite interests were virtually absent from the PDET process, giving communities a free hand to define PDET priorities.

- Implement alternative mechanisms for conflict resolution in the communities of the municipality of Bojayá.
- Dredge and reforest the Napipí river from the community of Union Cuiti to its mouth in the Atrato river.
- Install 9 mobile phone antennas in the black and indigenous communities of El Tigre, Napipi, Pogue, Isla de los Palacios, Puerto Conto, Playita, Punto Cero and Chanu.

The initiatives encapsulated in these planning documents carry the force of law; that is, the state is obligated to implement them. Nevertheless, foot-dragging, budget shortfalls, elite capture, corruption and a host of other institutional blockages have slowed the PDET implementation down to grinding pace, demanding bottom-up pressure to force the state to continue to advance on its development commitments. I track and analyze the strategies used by the communities to press for implementation, as well as the degree of implementation of the priorities as articulated in these planning documents.

Case Selection

As discussed previously in this chapter, a rigorous approach to case selection for controlled comparisons balances control for potentially confounding variables with ‘representative’ variation in the independent variable, in this case, regional integration (Seawright & Gerring, 2008; Slater & Ziblatt, 2013). Thus, I’m looking for a set of three cases of groups of communities in neighboring tributary rivers which are as similar as possible in most respects, but still maximize variation along my independent variable, that is, the degree of regional integration. As I discussed earlier, the goal is not to find a chimeral perfect comparison. Rather, it is to employ theory to think through possible confounding variables and maximize our potential to control for those factors, recognizing that some possible threats to endogeneity will still have to be untangled through process tracing in the case analysis. As such, I draw on theories of social movements, civilian resistance and civil conflict to generate a set of key factors that must be accounted for: economic factors, resource availability, geography, state capacity, conflict trajectories, political factors and socio-cultural factors.

First, social movement scholars argue that economic factors and the availability of resources such as jobs and income, public infrastructure and access to education can facilitate mobilization by freeing up time and resources away from survival activities (McAdam & Scott, 2005; Tarrow, 2011).

Furthermore, the relationships between economic factors and violence, in particular overall economic development (Braithwaite et al., 2016; Collier, 2003) and inequality (Cederman et al., 2011) has been extensively documented throughout conflict zones, and in Colombia specifically as well (Cortés & Montolio, 2014; Nieto-Matiz, 2019). This body of literature predicts that stronger and more inclusive economic development should expose communities to less violence.

Emerging from the “greed” literature of the early 2000s (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004), scholars of civil war in Colombia have identified a range of resources and commodities linked to the conflict, principally coca (Holmes et al., 2021; Llanes, 2020), but also gold and other precious minerals (Idrobo et al., 2014), oil (Rodríguez & Daza, 2012), and agricultural commodities including palm oil, coffee and cattle (Chacón et al., 2011; Tellez, 2021).

Likewise, in connection with the “opportunity cost” model of civil conflict (Fearon & Laitin, 2003), a number of geographic and state capacity factors in Colombia have been linked to violence in the civil conflict. Rough terrain (mountainous / heavily forested areas), climatic factors and proximity to international borders facilitate the opportunities for safe havens for non-state armed actors (Holmes et al., 2018; Vargas, 2012; Weintraub, 2016). Similarly, the distance to departmental capitals and the absence and ineffectiveness of state institutional infrastructure for security, justice, education, health, etc. may also create safe havens for armed groups and/or increase local grievances, facilitating armed group recruitment (Holmes et al., 2021; Krakowski, 2015; Weintraub, 2016). State policies such as land reform can either quell or incite violence, depending on the effectiveness of their implementation (Albertus & Kaplan, 2013).

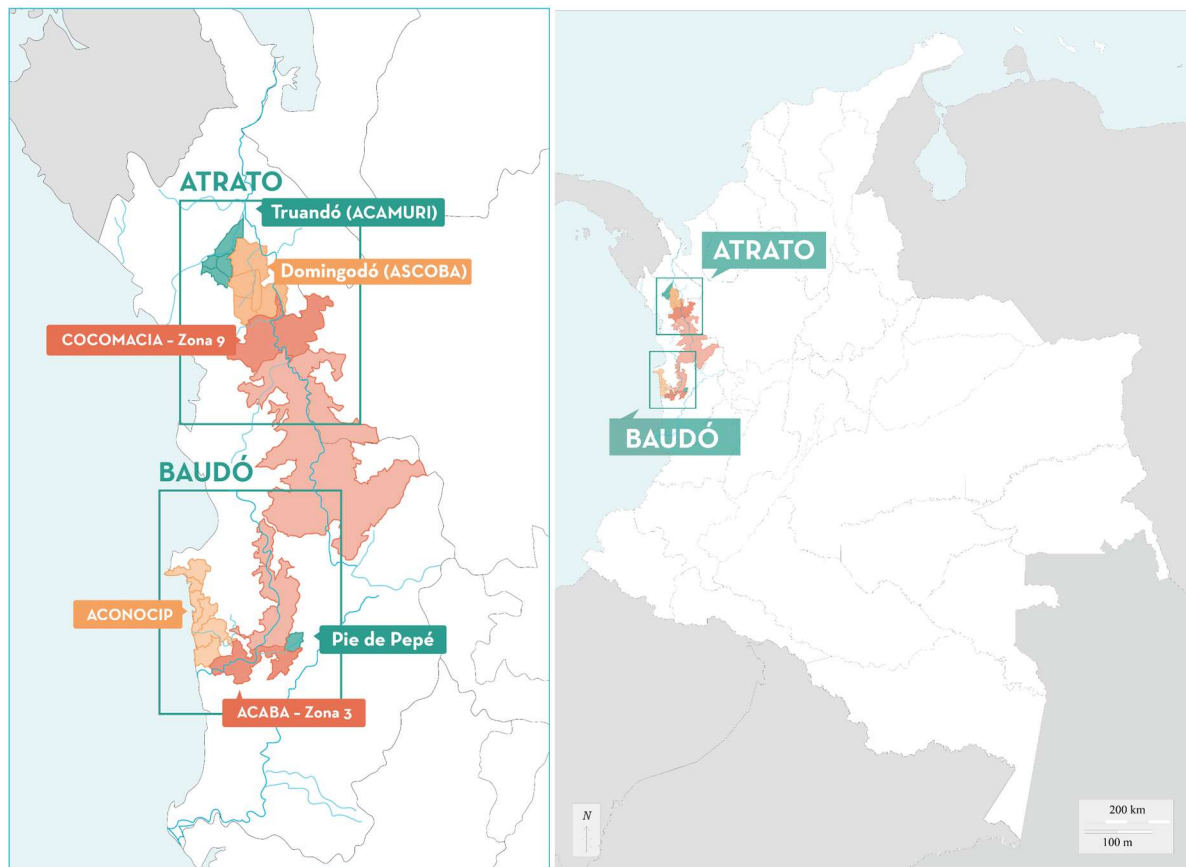
Furthermore, local political factors may impact both mobilization and communities' exposure to violence. The historical predominance or influence of different political parties, may either constrain or facilitate mobilization. For example, Valencia (2011) notes the specific long-running presence of leftist organizing in the Bajo Atrato that pre-dated Afro collective organizing. Research in Colombia has demonstrated the relationship between violence and civilian political preferences (Balcells & Steele, 2016; Steele, 2011), the competitiveness of municipal elections (Chacón et al., 2011; Cortés & Montolio, 2014) and the political alignments of mayors (Acemoglu et al., 2013).

The conflict histories of communities and the ongoing presence of different armed groups has a critical, though potentially multidirectional and indeterminate impact on communities. Research demonstrates that previous conflict is a consistently strong predictor for future outbreaks of violence (Daly, 2012). Depending on their resource base, ideology, time horizon and capacity for internal discipline, different armed groups will be more or less sensitive to civilian preferences; additionally, higher conflict intensity and stiffer competition for territorial control are theorized to make armed groups less sensitive to civilian preferences (Arjona, 2016; Krakowski, 2017; Weinstein, 2007). Kaplan (2017) points out that violence can have a multi-directional effect on organizational formation: it makes organizing more dangerous but also serves as a motivator to organize.

Finally, socio-cultural factors, including cultural institutions of collective work (ex. *mingas*) and the density of horizontal and vertical ties may also play a key role in facilitating mobilization (Edwards & McCarthy, 2003; Tarrow, 2011). An additional relevant variable here is organizational age: some areas may have longer-running historical traditions of collective organizing and older organizations; social movement research demonstrates that older organizations are likely to be more institutionalized and professionalized and receive more external legitimacy and funding than younger organizations (Jenkins et al., 2017; Minkoff, 1999).

I argue that the best way to further maximize my ability to control this range of factors is to seek three cases within the closest possible geographic area, that is, within adjacent sections of the major river cuencas. Given the relevant set of control variables I theorized in the previous paragraphs, I argue that geographic proximity is an optimal approach: geographically proximate communities are likely to face relatively similar economic conditions, have similar resources and commodities, share conflict history and the ongoing presence of likely the same armed groups (often down to the same bands within the same fronts), covered by the same diocese and political parties, with similar internal cultural practices. In addition, to at least partially account for potential differences in age among the organizations, I focus on consejos comunitarios who received their titles from the state within no more than two years of each other. The two areas with sufficient variation in the independent variable (all three levels of regional integration) in the tightest geographic proximity within the same major river cuenca and greatest

similarities in age of organizational formation are along the borders of the Middle and Upper segments of the Atrato river. These two areas form the basis of my two controlled comparisons.



At the border of the middle and lower Atrato regions, defined by the border between the Bojayá and Carmen del Darién municipalities, three neighboring clusters of communities are seated in the tributary rivers flowing into the western bank of the Atrato river. Furthest to the south, in the municipalities of Bojayá and Murindó are the 16 communities of the 'Zona 9', the northernmost section of the Consejo Comunitario Mayor COCOMACIA (Greater Community Council of the Integral Peasant Association of the Atrato River, *Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato*), a highly regionally integrated organization. Immediately to their north, in the municipality Carmen del Darién are the 8 communities of the river Domingodó, a tributary of the Atrato. The eight communities are divided into four different consejos comunitarios, all of which belong to the intermediate degree of integration, a regional association, ASCOBA (Association of Community Councils and Organizations of Bajo Atrato, *Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios y Organizaciones del Bajo Atrato*). Just to the north of Domingodó,

at the far end of the integration-independence continuum, are the 6 communities of the tributary river Truandó. These communities don't belong to any regional organization; rather, they have formed a small, more independent association exclusively of the Afro communities of the Truandó river called ACAMURI (Campesino Association of the Riosucio Municipality, *Asociación Campesina del Municipio de Riosucio*).

In the lower stretches of the Baudó river are three similar clusters of communities. The communities that border the Baudó river belong to the “Zona 3”, the southernmost section of the highly regionally integrated Consejo Comunitario Mayor ACABA (General Community Council of the Rio Baudó and its Affluents, *Consejo Comunitario General del Río Baudó y sus Afluentes*). Immediately to the west are six smaller rivers that flow directly into the Pacific ocean, these communities have formed a looser association of consejos comunitarios ACONOCIP (Norsiviria Association of Community Councils, *Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios de Norsiviria*). To the east, the northernmost community of the tributary river Río Pepé, a community called Pie de Pepé, formed its own independent consejo comunitario, and does not participate in any regional organization.

Alternative explanations / Threats to Inference

There are three sources of alternative explanations for the outcomes I observe, or threats to causal inference that I was unable to fully address through case selection: imperfect comparisons, spatial dependence between my cases, and non-random assignment to treatment. I discuss each in turn and outline my strategies to address these alternatives.

Limiting my study to just Afro-Colombian *consejos comunitarios* partially accounts for variations in a number of these factors, as these communities share broad historical and cultural similarities, and operate within the same legal regime. Kaplan (2017) furthermore argues that ethnicity in Colombia can serve as an (imperfect) proxy for social capital. Despite the advantages gained through selecting cases based on shared ethnicity and legal recognition, and close geographic proximity, there are potential differences between the cases along the relevant variables discussed above. I begin this section by pointing to relevant differences among cases that require further exploration through process tracing in the empirical chapters.

Each group of comparison cases spans multiple municipalities, introducing the possibility that outcomes are the result of differences between the municipalities. In the Atrato comparison, the COCOMACIA communities are in the Bojayá and Murindó municipalities, the ASCOBA communities of Domingodó are in Carmen del Darién, while the ACAMURI communities of Truandó are located both in the Riosucio municipality. In the Baudó comparison, the ACABA and Pie de Pepé communities are in the Medio Baudó municipality, while ACONOCIP is in Bajo Baudó.

I compiled available municipal economic data from censuses in 1993, 2005 and 2018. This data includes two different multidimensional poverty indicators, the Unmet Basic Needs Index and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (see table below). Neither group of comparisons show any notable differences among each other: all the communities in the study endure staggeringly high levels of poverty.

Table 2: Economic Comparisons Among the Cases

Municipality	Population 2018	NBI²⁵ (%) 1993	NBI (%) 2005	NBI (%) 2018	IPM²⁶ (%) 2005	IPM (%) 2018
Baudó Regon						
Bajo Baudó	29,957	81.97	78.28	65.87	95.75	80.2
Medio Baudó	15,109	91.1	no data	63.21	96.93	80.4
Atrato Region						
Bojayá	12,073	83.05	96.03	67.56	97.32	77.1
Murindó	4,911	99.91	97.08	81.73	95.14	81.5
Carmen del Darién	18,433	94	90.67	75.68	97.07	77.8

²⁵ NBI (Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas, Unmet Basic Needs) is a multidimensional poverty indicator assessing households' living conditions including inadequate housing, access to public services, critical overcrowding, economic dependency and school attendance. Households that do not meet the minimum threshold in at least one indicator are classified as poor. Further discussion of the methodology available: (Angulo et al., 2016).

²⁶ IPM (Indice de Pobreza Multidimensional, Multidimensional Poverty Index) is a weighted multidimensional poverty indicator developed by the Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI). It assesses poverty levels based on a combination of indicators within the categories: educational conditions, childhood conditions, work, access to health, access to public services and housing conditions. Households with at least a third of the deprivations (accounting for weights) are categorized as poor. Further discussion of methodology available: (Alkire et al., 2013).

Riosucio	53,449	94.82	85.21	75.15	91.45	70.9

Regarding resource availability and commodity production, all of the communities under study are highly comparable. In all of the communities, the major economies are subsistence agriculture and fishing as well as logging, the highest-value local resource. Coca crops are present in all of the municipalities under study to some degree, although both the Baudó and Atrato regions are much more transit zones rather than production zones. In the UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2018 municipal threat index,²⁷ all of the municipalities registered as “very low threat” in coca production, which reflects sustained but low-level production over the last several years (*Colombia: Survey of Territories Affected by Illegal Crops 2018*, 2019). While there are mining operations in other parts of COCOMACIA territory, and in other areas of Riosucio, none of the communities under investigation have any significant mining, gas or other extractive industries. Furthermore, while there is an infamous history of palm oil production linked to paramilitary operations in Carmen del Darién and Riosucio, those operations took place predominantly in the consejos comunitarios of Curvaradó and Jiguamiandó, on the other (east) side of the Atrato river from the communities under study.²⁸ None of the communities in this study have any significant palm oil production.

On a related note, geographic accessibility is also a factor: physical remoteness might serve to increase the vulnerability of communities by making them more difficult for the state to access (Hendrix, 2011). In Baudó, the less integrated communities Pie de Pepé, which is located on the Istmina road, and ACONOCIP, which is close to the port of Pizarro, are less isolated than the more regionally integrated ACABA. In the Atrato, none of the communities in the study are accessible by road. However, more of the communities in COCOMACIA were located along the main Atrato river, which potentially reduced their

²⁷ From the UNODC, the threat index, “registers simultaneously those municipalities with the highest number of crops, with the strongest expansionary tendency, and with the greatest permanence of the phenomenon in the territory” (*Colombia: Survey of Territories Affected by Illegal Crops 2018*, 2019, p. 108)

²⁸ For a more detailed discussion of the palm oil industry in the Bajo Atrato, see for example: (Melo, 2015).

isolation. In my investigation, I found that the more distant communities were more exposed to violence from the armed groups: in many, perhaps most cases, the communities located further into the tributary rivers, away from the main Atrato river, had mostly displaced to the more accessible communities along the Atrato river.

Mayors and consejos comunitarios often have extremely competitive, complicated and at times overtly hostile relationships; a hostile mayor can 'gate keep' access to the state, block funds and may have ties to armed groups.²⁹ Differences in municipal political conditions can be somewhat accounted for in the Baudó case by comparing between ACABA and Pie de Pepé, both of which are in the Medio Baudó municipality. However, potential differences among the municipalities will require further investigation in my empirical chapters.

Furthermore, potential differences in the conflict trajectories among the different cases warrant further investigation: more intense armed group presence for factors outside of the communities' control exposes them to more violence and potentially debilitates their organizing processes to a greater degree. I collect data on the conflict from three sources: the Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas (UARIV) Victims Registry, the National Police's Homicide data and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Colombia monitor. The Unidad para las Víctimas is the government agency responsible for assistance and reparation measures for all victims of the armed conflict. Their Registro Único de Víctimas tracks all officially registered victims of the conflict. The data is generated by victims self-reporting to the agency in order to become eligible for government assistance. I track homicides and displacements as the two most visible sources of violence in the Colombian conflict. I include a per 1000 people rate to adjust for differences in population size.

²⁹ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting Puerto Meluk June 1, 2019

Table 3: UARIV Violence Comparisons Among the Cases

	2018 Census population	Displacement	Displacement per 1000	Homicides	Homicides per 1000
Baudó Region					
Bajo Baudó	29,957	18430	615.22	176	5.88
Medio Baudó	15,109	13187	872.79	121	8.01
Atrato Region					
Bojayá	12,073	33693	2790.77	460	38.10
Murindó	4,911	5337	1086.74	116	23.62
Carmen del Darién	18,433	18197	987.20	299	16.22
Riosucio	53,449	102855	1924.36	1516	28.36

Publicly available homicide data from the Colombian national police is available from 2010-2018, based on their internal statistics. Once again, I include a per 1000 people rate to adjust for differences in population size.

Table 4: National Police Violence Comparisons Among the Cases

	2018 Census population	Homicides 2010-2018	Homicides per 1000
Baudó Region			
Bajo Baudó	29,957	26	0.87
Medio Baudó	15,109	9	0.60
Atrato Region			
Bojayá	12,073	5	0.41
Murindó	4,911	4	0.81
Carmen del Darién	18,433	18	0.98
Riosucio	53,449	67	1.25

OCHA's Colombia Monitor is an aggregation of reported events linked to the Colombian conflict, sourced from the Colombian government, NGO reports and news media. It tracks a wide range of events, including combats, threats, homicides, displacements, confinements, recruitments, among others (OCHA

Colombia Monitor Humanitario, n.d.). I include an event count and a victims count based on their date, rated per 1000 people.

Table 5: OCHA Violence Comparisons Among the Cases

	2018 Census population	Total Events	Events per 1000	Total Victims	Victims per 1000
Baudó Region					
Bajo Baudó	29,957	94	3.14	34962	1167.07
Medio Baudó	15,109	50	3.31	7353	486.66
Atrato Region					
Bojayá	12,073	93	7.70	26644	2206.91
Murindó	4,911	47	9.57	17943	3653.63
Carmen del Darién	18,433	95	5.15	8915	483.64
Riosucio	53,449	166	3.11	19357	362.16

The empirical evidence from these data sources regarding which communities have been impacted worse by the conflict is indeterminate. In the Baudó comparison, the ACABA and Pie de Pepé communities are in the Medio Baudó municipality, while ACONOCIP is in Bajo Baudó. The UARIV data suggests that Medio Baudó was impacted worse by the conflict than Bajo Baudó, while the National Police and OCHA data suggests the opposite. In the Atrato comparison, the COCOMACIA communities are in the Bojayá and Murindó municipalities, the ASCOBA communities of Domingodó are in Carmen del Darién, while the ACAMURI communities of Truandó are located both in the Riosucio municipality. Here, the UARIV and OCHA data suggests that the COCOMACIA communities have been the worst affected by the conflict, while the National Police data suggests the opposite.

The specific histories of conflict in both Baudó and Atrato are explored in significantly more detail in the historical chapter. However, I briefly consider differences between the conflict histories of the communities worth examining in my empirical chapters. In Baudó, all of the communities under study are downriver of Puerto Meluk, which is historically the dividing line between the ELN guerrillas (upriver) and the paramilitaries (downriver). As such, they have had fairly similar trajectories in the conflict. Nevertheless, there are two possible alternative explanations that possibly explain greater violence in less regionally integrated communities. First, there was a significantly greater historical presence of the FARC in Bajo Baudó than in Medio Baudó. Thus their demobilization potentially drove a stronger dynamic of

competition for abandoned territories than in Medio Baudó. Second, the community Pie de Pepé is located along a strategically vital road, the only road connecting Baudó to the rest of Chocó. While this made the community more easily accessed by the state, and in fact, it is the only community in the study with a police station, control over the road has historically been a major driver for conflict. In short, it is worth considering the possibility that disproportionately intense conflict in Pie de Pepé and ACONOCIP at least partially explain the variance in violence outcomes that I observe.

In the Atrato, the conflict arrived earlier in Carmen del Darién (ASCOBA communities) and Riosucio (ACAMURI communities) than in Bojayá and Murindó (COCOMACIA communities); Carmen del Darién and Riosucio are closer to a key paramilitary power center in Urabá. Multiple observers I spoke with argued that the conflict has been more intense in Carmen del Darién and Riosucio than in Bojayá and Murindó: “The hard war (*la guerra dura*) is not in Bojayá, it’s in the Bajo Atrato”.³⁰ Meanwhile, Bojayá has a unique conflict history because of a touchstone massacre in 2002 of nearly 100 people sheltered in the church: as such, news of violence there tends to generate more external attention because of the way that violent event is remembered. Thus, in my empirical chapters I also explore the possibility that any results may be at least partially explained by differences in the trajectories of violence in the region.

Additionally, the municipal division between Bojayá and Carmen del Darién marks the territorial division between the Diocese of Quibdó and Diocese of Apartadó. Missionaries have played a vital, long-term role throughout the comparison cases in the Atrato region, and both dioceses are known for an activist, liberation theology-inspired orientation. However, it could be argued that the relationship between COCOMACIA and the Quibdó Diocese is uniquely strong, long-lasting and well-institutionalized, offering a flow of external support, recognition and resources that the other cases don’t have access to (Gutiérrez & Restrepo, 2017). Two specific arguments at least partially mitigate this concern. First, the missionaries from the Quibdó Diocese never had strong relationships or ongoing presence in the northern part of

³⁰ Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz, Personal Communication, 2/14/2020

Bojayá, so their influence was greatly reduced in my case study area.³¹ Second, part of the motivation for selecting the Baudó region as the second set of case studies was that all of Baudó is covered by the same diocese (of Istmina), which was historically much more conservative in orientation, and offered very little direct support to the organizing processes in the area.³²

A second potential threat to causal inference is the spatial dependence among the units within comparison; that is, because of the geographic proximity and permeability between the boundaries of my units, there is potential for 'spillover' effects from one unit to another (Harbers & Ingram, 2019). Because of these potential spillover effects, subnational research methodologists question the often-unstated assumption of unit independence in geographically proximate comparisons. Thus, for example, one could imagine that a protest by a powerful regionally integrated organization against an armed group that gained high external coverage would quiet that group's activity throughout the region, generating positive impacts for communities outside of the organization. Alternatively, fracturing and conflict within one organization may provide a foothold in the region for an armed group that in turn creates negative consequences for communities outside of that specific organization. While there are possible threats worth disentangling through process tracing, the observation of unit interdependence also creates potentially very fruitful avenues of investigation. For example, in Baudó I observed deliberate knowledge transfers across organizations: the consejo comunitario mayor ACABA at times also invites other leaders outside of the organization to participate in their workshops.³³

Perhaps the most challenging endogeneity threat or alternative explanation lies in the non-random process by which each of the cases were assigned a 'treatment', that is, the process by which they entered into one of the organizational types outlined in the typology above. Thus it is fair to wonder if

³¹ Quibdó Diocese, Personal Communication, March 2020

³² ACABA asesor 2, personal communication, June 2019

³³ ACABA junta directiva leader 3, personal communication, June 2019

the outcomes I observe may be attributable to the processes that generated these variations in organizational structure, rather than the variance in structure itself.

From an ‘agent-focused’ perspective, one could argue that potentially factors specific to some communities – greater social capital, easier interconnections because of favorable geography, greater external support, longer histories of collective action – serve as the explanation both for how a group of communities originally was more able to form an organization and continues to explain outcomes we see (for example, greater mobilization). From a ‘structure-focused’ explanation, it is plausible that the structural conditions that permitted or blocked denser regional integration continue to explain outcomes. Most evidently, one could argue that in areas with higher violence, more entrenched armed group control or active collaboration between dominant political parties and armed groups might have prevented rural regional integration, and that those legacies of violence continue to inhibit active community mobilization into the present. Kaplan (2017) confronts a similar endogeneity problem in his research and concludes that violence has an indeterminant effect on organizational formation: it makes organizing more dangerous but also serves as a motivator to organize.

In the Atrato cases, I argue that it is possible to dismiss a number of ‘agent-focused’ alternative explanations that might simultaneously explain the greater integration of COCOMACIA and the reduction in current violence. As I discussed in greater depth in my history chapter, a regional-scale organization emerged in the lower Atrato, in the areas of present-day ASCOBA and ACAMURI, even before it did in the current COCOMACIA territory. However, increasing armed group presence in the mid-1990s did play some role in undercutting collective organizing in the region even before those communities received their collective land titles in 1996. Furthermore, some historical accounts (e.g. Valencia, 2011) hint that the communities of ACAMURI chose a more independent organizational form because it was co-opted by logging interests. Both stories point to the possibility that factors that prevented the emergence of more regionally integrated collective organizing in the mid-1990s (extractive interests or armed groups) continue to inhibit active community mobilization into the present.

In Baudó, while the ACABA communities in medio Baudó had developed a strong campesino movement even before the collective titling process, the communities of Bajo Baudó had very little formal

collective organizing active before the 1993 ley 70 that formed the legal basis for the consejos comunitarios. In fact, one of the ACONOCIP leaders argued to me that part of the reason they didn't form a more integrated consejo comunitario mayor, and instead opted for a more independent structure, was because of *desconocimiento*; that is, he implied that they were either unaware this was a possibility or that they lacked the organizing capacity to form such a structure.³⁴ In this study, the case of the independent community Pie de Pepé is highly instructive. The community was a part of the ACABA organizing process before the Ley 70, and then intentionally opted out of the integrated land title in order to preserve local independence.³⁵ While evidently this process of assignment to treatment is the exact opposite of random — leaders intentionally chose their independence — that process of assignment is deeply suggestive of the importance of the trade-offs between the two organizational forms. In fact, it pointedly suggests that leaders at the moment of organizational formation were intimately aware of the likely trade-offs between organizational forms, and that these trade-offs drove their decision-making.

As discussed, process-tracing allows us to address the short-comings of our case selection. For example, ACABA has a longer organizing history than the other cases in Baudó, potentially explaining why the organization has deeper levels of institutionalization and professionalization. Process tracing can help differentiate between the variables of age and organizational structures, as we would expect the two variables to have different 'causal chains' despite equifinal outcomes. Organizational age may plausibly lead to professionalization because longer organizing experience generates expertise. In contrast, I theorize that integration generates professionalization because its structure allows for complex divisions of labor, creating formalized institutional spaces for internal training. Thus by tracing the steps linking cause and effect, I can differentiate between my hypothesis and competing explanations. There is also a lot of opportunity to take advantage here of the fact that I am doing two sets of comparisons: in examining

³⁴ ACONOCIP Leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

³⁵ I was never able to get the full story of exactly how this happened. My best understanding: there were likely interpersonal conflicts between the leadership of the community and the broader organization that led to a break.

potentially endogeneity threats, I can gain leverage by examining my second set of cases. Thus for example, while ACABA precedes the other organizations of Baudó, I know my cases in the Atrato all have been collectively organizing for a similar duration – do the same variations in the level of professionalization between integrated and independent regions nonetheless persist in the Atrato?

Approach to Fieldwork

The empirical evidence for this project is primarily derived from fieldwork, both from interviews and from ethnographic observation. Fieldwork for this dissertation took place over the course of three visits to Colombia between March – August 2019, February – March 2020 and September – November 2021. Of those eleven months, four months were spent in Bogotá and seven in Chocó. In Chocó, I was based in the departmental capital, Quibdó. From Quibdó, I made a number of visits to rural communities as well, including a three week visit to rural Atrato and a two week visit to Baudó, as well as several smaller trips to both locations. The empirical evidence presented in this dissertation is the results of site visits to 18 rural communities and over 150 interviews conducted in Bogotá, Quibdó, Atrato and Baudó. Here, I discuss my approach to fieldwork, focusing on ethical and safety issues of fieldwork in a dangerous context and the processes of recruitment and data collection. I discuss the disruption to my research caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the steps I took to undertake fieldwork ethically during a pandemic. I conclude by discussing my understanding of accountability and reciprocity with my research partners.

The Colombian Pacific is a dangerous place, both for me and for the activists and leaders I am working with on this project. I sought to be as ‘ethically rigorous’ as I could by being deliberate and careful as possible in developing safety measures (Campbell, 2017; Mazurana et al., 2013). In order to do so, I read widely on the literature on ‘dangerous fieldwork’, consistently sought out the opinion and advice of data security experts from AU, experienced researchers in the U.S. and Colombia as well as people with extensive knowledge of Chocó, and I participated in a summer training program in 2019 for young

academics working in conflict environments.³⁶ Here, I discuss my approach to two key issues: security (with particular attention to confidentiality and data security) and informed consent.

Ensuring my own safety and the safety of my interlocutors was my highest priority in the field. My everyday safety measures included sharing travel plans and multiple phone numbers where I would be reachable with trusted people both in the country and in the U.S. and regular check-ins. In my visits to the field, I only traveled during the daytime, let community leaders know in advance that I was arriving, and traveled in partnership with a well-recognized local leader. I sought to verify the trustworthiness of my field guides by asking for their reputations in multiple different spaces (i.e. with Church leaders, INGO staff, trusted local friends. In general, I was incredibly dependent on my partners and friends in Chocó to help keep me safe, a phenomenon noted by basically every conflict scholar (Malthaner, 2014; Wood, 2006). Without question, my Chocoan friends kept me safe both in ways that I recognized and, undoubtedly, in ways that I didn't pick up on: advising me which streets not to walk on, arranging a safe home for me to stay in, telling me within earshot of the mototaxi driver that they would expect a call when I arrived home, and, in the case of several leaders with government protection, allowing me to travel with them and their *escoltas* (armed guards).³⁷

Following standard practice in conflict research, I have sought to maintain the confidentiality of my interlocutors as much as possible and err on the side of anonymity in data collection (Campbell, 2017; Malthaner, 2014; Wood, 2006). I avoided gathering identifying data, such as name, location or identifying

³⁶ The Advancing Research on Conflict (ARC) summer program: <https://advancingconflictresearch.com/aboutus>

³⁷ As a side note on trusting local guidance - as much as the conflict methods literature emphasizes the importance of trusting local contacts, there is little mention of the vast differences of opinion and conflicting motivations I would hear when asking, "is it safe to do X?". In Chocó, I found that recommendations of which neighborhoods were off-limits might either be classist stereotypes or deadly-serious warnings. And I found that my interlocutors don't always necessarily prioritize my and their safety above all else, because a trip potentially offered prestige and money or because they may simply have different risk perceptions.

features; I did not record any interviews while in Chocó³⁸ and do not use written consent forms. I further sought to protect my data by writing up my notes in password-protected files in my computer as soon as possible after the interview and destroying the written notes. Following Wood (2006), notes were taken in English and I tried to make my script worse to make the notes more challenging to read.

It should be noted that these strategies are not guarantees of safety: even in the best of circumstances, it is very difficult to stop a determined reader from piecing together clues in our written work; even minor details can be very revealing (Bosk & De Vries, 2004). My notes don't have people's names but my whatsapp contacts do – I can't really imagine another way to reasonably organize my conversations and remember who I'm talking to. Quibdó is a small town, and the rural villages are of course even smaller – people often physically see who I'm talking to or moving with. And some of the organizations in my study are very small, but need to be identified – it is pretty crucial for the reader to know which consejo comunitario an interviewee comes from. Within that consejo comunitario, there may only be two or three leaders, already providing substantial clues if someone was really looking. I try to balance this through the nature of my investigation, which focuses more on the work of the organizations than the armed groups, avoids questions that would be strategically significant to armed actors and contains information that is fairly obvious to anyone familiar with the consejos comunitarios in Chocó.

I carried out in-depth interviews with somewhere in the range of 150 people in Bogotá and Quibdó, as well as a few interviews in DC and online during the pandemic. I sought to get the broadest possible variety of perspectives on the peace process, the consejos comunitarios, the other relevant players and the overall context of Chocó, drawing from a range of political ideologies, interests and fields of expertise. In addition to activists and everyday people within the consejos comunitarios, I spoke to

³⁸ I recorded several interviews with professors in Bogotá. I am also using voice messages in whatsapp in several cases to conduct interviews from distance during the pandemic. These messages can be deleted but whatsapp is not necessarily a secure platform.

government officials (especially from the Procuraduría³⁹, Defensoría del Pueblo⁴⁰ and the ART, among others), representatives of international organizations, mostly from various institutions within the UN and OAS, other Afro and some indigenous movement leaders, both in Chocó and Bogotá, local politicians in Chocó and Colombian academics.

The challenge of 'initial access', that is, the process of finding the first few contacts to help get yourself established, felt incredibly daunting to me as an inexperienced researcher with no pre-existing contacts in Chocó. A six-week stay in Bogotá first offered a pretty soft landing. In addition to some useful points of contact offered by committee members, I got started by mass emailing all the Colombian academics who had written work I had found useful as well as the office emails of all the international organizations. From there, my method of reaching new people was through snowball sampling. At the end of interviews and other meetings I asked people who else they thought I might talk to, and slowly built my network of contacts (Malthaner, 2014; Wood, 2006).

One professor mentioned that he had an upcoming field trip with a group of students to Chocó in the beginning of April 2019, and invited me to join. It was through this professor, who has a long-standing relationship with ACABA, that I began meeting ACABA leaders. I became interested in the Baudó region in large part because the organization was so welcoming towards me and interested in helping me with my project. Additionally, given my interest in the Acuerdo Humanitario, I sought to build an official relationship with the Foro Interétnico (FISCH), the umbrella association of all ethnic organizations in Chocó, and after some discussions we built a research agreement together. Though my link with FISCH has felt tenuous throughout the research process, it did help increase my network in Quibdó and opened possibilities for me to sit in and observe lots of different meetings and activist spaces in the city. Once I was in these spaces, I could build relationships somewhat more organically; for example, I spent a lot of

³⁹ The Procuraduría, or Inspector General is an independent agency plays an oversight role over government institutions, with the right to initiate disciplinary actions.

⁴⁰ The Defensoría del Pueblo, or Human Rights Ombudsman is an independent agency that monitors violations of the human rights of Colombian people.

time in the ACABA offices in Quibdó and met many key people in the organization there; after meeting them and building a relationship I would ask if they would be willing to sit with me for an interview.

The potential problem with the 'snowball' approach to recruitment is that it can limit our networks and create a selectivity bias if we become over-reliant on a specific key informant or narrow network (Balsiger & Lambelet, 2014; Shesterinina, 2019) Methodological experts push researchers to account for this by thinking deliberately through the interests and viewpoints of our contacts and developing multiple networks, strategically seeking out multiple and contrasting positions (Shesterinina, 2019; Wood, 2006). The goal is to be able to 'triangulate' data: that is, ideally, discussions and observations with people with a range of interests and viewpoints would point towards similar conclusions, giving us more confidence in our findings. While I was able to build a large network with a diversity of perspectives (politicians, professors, movement activists, IO workers), I think the main challenge for me was that the leadership of the organizations I am studying is over-represented relative to the rank-and-file since even in my visits to the communities, the most vocal people were the local leaders of the consejos comunitarios. I was rarely able to find spaces to discuss the work of the consejos comunitarios with people in the community who didn't participate very actively in the organization.

In this section, I discuss my approach to informed consent and to the process of interviewing in general. While the IRB establishes informed consent as a basic principle all researchers must meet, research on conflict presents specific challenges, both because written consent leaves a potentially risky paper trail for respondents and because discussing the conflict poses both physical and psychological (i.e. potential retraumatization) risks.

My fundamental goals in discussing informed consent with my respondents was that my interviewees understand who I am (a student writing a thesis about the consejos comunitarios and the peace process), how their words would be used (to write a thesis on the consejos comunitarios and the

peace accords), the steps I would take to protect their anonymity.⁴¹ I also sought to open space by asking them both before we met and before we started if there were any specific measures we should take to better protect them (i.e. specific meeting places, if there were any topics we must avoid). I benefited greatly from Wood's (2006) and Campbell's (2017) discussion of 'flexible' consent options, and made sure to discuss with my interviewees: not only were they under no obligation to participate and could end the interview at any time, but that they were free not to answer any question, or to explain me something 'off the record' that I wouldn't write down. I also always provided a number (my whatsapp) for them to reach me if they wished to retract or change anything they said later on.

I sought to be as careful as possible about the risks of re-traumatization. Cognizant of the emotional weight of the experiences I was asking about, I also tried to be attentive to body language and non-verbal cues (fidgeting, lack of eye contact, longer pauses) that might signal me to back off an overly sensitive line of questioning. I made a point of not asking questions that weren't directly relevant to my research: so rather than asking probing questions about people's experiences in the war, I focused specifically on what the organization or the community in general was doing in response to the conflict. I also have tried as much as possible to gather the histories of the war from what is already written and publicly available to reduce the burden on participants of re-explaining to me obvious details about the conflict (people frequently did this anyways). I never noted anything that struck me as psychological distress during my interviews (I freely admit that I am not an expert and I could have missed something here). While I heard some incredibly heavy stories, often these came later, outside the context of my interviews, with people that I started to know better.

Like other researchers, I encountered several gray areas in informed consent. There was an ongoing tension between my responsibility to be transparent about what I was doing in Chocó and being conscious of oversharing (Wood, 2006). I remember one evening I started to explain my research and a friend quietly tapped me and told me to stop. From that point, I sought to employ what Malthaner (2014)

⁴¹ Notes, ARC Conflict Research Conference, August 2019

describes as ‘reciprocal honesty’, that is, when I’m sitting for an interview and expecting honesty, or as I’m building a relationship with someone, I explain my project as fully as possible (or as much as the person was interested in knowing). Otherwise, I erred on the side of vagueness (“I’m a student interested in the *consejos comunitarios*”). This ties to another challenge: how often do I continue to announce who I am and what I’m doing? For example, when sitting in on a meeting, if a person came who didn’t know me, or when discussing topics relevant to my work, outside of interview spaces, it was sometimes unclear if people realized I was still ‘in my role’ as a researcher. I tried to use my best judgment as to how often I should re-establish for people my understanding that our discussions were on the record.

In my approach to the interviews themselves, I sought to build on relational approaches developed by Fujii (Fujii, 2018) and others. I approached my interviews as an opportunity to speak with and benefit from the wisdom of movement elders with a rich history of experience, and tried to create a space that allowed for co-constitutive building of the conversation, that flowed and built on the stories and pacing from the interviewees. I always sought to learn as much as possible about the person beforehand, and orient my questions towards considering what particular insights that person could offer. Almost always, I adjusted my lines of questioning depending on my sense of where a person’s interests and knowledge lay. I also did my best to track the ‘meta-data’: silences, tone, body language, thinking through lived experience of the person I was talking with to build a feel for their perspectives and what they might hope for me to understand out of the conversation (Foster & Minwalla, 2018; Wolfe, 2017).

In addition to interviews, I gathered a substantial amount of data through observation, by sitting in on internal meetings within the *consejos comunitarios* as well as broader meetings involving the Church, IOs and/or the government. I also spent a lot of time more or less hanging out in *consejo comunitario* offices, going to social events, moving around with the organizations, and going to the villages. In this process of participant observation, I sought to bring a deliberately ‘ethnographic sensibility’ to a positivist project (Simmons & Smith, 2017). Principally, I understand this to mean a commitment to longer, slower research, being in, experiencing and (with care) participating in the spaces where the organizations I study ‘happen’. One of my fundamental curiosities was: what does everyday life for a *consejo* leader look like? I got to see a lot of the mundane tasks; meetings, paperwork, grant writing, networking with

government officials, etc. An ethnographic approach also implies a sensitivity to the 'metadata' of these spaces (who is and isn't there, body language, silences, the qualities of the interactions between people). Particularly relevant was the (often unspoken) quality of the relationships between leaders and rank-and-file within the consejos comunitarios - how well do they know each other? What level of trust exists?

I conducted this research fully recognizing that my identities, life history, body of knowledge and how I move in the world deeply conditioned who I was able to talk to and what was shared with me. My research subjects face overlapping oppression: severe racial injustice from a state that fails to meet their basic needs and treats them as responsible for their own poverty, ongoing violence and crime, and everyday oppression within their own community, in particular directed at women and at non-cis and non-straight people. I very visibly do not share these identities and life experiences. It is very unsurprising that people often treated their encounters with me in a transactional way, or sought to shape my understandings to meet their own strategic objectives, or simply ignored me. It was particularly difficult to cross gender lines in rural areas, and I openly acknowledge that despite my best efforts, my data collection underrepresents the viewpoints of women.

I sought to bridge these gaps to the best of my ability by drawing on the lessons I learned in cross-racial collective organizing spaces, that the only way to build something approximating horizontal relationships is to do my best to bring my full self into the space, and to put years of real work into supporting the movement. Regarding the former, I am sure there were multiple misunderstandings, faux pas and missed opportunities that limit my findings in ways I am maybe only dimly aware of. Regarding the latter, I see myself at just the beginning of my work in contribution to a specific struggle for peace and human rights in the Colombian Pacific, as part of a hemispheric project for racial justice. I discuss this further in the reciprocity and accountability section, below.

Like the entire rest of the world, the COVID pandemic caused significant disruption to my work. I was in Colombia in March of 2020. When I left the country, I had no way of knowing that it would be over a year and a half before I would be able to return. South America was one of the worst affected regions in the entire world, and Colombia suffered multiple horrendous waves. Given that most of the communities in my research sites in rural Chocó have extremely limited access to formal healthcare infrastructure, a

return to research was a decision to be made with extreme care. In consultation with my committee and my contacts on the ground, we determined that more empirical research was essential for the dissertation, and that the dropoff in cases in September 2021 and the rapid increase in vaccine access made research feasible.

In order to keep myself and my research subjects safe, I was fully vaccinated and boosted. Furthermore, my research procedures were adjusted to reflect COVID protocols: meetings were only held in outdoor locations, at an appropriate distance, with PPE. I avoided crowded indoor spaces and physical contact if at all possible. I brought home tests, and tested myself for COVID on a bi-weekly basis and/or before moving to any new place, whichever came first. With my committee and the IRB committee, I developed case rate cut-off points that would trigger an immediate return, and created emergency action plans if I or one of my research subjects became sick with COVID. To the very best of my knowledge, nobody I knew of or interacted with caught COVID during the course of my research.

Finally, I take some time to reflect on my understanding of reciprocity and accountability to my research partners: the *consejos comunitarios* who I worked with, as well as the many other people who willingly contributed their time and expertise to help me. Many, many people were incredibly generous in sharing with me their valuable time and hard-earned knowledge. They did so despite the suspicion and necessity for caution that one would expect in a warzone, despite the fact that I frequently heard stories of previous negative experiences with academics who demanded peoples' time and never followed up again after, despite the barriers of race, class and gender and huge gulfs in life experience.

I am deeply grateful for the open-heartedness and wisdom of the people who received me in Chocó, and it is my responsibility to carefully consider how to repay my debt to my friends and teachers. I understand reciprocity and accountability as my best efforts to honor the time of my collaborators and to create meaningful compensation and benefit for their participation, an ongoing openness to making space for feedback and communication, and maintaining real relationships of friendship and collaboration over the long run. More specifically, in this project, I aspired to undertake research in partnership and in collaboration with the participants in my project: by making research that has academic and practical

value, by being deliberate in 'returning' the findings, and by thinking through ways to contribute and be in relationship beyond my research.

First, I see giving my honest effort to making research of meaningful academic and practical value as a key part of reciprocity. As Campbell (2017) writes: methodological rigor is ethical rigor, because by deliberately building serious research insights on the micro-processes of war and possible avenues to building peace, we respect the time given and the (at times) serious risks taken by the people who work with us. Many people I talked to were deeply committed to sharing the strategies of self-protection and collective defense they had carefully built over decades in conflict. I see this project as playing a (small) role in disseminating their hard-won insights.

Second, I am committed to the belief that our research partners deserve both recognition and access to the work they play an integral role in co-creating. Beyond an acknowledgements section in this dissertation, I hope to continue to explore joint projects with the organizations I work with. Furthermore, I am thinking through 'returning' the research through multiple forums: to share out key findings in multiple platforms either online, or (ideally) in person in Chocó, following up on a presentation I made at the University of Chocó in July 2019. I will also write a summary with the key findings of this dissertation in Spanish to be shared with the organizations I worked with. In doing so, I am seeking to align myself with a distinguished tradition of movement scholars who see it as an ethical obligation to provide our partners with useful research findings (Milan, 2014; Shesterinina, 2019). While I am humble about the impact of these gestures, I think these research return efforts could provide potentially useful language for grant applications and potentially offer the *consejos comunitarios* an opportunity to 'think reflexively' in maximizing the relative advantages of their organization and collaborating across organizations to mitigate some of the challenges that many of the *consejos* face (Balsiger & Lambelet, 2014)

Finally, I acknowledge the need to go beyond research in my commitment to being in relationship with and accountable to the movements I work with. Like many other conflict researchers, I frequently encountered real frustration with the distant and intangible benefits that pure academic research purports to provide compared to the obvious benefits that accrue to the researcher (a job, prestige, expertise, etc.) (Cronin-Furman & Lake, 2018). And as Wood (2006) discusses, I also struggled with how to meaningfully

thank and reciprocate the efforts of my research partners. Drawing on the reflections of Campbell (2017), I personally am committed to finding ways to provide benefits beyond the research, balanced with a humility for the extent of my possible impacts. One way is by trying, as Shesterinina (2019) describes, to practice a feminist ethic of care: that is, by being in real, caring relationships with my partners that extend beyond this specific research project. As an extension of that ethic I try to find small but (hopefully) meaningful ways to contribute to their lives, and for the benefit of their organizations, like ongoing English classes and helping out with translation work and grant-writing whenever possible. More broadly, I see myself as committed over the long-run to continue working in the service of the ethnic movements of the Colombian Pacific in whatever professional and personal capacity I find myself in.

Research Design Chapter Conclusions

This dissertation asks the question: what explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation? In my previous chapter, I outlined a theory of variance in regional collective organizing structures as a possible explanation. In this chapter, I have outlined an approach to test this theory, based on a research design that includes two controlled comparisons of three cases ranging from ‘independence’ to ‘partial integration’ to ‘full integration’, tested against two outcomes: post/conflict violence as defined by the *Acuerdo Humanitario*, and advancing community objectives in state-led peace implementation, defined by participatory-defined development objectives in the PDET program.

I focused significant attention to developing an outline for my two controlled comparisons. I argued that we build controlled comparisons using theoretical priors and case selection to control for as many possible threats to causal inference as possible. Given the complexity of the real world, rationally, we expect to find meaningful differences between the cases other than our independent variable. I drew on theories of social movements, civilian resistance and civil conflict to generate a set of key factors that must be accounted for: economic factors, resource availability, geography, state capacity, conflict trajectories, political factors and socio-cultural factors. Then I discussed how those controls potentially differ among the cases. This doesn’t undermine the value of controlled comparison: we continue to employ the method because relative to individual case studies, controlled comparison has the potential to

provide us with powerful analytical leverage by coming perhaps as close as possible to approximating a hypothetical counterfactual. However, I do point to factors that require further exploration through process tracing in my empirical chapters, in particular issues of diverging conflict trajectories among the communities and differing processes of organizational formation.

I concluded by explaining my approach to fieldwork. Although I am working within a positivist framework, I discuss an ethnographic and relational approach to fieldwork, focused on relationship-building, sensitivities to 'metadata' and long-term commitments to continue advancing the struggle for human rights for the people of the Colombian Pacific. I offered insight into how I addressed two major challenges to my fieldwork: the fragile security environment in Chocó and the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on what I did to keep both me and my interlocutors safe. I concluded with a discussion of my understanding of reciprocity and accountability, discussing both the short- and long-term work in support of the movements I work with.

CHAPTER 5

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE COLOMBIAN CONFLICT, ORGANIZATIONAL FORMATION, AND THE WAR IN CHOCÓ

In this chapter, I seek to provide the reader with a history of three interrelated processes. First, I contextualize the peace process in Chocó by offering a general overview of the course of the Colombian conflict and the 2016 peace process with the FARC. Then, I offer more detailed histories of the formation in the 1980s-2000s of the organizations that make up the cases for comparison in this study, the *consejos comunitarios* in Atrato and Baudó, two regions of Chocó. I follow that with a history of the war in both the Atrato and Baudó regions that began in the mid-1990s and has continued to the present.

I conclude this chapter by exploring the impact of the peace process on the communities in Atrato and Baudó that are the focus of this study. I detail the goals of these communities in the peace, the initial optimism they felt, and the consequences of the failure of the state to fill the power vacuum left behind by the FARC. This concluding section sets the stage for my empirical chapters, which explores how communities respond to the threats and opportunities in a peace process through the question: “What explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation”

Beyond the value this Chocó-specific history holds in offering context for the reader, these sections offer crucial information in assessing the validity of my controlled comparison. First, I argue that the cases within each region (Atrato and Baudó) shared a similar-enough conflict history that they can be meaningfully compared. This account of the conflict in each region will point to the potential differences in experiences among the communities that require further consideration. Second, I argue that although the assignments to treatment was obviously not random, the histories of organizational formation point to possible alternative explanations that can be further explored with process tracing.

The Colombian Civil Conflict: An Overview

Independence - La Violencia 1819 – 1964

Following its independence in 1819, Colombia experienced a series of nine civil conflicts through 1902, centering on the rift between the Liberal and Conservative parties. At the same time, land concentration in the late 19th and early 20th century set the stage for the rural class-based competition that defined the Colombian conflict. In the early 20th century, state allies consistently favored landowners in this conflict during a period of extended Conservative control over the country, spurring mass displacement and profound land inequalities (Meacham et al., 2014).

However, 1930 to 1946 saw a period of sixteen uninterrupted years of Liberal control, a period known as the “Liberal Republic”. During this period, the ruling party attempted to advance pro-poor agrarian reform and increased state intervention into the economy. This prompted deepening tensions with Conservatives and their wealthy land-owning supporters, setting the stage for one of the most violent periods in Colombian history: *La Violencia*, the civil war that lasted from 1948 - 1958. The violence erupted after the assassination in April 1948 of Liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, a charismatic populist leader advocating for wealth redistribution in the country. His death sparked a period of weeks of rioting and violence between Liberals and Conservatives in Bogotá known as the *Bogotazo* (Metelits, 2010).

From its origins in Colombia's cities, the war quickly spread to rural areas, where the feud between Liberals and Conservatives intersected with local class-based disputes over land. Liberal peasant uprisings occurred simultaneously throughout the country. Liberal elites began fearing a mass revolution, and offered tacit support to the new conservative president, Laureano Gómez, elected in 1950, to violently repress the peasant self-defense groups. Conservative death squads, known as *pájaros*, roamed the countryside, terrorizing peasants (Leech, 1999). Hundreds of thousands of people fled to Colombia's peripheries, seeking safety and new lands on Colombia's colonizing frontiers, allowing rural elites to dramatically increase their holdings by taking over the lands of displaced peasants (Hristov, 2009).

Gómez was overthrown by a military coup led by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla in 1953, who attempted to stop the war by offering amnesty to the armed peasants and attempting a (failed) agrarian reform. However, he was unable to quell ongoing rural violence between local power-holders and peasant self-defense forces. A general strike led by the Conservatives and Liberals forced Rojas Pinilla to resign in 1958, and the Conservative and Liberal leadership developed a power-sharing pact in which the parties would alternate power, known as the National Front. This agreement lasted through 1974. The violence then subsided, leaving some 200,000-300,000 dead (Hristov, 2009).

Colombian Civil War 1964 – 2016

The end of *La Violencia* generated the seeds of the next round of conflict, built on the same dynamics that had preceded it: the violent enforcement of political exclusion and deep rural inequality. The National Front power-sharing agreement blocked any legitimate route to political power for other political parties, thereby radicalizing the leftist parties. Broad social mobilization throughout the 1960s in response to issues of inequality and injustice by students, peasants and workers was met by severe state repression (Hristov, 2009).

In rural areas, peasants maintained and expanded their self-defense groups in response to state terror. These groups, which dated back to rural communist organizing in the 1920s, had become more mobile and offensive during *La Violencia*, and were unwilling to give up their capabilities in the aftermath of the war. In response to increasing state repression, they began to gather, particularly in Tolima, Meta and Caquetá, developing islands of 'independent republics' outside of the reach of the state (Metelits, 2010). The state perceived these rural areas as communist strongholds, and sent government forces to 'reconquer' them. In 1964, the government unleashed a bombing campaign on the communities, forcing the peasants into the mountains, where they began reforming with the intent to form a true insurgent army; two years later, in 1966, they officially named themselves as the FARC and began establishing their base of power in the southwestern interior (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2008).

The FARC were far from alone, however: the 1960s proved to be a propitious time to form a guerrilla group in Colombia. Three years earlier, in 1963, the ELN was formed by former Liberal fighters, radical priests and university students after receiving training from the Castro regime in Cuba. Though it

established itself in rural areas, its membership was more middle class than the FARC (Norman, 2003). The EPL formed in 1967 as the armed wing of the Colombian Communist Party, establishing a base of power in Catatumbo, in the north-west. M-19 formed in 1970, made up of supporters of ANAPO, a political party that its supporters allege was denied victory in the 1970 national elections; its ideology was more liberal-democratic than communist (Leech, 1999).

In response to this wave of militant leftist organizing, the United States began to take a keen interest in Colombia, building deep, long-term relationships with Colombian security forces beginning in the 1950s. Together, the two countries developed the counter-insurgency plan 'Plan Lazo', approved in 1962, which served as the birth of legalized paramilitaries in Colombia. With American encouragement, the Colombian state saw paramilitaries as a cost-effective way to expand their rapid response capabilities in rural areas; to this end, the government passed the Law 48 of 1968, which permitted the Ministry of Defense to create and arm civil patrols; funding came from the U.S. military assistance program (Tate, 2001).

Through the 1970s, the conflict in Colombia remained fairly low-intensity, concentrated in a few remote areas of Colombia. The FARC remained rife with internal divisions and counted on fewer than 900 fighters through 1978 (*¿Cómo fue en inicio de las Farc?*, 2019). However, a twin set of issues, the deepening rural poverty and the beginnings of the Colombian drug economy, presaged the rapid expansion of the war in the 1980s. The National Front alliance, which ended in 1974, had been economically disastrous; over the time period from 1958 to 1975, the percentage of Colombian workers living in poverty doubled from 25% to over 50%; in rural areas the situation was even worse. By the early 1970s, there was a boom of marijuana production concentrated in the Caribbean region; U.S. anti-coca actions in Peru and Bolivia pushed production and export of cocaine into Colombia a few years later. Extreme poverty generated a mass migration of the unemployed and landless to the FARC-controlled Colombian frontiers where the campesinos sought to benefit from the emergent coca economy. Revolutionary taxes from coca massively increased FARC revenues (Leech, 1999).

The increase of FARC revenues from taxing the narco economy had a dramatic effect on the organization: the guerrillas modernized their armaments and expanded from five fronts in 1975 to twenty-

four by 1982. That same year, the organization changed its name to FARC-EP (*Ejército Popular*, People's Army) to reflect its national character and made plans to double their fronts again by 1990 (Pécaut, 2008)

However, the FARC expansion was matched by a massive expansion in the strength and capacity of the Colombian paramilitaries, driven by intersecting interests between the Colombian security forces, the landed elite, and the drug cartels. Led by Pablo Escobar and the Medellín Cartel, a new narco elite formed and translated their enormous incomes into bulk land purchases of some of the most productive lands in the country; in parallel, they began building small armies to protect these enormous investments. Following the kidnapping of Martha Ochoa, sister of two high-ranking members of the Medellín Cartel, the cartel bosses founded MAS (*Muerte a Secuestradores*, Death to Kidnappers). Other landowners and elites soon found that funding MAS was an efficient way to hit back against guerrilla kidnappings and to protect their interests more generally.

In Puerto Boyacá, on the border of Antioquia and Boyacá, the local elites adopted the MAS model in explicit cooperation with the military, setting the foundation for the paramilitary-state nexus that would dominate the rest of the Colombia conflict. To the north, in the late 1980s, the Castaño brothers, formerly involved with MAS, went on to found their own paramilitary group, the ACCU (Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá). Both groups would go on to become the largest and best organized paramilitary organizations in the country (Gutiérrez-Sanín & Barón, 2005; Hristov, 2009).

Another strong impulse for paramilitary expansion was the Betancur peace process with the FARC in the mid-1980s. In 1984, Betancur signed the Uribe Agreement, a ceasefire agreement which recognized the FARC as political actors and allowed them to form their own political party, the Unión Patriótica (UP). Throughout the 1980s, UP was quite successful, winning a number of mayoral positions and several seats in congress, and was poised to offer a serious threat to the bipartisan political system (Metelits, 2010). The paramilitary organizations served as a channel for the reactionary response to leftist advances. Between 1986 and 1990, somewhere between two and four thousand members of the UP were killed by paramilitary groups, including two of their presidential candidates and thirteen members of congress (Romero, 2003; Velásquez Rivera, 2007). The systematic destruction of the UP party ended the hopes for a FARC peace process for decades, shifting the organization's attention firmly into

strengthening its military capacity, funded by kidnapping, revolutionary taxes and the drug trade. The organization expanded from roughly 2,000 soldiers in 1982 to over 18,000 by 2001 (Metelits, 2010).

The recommitment of the FARC to warfare and the rapid expansion of the paramilitaries and the drug cartels in the late 1980s put Colombia on a path towards near collapse, with increasing confrontations throughout the country and a dramatically climbing homicide rate. Three presidential candidates in the 1990 national elections, including the favorite, liberal Luis Carlos Galán, were assassinated. Consecutive presidents, Virgilio Barco (86-90) and César Gaviria (90-94), attempted a series of broad peace-making reforms. Responding to the demands of the demobilizing guerrillas and a powerful student-led peace movement, the most significant state concession was a re-written Constitution, which enshrined a broad new set of democratic and participatory rights in the country in 1991.

However, the government's commitment to peace was short-lived: the political elite of both parties found ways to systematically undermine the democratic commitments made in the new Constitution. Furthermore, under Liberal Ernesto Samper, the government brought back legalized paramilitarism in 1994 under the banner of the CONVIVIR (Cooperatives for Surveillance and Private Security) plan, which allowed civilians to establish "security cooperatives" to provide troops with intelligence and support. In 1998, just before the abolishment of CONVIVIR, many of these 'civilians' announced that they would be joining the AUC, (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*, United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia) (Hristov, 2009). The AUC was the umbrella organization unifying the paramilitary groups of Colombia under the leadership of Carlos Castaño and the ACCU. Though the AUC was never more than a loose confederation, it was able to expand from 2,000 fighters in 1996 to 11,200 in 2000, with deep ties to the Colombian security forces and a preponderant influence on Colombian politics, as would be revealed in the *para-política* scandal of the mid-2000s (Metelits, 2010; *The "Sixth Division,"* 2001).

The election of Andrés Pastrana in 1998 created new possibilities for peace. A massive mobilization in 1997 collected 10 million symbolic votes in favor of peace, sparking a new round of talks with the FARC beginning in 1998, the Caguán peace process (1998-2002) (Segura & Mechoulam, 2017).

As an act of good faith, the government conceded a demilitarized zone of 42,000 km² in the Caguán river basin (which commentators unfailingly describe as the 'size of Switzerland'). The negotiations soon stalled, particularly after the FARC killed three Americans in 1999, and died a slow death before its official end in 2002.

Most attribute the failure of Caguán to a lack of sincere commitment to peace on the part of the FARC, which used the demilitarized zone to rebuild its strength and continued to benefit from coca production in the Caguán area (Arjona, 2016). However, the explanation may be significantly more complex, including internal fragmentation and disagreements over the negotiation platform within the FARC, ongoing paramilitary violence, and an absence of support for the peace process from the Army and the economic elite (Pizarro, 2006; Segura & Mechoulam, 2017). Regardless of the reason, by the end of the peace process, the FARC reached their peak strength, with over 20,000 fighters and a presence in 60% of Colombia's 1,071 municipalities (Leech, 1999)

In the face of the imminent failure of the Caguán process, persistent insecurity throughout the country, rapidly expanding coca production and a real threat to the political system posed by a resurgent FARC, American observers fretted that a staunch ally in South America might soon become a 'failed state'. Two months after his election, Pastrana traveled to Washington promoting a "Marshall Plan" for Colombia, a \$7.5 billion initiative of social, economic and military aid. In January 2000 President Clinton responded with "Plan Colombia", a \$1.3 billion aid package, centered around allocations for helicopters and other military equipment to enable a push into the FARC-controlled Putumayo. All told, U.S. funding from 2000 to 2005 totaled \$4.5 billion, making Colombia the third largest receiver of U.S. aid in the world; between 2002 and 2008, the U.S. trained more Colombian security personnel than in either Iraq or Afghanistan (Lindsay-Poland, 2018).

Even more than Pastrana, President Alvaro Uribe (2002-2010) deeply embraced Plan Colombia, generating a partnership with the United States that would successfully undercut the power of the guerrillas over the course of the 2000s. As president, Uribe initiated the Plan Patriota, a joint initiative with the U.S. government to deploy 15,000 troops to FARC territories, matched with the 'Democratic Security'

initiative, which once again gave legal backing to the use of civilian collaborators and peasant militias in cooperation with the Colombian security forces (Hristov, 2009).

Uribe's presidency left behind a decidedly mixed legacy. By almost any account, the general security situation in Colombia showed remarkable improvement: whereas in 2000, the government controlled perhaps a third of the countryside, by 2008 it had established a permanent presence in 90% of the country; homicides fell by half and kidnappings dropped by 85% (Meacham et al., 2014). However, the period was also marked by two deeply troubling scandals that continue to reverberate in Colombian politics. In 2006, the *parapolitica* scandal revealed that hundreds of politicians through the highest levels of the Colombian government systematically colluded with paramilitary groups to get elected (Romero et al., 2007). Second, in order to meet military body count quotas, the Colombian military killed civilians and reported them as FARC deaths, a scandal known as the *Falsos Positivos* (false positives). Prosecutors and human rights groups have documented more than 5,700 cases of such military executions.

One of the most important legacies of the Uribe presidency was the paramilitary demobilization process of 2003-2006. Over that time period, under the 'Justice and Peace law', 31,000 paramilitary fighters passed through a DDR process and the AUC formally disbanded. Colombia was at the time negotiating a free trade agreement with the U.S., which had recently designated the AUC as a terrorist organization, putting pressure on the Colombian government to combat the organization. Furthermore, increased U.S. assistance to the Colombian military made the paramilitaries somewhat redundant in the counter-insurgency fight (Daly, 2016).

International observers have noted that the demobilization process was, in essence, designed to fail. First, the demobilization made no attempt to verify who exactly was demobilizing, and it has been widely documented that the paramilitary groups paid random people to appear at government concentration sites and 'demobilize' (Maher & Thomson, 2011). Second, as Human Rights Watch documented, the government "actively resisted efforts to dismantle paramilitaries' networks and to investigate their accomplices" (*Paramilitaries' Heirs*, 2010, p. 24). As a result, it was not a surprise when the same paramilitary groups quickly reformed, taking advantage of the same criminal networks they had developed throughout the country. The demobilization of the Elmer Cardenas Bloque (BEC), who

dominated northern Chocó in the early 2000s, is instructive. The bloque was one of the last to demobilize, though ultimately 1,500 soldiers turned themselves over to the Colombian state. Nevertheless, just a few years later, the same social and political network reformed under the leadership of Daniel Rendón ('Don Mario'), the brother of BEC leader Freddy Rendón (COVIJUPA Comision Vida, Justicia y Paz, 2012). Currently known as the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (AGC), the group is the most powerful criminal organization in Colombia at the present.

The Peace Process: 2010 – 2016

In 2010, Juan Manuel Santos was elected on a pro-peace agenda, marking a decisive turning-point for the conflict. A year later, the Santos government adopted the "Victim's Law", seeking to make reparations for the victims and explicitly recognizing the political character of the internal armed conflict. Meanwhile, military pressure continued to significantly weaken the FARC: from 2008 to 2011, military attacks killed 53 FARC commanders and three members of the secretariat, compounded by the death (of a heart attack) in 2008 of FARC founding member Manuel Marulanda Vélez. Although the FARC were left with a little over 9,000 fighters in 2012, down from over 20,000 in the early 2000s, they were not defeated, and had adopted a decentralized approach that increased their lethality. Neither party believed they could win an outright military victory. Long-term allies of the FARC including Hugo Chávez and Fidel Castro began to urge the group to engage in negotiations (Segura & Mechoulam, 2017).

Soon after his inauguration in August 2010, Santos sent a message to the FARC leadership inviting its representatives to begin confidential discussions. Secret talks took place between March and October 2011 along the Colombia-Venezuela border. In these meetings, the Santos administration recognized the FARC as a legitimate political organization, and selected a group of international observers to support the negotiations. Cuba and Norway served as the 'guarantors'; Cuba, for its role in bringing the FARC to the table, Norway, given its track record of supporting international peace negotiations. Though they did not directly mediate negotiations, they offered logistical support, capacity-building and problem-solving, and brought a level of formality and prestige to the setting. Venezuela and Chile served as 'accompanying countries' Venezuela, given the influence Caracas had over the FARC, and Chile, chosen to balance out Venezuela given the center-right orientation of the Piñera

administration. As companions, they did not maintain a constant presence, but rather went to Havana at regular intervals to be briefed by the parties (Segura & Mechoulam, 2017)

In February 2012, the Colombian government and the FARC began exploratory talks in Havana under conditions of total secrecy: the ICRC covertly flew in the FARC negotiators, no computers were allowed and notes were taken by hand. On August 26th, the two parties signed a general accord establishing that negotiations would focus on: ending the conflict, land distribution, political participation, drug production and trafficking, attention to victims, and the implementation of an eventual peace agreement. A day later, supposedly after ex-President Uribe leaked news of the negotiations, Santos publicly confirmed the talks, beginning the 'public' portion of the negotiations. Official negotiations started in October in Oslo, and shifted to Havana by November. Cuba was chosen as a host to buffer the talks from the vicissitudes of everyday politics in conflict, as well as from ongoing violence between state forces and the FARC. However, Segura and Mechoulam (2017) argue that the cost of this approach was that many Colombians felt alienated and distant from the negotiations.

Nevertheless, initially, public support ran extremely high: a national survey in late 2012 found that 82% of the Colombian population supported the talks (Rodriguez, 2019). However, given the closed nature of the talks and the extreme reluctance of either party to open real space for civil society participation, that support began to be put in question. In April 2013, over one million civilians marched for peace, showing support for the process but demanding greater space for civilian stakeholders. Eventually, four defined participatory mechanisms were established for the participation of civil society. All of these forms of participation were limited to non-binding commentary and input. First, the government organized civil forums in Bogotá and in other regions to provide input on the five points of the Agreement. Second, each side of the negotiation could invite different experts to give advice to the negotiating teams about the different topics discussed. Third, any citizen or social group could send proposals through an online platform. Fourth, five delegations of 12 victims each were invited to La Havana to share their experiences, memories, and needs with the peace delegations (Rodríguez Iglesias & Rosen, 2021).

By 2014, the talks appeared to be in serious danger. First, in February, La Semana published a report alleging that military intelligence were wiretapping the peace talks; Santos responded by

dismissing two generals in the following weeks. Then, Uribe threw his support behind an ally, Oscar Zuluaga, in the May 2014 elections; the coalition made opposition to the peace process the centerpiece of their platform. Santos won the election, widely seen as a mandate to continue the peace process (Bakiner, 2019).

By mid-2014, civil society pressure was ramping up as well, particularly on behalf of women's and LGBT groups as well as victims groups, who argued that their voices were being cut out of the negotiations. Pressure by both groups and their international allies led to the creation of Gender and Transitional Justice subcommissions. Between August and December of 2014, five delegations of 60 victims in total from a variety of backgrounds traveled to Havana to meet with negotiators. The non-binding character of their input and the limited number of victims has led some to question the depth of their impact (Mendes et al., 2020).

Pressure from women's groups in conjunction with UN support and allies within the Santos government led to the creation of the gender subcommission in September 2014. The subcommission's methodology was to work through the texts that had already been agreed to by the negotiation parties and make recommendations introducing gender-sensitive language and adding specific obligations to study sexual and gender-based violence during the conflict. Though the gender subcommission also operated with non-binding recommendations, Segura and Mechoulam (2017) argue that the group nevertheless had a high degree of impact in mainstreaming gender inclusion in the peace agreement.

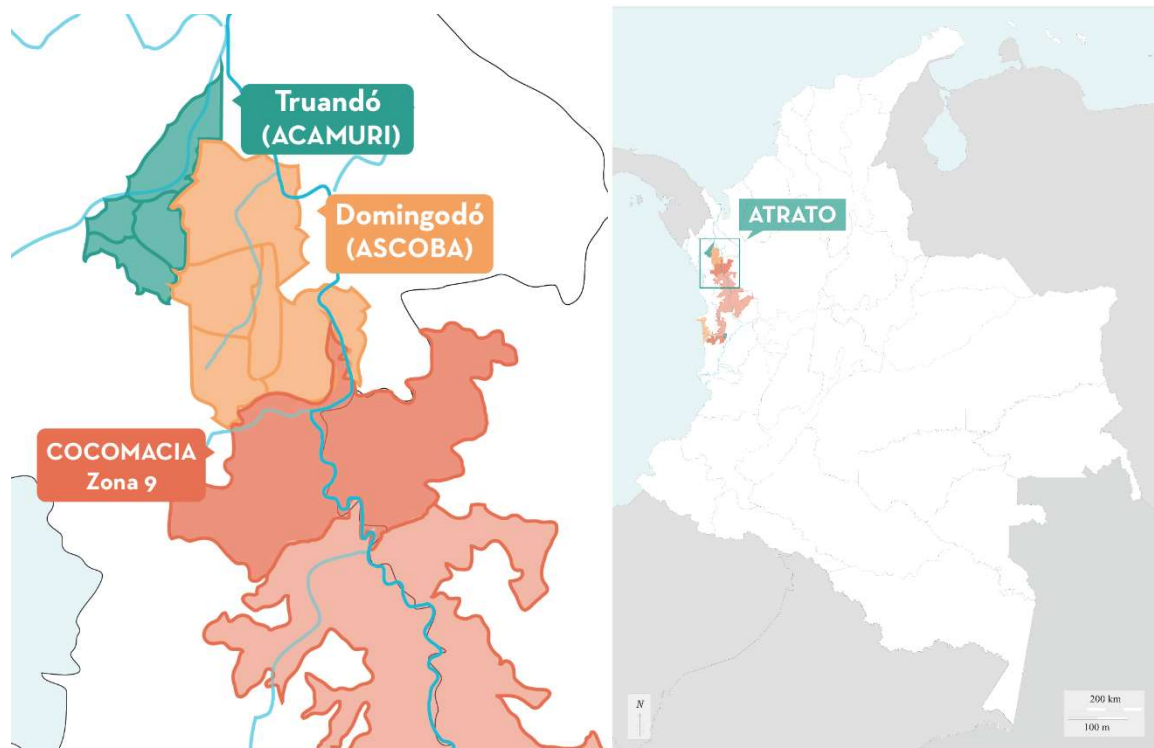
Despite this progress, peace was still far from guaranteed. In November 2014, the FARC abducted Brig. General Rubén Darío Alzate Mora and held him for two weeks, leading to the suspension of peace talks. Just as they had done in 2013, in December 2014 the FARC announced a unilateral indefinite ceasefire in time for Christmas. This time, the ceasefire lasted nearly six months. It began to break down in April following intense fighting in Cauca and the resumption of bombing raids by the government. In May the military killed 29 FARC fighters in Cauca as well as FARC commander Román Ruiz and the FARC ended the cease-fire. In response, international allies put significant pressure and attention on both parties to resume the process; the U.S. and the U.N. named special advisors to the process and a UN delegation met with the FARC to discuss de-escalation. By late September, the parties

reached an agreement on transitional justice, the final of the five substantive issues addressed in the negotiations. Early 2016 was spent finalizing the implementation process; the U.N. agreed to create a mission to monitor the surrender of the weapons and the cease-fire. On June 23, the parties signed the agreement to end the conflict and set an official plebiscite to ratify the deal for October 2 (Bakiner, 2019)

Though many international and domestic observers treated the results of the plebiscite in favor of the peace deal as a foregone conclusion, a razor-thin majority of voters rejected it (50.2%). Led by Uribe, the 'no' campaign succeeded in demonizing a transitional justice approach they deemed too light on FARC members, and in using misinformation to incite resistance to the gender and pro-LGBT elements of the peace deal (Mendes et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the Santos government passed a new version of the peace agreement with only slight revisions on November 24th, officially ending the one of the longest ongoing insurgencies in the world.

Organizational Formation in Atrato and Baudó

Organizational Formation in Atrato



The origins of COCOMACIA, the consejo comunitario mayor in the middle Atrato, can be traced to the arrival of liberation theology in Chocó beginning in the 1970s. While the Quibdó Diocese had a long history of overtly racist practice in the middle Atrato, by the end of the 1970s, the Claretian missionaries were openly questioning the civilizing discourse of the church and seeking to generate explicit commitments in the Diocese to support poor peoples and their cultures (Restrepo 2013).

In 1979, missionary teams began for the first time establishing permanent bases in the rural communities of the middle Atrato. The establishment of permanent missionary teams in the rural areas of the middle Atrato signaled a commitment from the church to building deep relationships with the communities. Perea (2012) marks the arrival of these missionary teams as the “departure point” for the organizing process in the middle Atrato. The missionary teams in the middle Atrato encountered a population experiencing deep poverty and marginalization from the state in terms of education, work, health and transportation; Mosquera (2019) writes that they found communities with infant mortality rates reaching up to 50%.

One of the most influential programs established by the missionaries was the Grassroots Ecclesial Communities (*Comunidades Eclesiales de Base*, CEBs). What began as small reading groups expanded into weekly collective reflections on the realities and problems faced by the campesinos of the middle Atrato. Shared awareness of the problems the communities faced led to a shared motivation for collective action to address the urgent unmet needs of the campesinos. Padre de la Torre recalls that emerging from the CEBs, the missionaries “Started doing things with people. [We asked them] what do we need: an aqueduct. So let's work on the aqueduct. A little bridge for the population, well let's do it (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017, pg. 70)”.

The CEBs served as a driving motivation behind a series of economic, cultural, health and education projects advanced by the missionaries in partnership with the communities. Agricultural cooperatives supported the communities' economic independence; community stores addressed shortages of basic goods (Restrepo 2013). An ambitious medical program brought in professional nurses and a doctor from Medellín, and also turned to local experts and traditional doctors to conduct courses on

local plants (De la Torre 2013). In addition, the missionary team focused on education, including adult literacy classes and “hogares infantiles” (Restrepo 2013).

The late 1970s and early 1980s was a period of rapid evolution within the church. In Quibdó in 1979 a group of Claretian missionaries and young Indigenous leaders founded the Indigenous Pastoral, followed a few years later by the formation of OREWA, the Embera Wounaan Organization of Chocó (*Organización Embera Waunana del Chocó*) (Restrepo 2013). Inspired by the success of the Indigenous Pastoral and OREWA, in 1982 in Quibdó the Pastoral Afro was founded. Padre de la Torre cites by the Pastoral Indigenous and Afro as important sources of support and accompaniment for the incipient middle Atrato organizing process (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017)

Further north, in the lower Atrato, the collective organizing processes which eventually led to the organizations ASCOBA and ACAMURI had more diverse origins. These organizations trace their origins to three processes beginning in the 1970s: the emergence of liberation theology-oriented church leadership in the Riosucio parish, the formation of the Community Action Boards (*Juntas de Acción Comunal*, JACs), and the arrival of leftist political organizing associated with the guerrilla movement.

Like the Quibdó Diocese, the Riosucio parish was deeply impacted by the liberation theology wave of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and began to take on a more direct role in supporting local community organizing. In the early 1970s, the Padre Marco Tulio Gómez led the formation of an organization known as the Pro-Development Board (*Junta Pro-Desarrollo*), an organization to support development in the rural communities, unblock the rivers and give education to the campesinos (Valencia 2011). The Church strengthened its role in local collective organizing in the 1980s, particularly following the arrival of the activist priest Padre Javier Pulgarín in 1984. Supported by a missionary group of young people that he recruited from his time working in the middle Atrato, the Padre “began to organize the campesino biblical courses, formation of catechists, health promoters, a teachers association...” (Valencia 2011, p. 13).

A Church project of particular importance was the formation of the Community Action Boards (*Juntas de Acción Comunal*, JACs), a process which was “born from the parish...so that [the

communities] had a better way of demanding more from the government..." (ASCOBA representative, quoted in Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017, pg. 126). Though many of the JACs were established with Church support, others were independent community initiatives, or supported by the Unión Patriótica, the FARC's social movement wing (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017). The JACs became widespread toward the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. The primary function of the JACs was to facilitate collective goods for a community, both by organizing collective projects as well as by making demands on the municipal government to fund local services (Valencia 2011).

The JAC organizing process also led to the formation of perhaps the first black 2nd-level organization in the Colombian Pacific. In 1982, recognizing the limitations of working as individual communities, JACs across several river basins formed the organization Asocomunal (the Association of Community Action Boards) (Pardo 2016). The mission of the Asocomunal was to unite efforts to confront problems that spanned multiple communities, including the cleaning of the rivers and halting the over-exploitation of natural resources (Valencia 2011).

The founding of the Asocomunal proved to be the high-water mark of the JAC organizing process. Many of the JACs were captured by local political bosses or the FARC, who were expanding their presence in the lower Atrato in the early 1980s (Villa, 2013). In addition to issues of organizational capture, even with the formation of the Asocomunal, by the mid-1980s the JACs seemed too limited to take on the challenges collectively faced by campesinos in the lower Atrato with the rapid expansion of mechanized logging (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017, Pardo 2016). The need to collectively confront the danger of mass clear-cutting of the lower Atrato forests served as the impulse to seek a broader, more powerful platform for campesino collective action.

An element of the lower Atrato's history with a more ambivalent impact on the campesino organizing process is the arrival of the Unión Patriótica (UP), the social and political wing of the FARC. The UP arrived along with mestizo migrants in the mid 1980s and rapidly expanded throughout the lower Atrato: "the isolation [of the lower Atrato region], its local community projects, pastoral support that sought justice in the face of business abuses, all these were bases for the growth of this political organization" (Valencia 2011, pg. 77).

The UP presence had some positive impacts on the organizing capacity of communities in the lower Atrato. The UP assisted in setting up JACs in several communities, and their electoral victories in 1988 and 1992 perhaps opened political space for grassroots movements. The movement was heavily involved in leftist leadership formation among local campesinos (Valencia 2011). A local leader cites the UP political education as giving campesinos in the lower Atrato an understanding of land concentration, economic class and the need for rural reform (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017). However, as previously discussed, the eventual FARC capture of the JACs significantly undermined the legitimacy of those organizing spaces.

Returning south to the middle Atrato: In the midst of an upswell of organizing energy in rural middle Atrato in the early 1980s, the Claretian missionaries and campesino leaders began seriously contemplating building a formal campesino organization for the middle Atrato. By then, there was growing recognition of the need for a strong collective response to confront the interlocking problems they faced in terms of economics, education, health, transportation, lack of basic services, poor prices for their crops and lack of jobs (De la Torre 2000). At the same time, they were becoming aware of the limitations of existing strategies: in particular, while the CEBs had been an effective way to address community-level problems, they excluded non-Catholics and lacked the capacity to address more intractable structural problems.

The catalytic moment for the collective organization was the arrival of logging companies in late 1983 and early 1984 throughout the middle Atrato (Restrepo 2013). At that time in the early 1980s, the massive logging projects to the north, in the lower Atrato, were beginning to run out of prime forest land; the middle Atrato was seen as the strategic next point of expansion (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017). The missionaries and campesino leaders used the CEBs as spaces to explain the threat presented by the loggers. A number of people were already familiar with the lower Atrato and Urabá experience further north, and could explain that despite promises of economic development, mechanized logging would only result in a destroyed ecosystem and the loss of their land (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017). The defense of natural resources and the right of people to their land against the “unjust and irrational” exploitation of the loggers became the banner of the incipient organizing movement (De la Torre 2000, pg. 85).

However, the organizing process faced significant challenges. There was not a lot of pre-existing unity or relationships across communities or across different affluents of the Atrato. Communication and transportation costs presented daunting obstacles. Furthermore, the campesinos and missionaries did not see an existing organizational model they could use to build their organization. Though they were aware of the Associations of Community Action Boards (Juntas de Acción Comunal, JACs) under formation to the north, in the lower Atrato, they saw this approach as overly institutionalized and clientelistic (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017). The next several years would thus consist of an intensive collective learning process in constructing a new kind of campesino organization.

The momentum behind the organizing process led to the First Campesino Meeting in September 1984 in Beté, in which leaders from across the region agreed on two goals: to form a regional campesino organization and to title their land as a strategy to defend their resources (De la Torre 2000, Restrepo 2013). In a workshop in the community of Amé in December 1985, the campesino leadership came to the conclusion that individual titling was not sufficient for the problems they faced, since this would still leave the forests and swamps (considered collective property) vulnerable to exploitation (De la Torre 2000). Additionally, there was growing uncertainty in how long thousands of individual title requests might be delayed. The organization began to orient itself toward a collective land title (Perea 2012).

In 1986, the organization began to focus on a campaign for recognition from Codechocó. In January 1986, campesinos began putting together a letter expressing their concerns over the logging companies that eventually collected 1300 signatures from 26 different communities (De la Torre 2000). The Codechocó director responded in support of a role for campesino people in directly managing their resources. However, after seeing no changes from Codechocó in the following months, the organization began pressuring various government institutions for a response, an effort that culminated with a trip by a delegation of ACIA leaders to Bogotá in late 1986. From their efforts, they learned that the logging concessions were almost finished, lacking only the final approval from Codechocó. In a decisive final meeting with INCORA, the delegation was able to temporarily block the logging concession, with an agreement for a follow-up meeting with a special commission of the government in the middle Atrato the

following year (De la Torre 2000). In that trip to Bogotá, the organization also acquired its legal status as the Integrated Peasant Association of the Atrato (*Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato*, ACIA)

That follow-up meeting in Buchadó, a community in Bojayá, on June 19, 1987, resulted in a series of government commitments known as the Buchadó Accord. The Accord created a contract of association between ACIA and Codechocó for the joint management of natural resources and promised to create a forest reserve under the control of ACIA between Quibdó and the Bojayá river, with the option to expand if other communities wanted to join later (De la Torre 2000). Buchadó was a crucial moment in the history of Afro-Colombian political struggle, and had repercussions both immediate and long-term, both locally and nationally. Locally, it was a powerful proof of the value of collective organizing, and served as a motivator to continue to build in the middle Atrato. Nationally, Buchadó is seen as the point of departure for the construction and legal recognition of Afro-Colombians as an ethnic group, since at Buchadó the government for the first time recognized afro communities as a collective subject (Restrepo 2013, Villa 2013).

Just as in the middle Atrato, in the lower Atrato the central motivation for collective organizing was the defense of natural resources. By the mid-1980s, the consolidation and expansion of the logging industry had led to vast clear-cutting of the forests of the area (Leal and Restrepo 2003). Campesinos found that they were never asked or taken into consideration when the government granted new logging permissions and were still poor and lacked basic services and infrastructure despite the booming production (Valencia 2011, Restrepo 2013). Discussions around the negative consequences of the logging economy eventually transformed into a discourse on the defense of the natural resources against what the campesinos saw as an “irrational logic of exploitation...leading to the impoverishment of the true inhabitants of the region” (Valencia 2011, pg. 13).

As with the Quibdó diocese in the Middle Atrato, the accompaniment of the Riosucio parish was crucial in the formation of a collective organization. Beginning with the arrival of Padre Javier Pulgarín in 1984, the Riosucio parish began a “permanent accompaniment” of the organizing process, which included training as well as funds to support travel and pay for meetings. In 1984, a great assembly brought together 900 people from throughout the lower Atrato and officially founded an organization they

called the Campesino Organization of the Lower Atrato (*Organización Campesina del Bajo Atrato, OCABA*) (Cuesta 1993).

The founders of OCABA were also deeply influenced by the ACIA process taking place just south of them, in the middle Atrato. At some point in the early-mid 1980s the Riosucio parish and the incipient OCABA leadership made a visit to the Middle Atrato organizing process to exchange experiences (Restrepo 2013). The visit had a significant impact on OCABA leaders. One founder of OCABA writes, “What struck us was seeing black people unified, organized. All working for common ideals. So we learned from there.” (Interview with an OCABA founder, cited in Valencia 2011, pg. 11).

Over the course of the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the organization consolidated into a significant force in the lower Atrato. By 1992, the organization included within its zone of influence the entire lower Atrato, including the municipalities of Acandí, Unguía, Murindó and part of Mutatá in Antioquia, Riosucio and the northern extent of Bojayá, an area covering 123 communities and 47,000 inhabitants according to an OCABA census (Cuesta 1993). Each community had a local committee that was often highly influential, serving as the voice of the community and drawing strong participation (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017).

The Campesino Association of the Riosucio Municipality (*Asociación Campesina del Municipio de Riosucio, ACAMURI*) was founded in 1988 by a former director of OCABA and a collection of former member communities of OCABA who disagreed with OCABA's radical stance against the logging industry. The organization was most influential in the Truandó river, a traditional logging center (Valencia 2011).

The member communities of ACAMURI primarily made their living from logging and thus sought to find a middle road for logging negotiations in contrast to OCABA's efforts to block new logging concessions (Valencia 2011). A missionary from the Riosucio parish suggests that many communities felt that without logging, there wouldn't be any development in Riosucio (Gutiérrez and Restrepo 2017). However, a number of OCABA leaders argue that the organization was a strategy of the logging companies to undermine OCABA's organizing efforts in the region (Valencia 2011). In 1990, ACAMURI,

along with the loggers union and (allegedly) supported by the logging companies staged a strike in the Riosucio municipal head against OCABA and the Riosucio parish for its positions against logging. Since then, the people of Truandó separated themselves from any broader organizing process in the lower Atrato associated with the Riosucio parish, a split that continues through the present day (Valencia 2011). Nevertheless, the organizational work of ACAMURI was in many ways similar to OCABA; it sought to organize its member communities, regulate natural resource use and improve the living conditions for member communities by negotiating with the state and the logging companies (Valencia 2011, Wabgou et al. 2012).

In 1990, the announcement of a National Constituent Assembly (*Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, ANC*) to create a new constitution set off a flurry of organizing activity throughout the Colombian Pacific, and both ACIA and OCABA played an active role.

OCABA was an active member of the Black Communities Coordination (Coordinadora de Comunidades Negras), a body that sought to coordinate Afro-Colombian efforts to gain representation in the ANC (Restrepo 2013). During the proceedings of the ANC, OCABA was active in the mobilization to include formal recognition of Afro-Colombians in the new Constitution. Following the successful inclusion of the Transitory Article 55 of the Constitution (*Artículo Transitorio 55, AT55*), OCABA was a member of the Special Commission (Comisión Especial) to regulate the AT55 (Restrepo 2011).

In the lead-up to the ANC, ACIA was an active member of the Black Communities Coordination (Coordinadora de Comunidades Negras, CCN) (Restrepo 2013). ACIA also helped lead marches and protests in Quibdó to pressure for the passage of the Ley 70 (Perea 2012). Beyond its active participation in the ANC and Ley 70 process, ACIA generated many of the concepts and drive to organize that underwrote the Ley 70. One of the founders of ACIA expressed: “the spirit of Law 70 was created by ACIA. And the text. We here [in ACIA] elaborated the proposal with other organizations that existed, OBAPO and OCABA” (Restrepo 2013, pg. 88).

Following the passage of the Law 70, ACIA undertook a “substantial” mobilization and awareness-raising campaign to inform the communities of the new legislation (Wouters 2001, pg. 505).

ACIA submitted its titling request to INCORA in April 1997, and received the title of approximately 700,000 hectares the following year, in April 1998 (Wouters 2001).

In the lower Atrato, the diffusion of the new AT55 law was a massive effort coordinated jointly between the Riosucio Parish, OCABA and ACAMURI. Despite the serious conflicts between the organizations, the Church was able to mediate an alliance in order to jointly confront the enormous challenge of preparing to conform community councils in the lower Atrato (Hernández 2009).

With the opportunity to petition for a collective title finally available, the communities of the lower Atrato had to decide how they wanted to title their region. This ignited a debate between three different positions: a universal title encompassing all the lower Atrato, a river-basin title for each of the tributary rivers of the Atrato, or individual titles by community. Much of the OCABA leadership argued for the universal title, or at least a river-based title. They argued that this approach to titling was less cumbersome and would gain the title quicker; furthermore, with a bigger territory they would be in a stronger bargaining position with the state. Others sought individual community-based titles as a way to protect local autonomy and ensure that communities could directly secure resources (Valencia 2011).

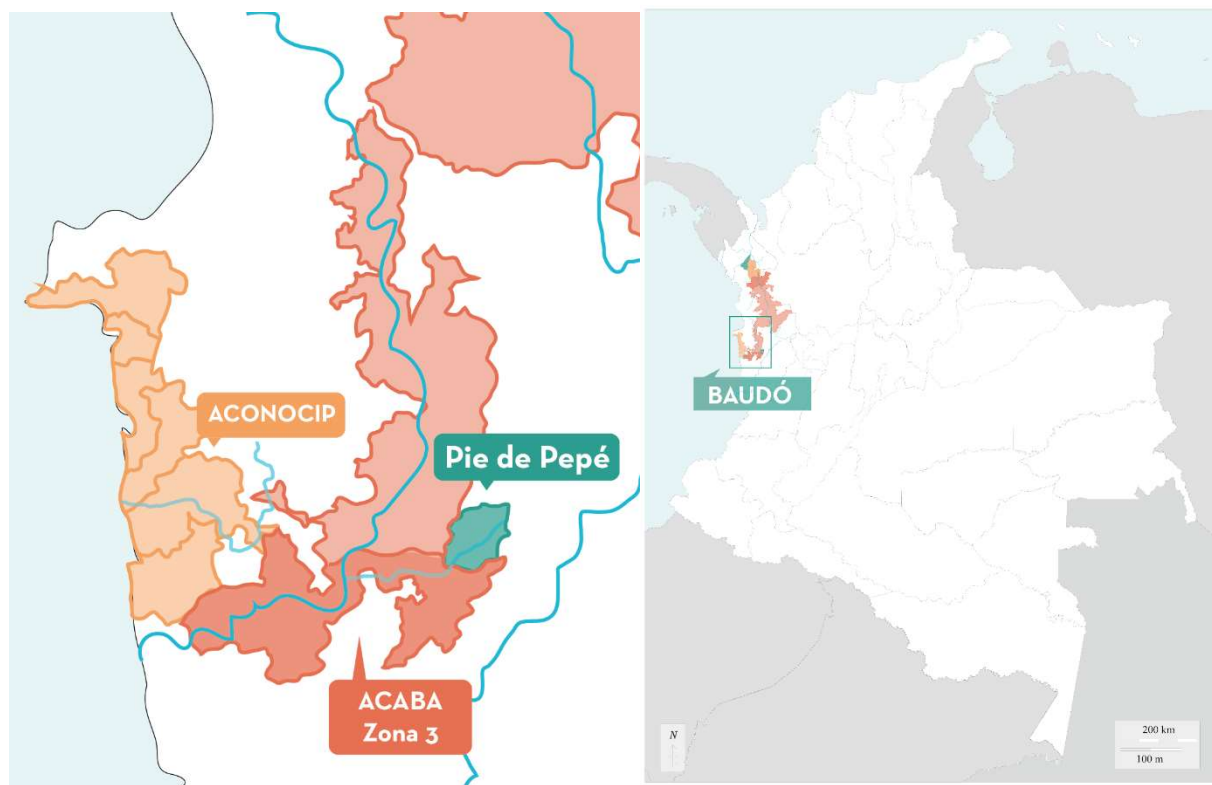
In December 1996, the first seven collective titles of Afro communities in the Colombian Pacific were issued to eight individual communities in the Domingodó and Truandó rivers: Chicao, La Madre and Apartadó-Buenavista in the Domingodó river and La Nueva, Dos Bocas, Taparal, Truandó Medio and Clavellino in the Truandó river.

Why did these communities decide to take on individual titles? As I have demonstrated, all the Afro communities in both of these rivers were involved in an intensive collective organizing process dating back to the 1970s. These communities were both well-organized and had ample access to information about the structure of collective titling. The communities of Domingodó were well-integrated into the OCABA organization, many of whose leaders were pushing for a universal title.

An OCABA leader from Chicao (river Domingodó) argues that the Riosucio parish and other advisors urged him and others from his river to select individual titles: “The parish said that the best thing would be to make the individual titles so that each community had its autonomy within its territories and

that the resources could go directly to their communities” (Valencia 2011, pg. 26). Valencia (2011) also suggests that economic and political interests might have played a role both in the decision for the Truandó and Domingodó communities to aim for individual titles and for the speed with which they received those titles: the titles happened to coincide with a massive “community forestry management” project proposed by Maderas del Darién in the Domingodó and Truandó river basins (Ramírez unpublished, cited in Valencia 2011, pg. 27).

Organizational Formation in Baudó



Unlike in the Atrato, Baudó had a very limited organizing history before the late 1980s organizing wave of Chocó. For one, the Istmina diocese, which included the Baudó region, was significantly more conservative than the Quibdó diocese, reducing space for the activist liberation theory priests which were highly influential in the Atrato organizing process. The Istmina Diocese did attempt some productive projects in the 1970s, including a carpentry project headed by Father Miguel Ángel Mejía, with only very modest success. Furthermore, because of the geographical isolation of Baudó, communities there had less access to emerging forms of rural organization, such as the Juntas de Acción Communal, which

were imported to the Atrato from Urabá. However, Castro and Meza (2017) do reference “juntas del río” in Baudó, informal community-level organizations responsible for meeting collective needs such as path and dock repairs, which later became the foundations for the broader organization.

The ACABA organizing process was founded by “Chonto” Abigail Serna Arriaga and Rudecindo “Yuya” Castro, two leaders and lifelong friends from Baudó who had joined the black activist organization ‘Movimiento Cimarron’ during their time in urban Colombia. In the late 1980s, influenced by their activism outside of Baudó and the emergent forms of organizing in the Atrato and elsewhere, they began formulating plans to begin organizing black communities in Baudó. In 1987, they began taking self-funded trips to communities in the Baudó cuenca, making workshops on *cimarronaje*, black identity, culture and history. They sought to create study circles on ethnic identity throughout Baudó, with the goal to use these study circles as the basis of a future organization (Castro & Meza, 2017).

From its origins as study groups, the nascent organization soon expanded into larger-scale collective projects. In these study groups, community members consistently raised the challenge of exporting agricultural products for fair prices: middlemen bought their products at whatever price they set, and pitted farmers against each other. Higher value products, such as borojó had been abandoned because the exporters were not dependable enough and farmers would lose their crops.

From these discussions with the river communities, a group of leaders developed a project called, “Recovery of memory, reintroduction of borojó cultivation and plantain planting”, seeking to link their ethnic identity work with a large-scale agricultural cooperative for the benefit of the farmers of Baudó. Through their contacts within the Movimiento Cimarron organization, the leaders were connected with claretian priests in the Quibdó diocese who offered financial support for the project (Castro & Meza, 2017). The project began in 1988, setting up nurseries and distributing seeds for platano and borojó cultivation, employing traditional production practices. The project was focused in Alto Baudó, in the area around the community of Chachajo (Castro & Meza, 2017)

Meanwhile, the founders of the organization continued to circulate throughout Baudó, moving from community to community to discuss a campesino organization for Baudó. From eight original

comités veredales, the organization expanded to 30, stretching from Cugucho in the northern extent of Alto Baudó through Boca de Pepé in Medio Baudó. That same year, in 1988, leaders and elders of the organization gathered in Pie de Pató and formally founded ACABA, the Campesino Organization of Baudó (*Asociación Campesina del Baudó*) (Castro & Meza, 2017).

In 1990, the organization Swissaid donated the funds for a boat to transport borjón and platano crops, facilitating a producers cooperative in Baudó to export products directly to market in Buenaventura and collectively bargain for fair prices by cutting out middlemen exporters (Castro & Meza, 2017). Meanwhile, the organization began negotiations with the grocery chain Carulla to sell the company the borjón produced by the cooperative. The success of the project generated excitement about the possibilities of collective organizing and provided funds for leaders to move more easily on the river, facilitating the expansion of the ACABA organization throughout the river basin down to the rivermouth at the Pacific ocean (Castro & Meza, 2017).

At the same time, ACABA was becoming highly active in regional efforts to push forward a provision for collective titling in the Constituent Assembly to write a new constitution in 1991. Following the failure of Afro organizations to place a representative in the constituent assembly, ACABA was one of the first to initiate dialogue with Rojas Birry, an indigenous representative from Baudó who would go on to represent afro interests in the assembly.

The passage of the Ley 70 in 1993 halted processes of titling or expanding *resguardos* in areas where black communities were also making land claims, generating inter-ethnic hostility in Baudó (Castro & Meza, 2017). With the help of Jaime Arocha, a prominent anthropologist, ACABA was able to meet with the indigenous organization OREWA and generate an agreement that prevented inter-ethnic war (Castro & Meza, 2017). However, because of the ratcheting inter-ethnic tensions over land, ACABA chose to seek individual titles for afro communities in the north of Alto Baudó, as they anticipated that the quicker and cheaper process to prepare smaller titles would block the territorial advance of indigenous *resguardos* while they waited for the big title of ACABA to be completed. This led to the birth of the first *consejos comunitarios* in Baudó: Berreberre, Cugucho y Puerto Echeverry between 1998 and 2000 (Castro & Meza, 2017).

However, the geography of Baudó's consejos comunitarios is not solely a reflection of ACABA interests. Pie de Pepé specifically sought to maintain its autonomy: they believed it would be difficult to manage the huge territory of ACABA, so they wanted to be able to control their own territory. Pie de Pepé received its title in May 2000.

In Bajo Baudó the relationship between ACABA and the communities wasn't as direct, but the consejos comunitarios there were, as an ACABA leader narrates, "still advised on and built by us [ACABA]. We were the only process in the region, so they looked to us for advice and support, CONCOSTA [a consejo comunitario of Bajo Baudó] y todo de ellos, we helped to form".

In a conversation with several Bajo Baudó leaders, they explained to me the thought process of their communities in the titling process of the 1990s: joining one of the huge CCMs means giving up local decision-making power, which is especially disconcerting if you're way in the periphery of the title and don't have strong connections to the center. How do you really know what's going on in the organization or hold it accountable? What kind of voice will you have in decisions? Moreover, collective organizing was a massive challenge back then: they had no money or support for transportation and no easy means of cross-community communication: even meetings with neighboring communities could mean hours of walking on the beach. Thus, in the end, because of the geographic challenges, concerns about their representation in centralized decision-making, and the fear and distrust generated by the growing armed group presence in Baudó, the Bajo Baudó communities sought their own titles.

The communities of Bajo Baudó received their titles between May 2000 and December 2001. ACABA received its title in May 2001.

War in Chocó

War in Atrato

From the early 1960s, the Popular Liberation Army (*Ejército Popular de Liberación*, EPL) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia - Ejército del Pueblo*, FARC-EP) were active in the intense labor conflict in the banana plantations in Antioquian Urabá, on the border with Chocó (Ballvé 2013). No fixed date exists on the exact arrival of the guerrillas to the

Atrato. Molano Jimeno (2016) writes that residents of the region remember the ELN as the first group to arrive in the mid-1960s; Hernández (2009) writes that the inhabitants remember the EPL as the first to arrive, in the early 1970s. Initially, it appears that the guerrillas had relatively minimal contact with the population, doing some political organizing but recruiting very few Chocoanos into their ranks (Hernández 2009).

The FARC appear to have arrived some years later. Valencia (2011) writes that the Patriotic Union, the political party associated with the FARC, arrived in 1979 and were active throughout the region in the early 1980s. Hernández (2009) writes that “Chocó became the place where [FARC] troops could rest, for short periods, in order to return strengthened to combat zones in Antioquia and the south of Córdoba” (Hernández 2009, pg. 20). From these initial short stays, the FARC soon converted the lower Atrato into a more permanent rearguard area, as the region offered ideal conditions for guerrillas: dense, difficult to access topography and scarce government presence.

By the late 1980s, the FARC consolidated their control over the Urabá banana workers union while their political party surged to electoral victories across Urabá and the lower Atrato. Their zone of influence appears to have grown accordingly: by the late 1980s, while much of the territory east of the Atrato was under EPL control, the FARC controlled everything west of the Atrato river to the Pacific coast, including the all the areas of focus of this study (Villa 2013). By 1995, the FARC had emerged victorious from a violent conflict between the guerrilla groups present in the region (which included the FARC, the EPL and ELN) and pushed both other groups out, monopolizing control over the Atrato (Hernández 2009, Valencia 2011). As the FARC succeeded in eliminating its competitors in the lower Atrato, it became the sole authority in the region, imposing social rules, regulating and taxing economic activities and administering justice (Villa 2013).

The FARC expanded their reach south into the middle Atrato in the mid-1980s (Villa 2013, Wouters 2001). The ELN arrived a few years later, in the late 1980s (Wouters 2001). The EPL were also present in the late 1980s further south. Through the early 1990s, guerilla presence in the lives of the campesinos in the middle Atrato was limited to the occasional ‘revolutionary’ meeting and punishment of criminals (Wouters, 2001).

Starting in the mid-1980s, the Antioquian cattle ranchers and cocaine barons that would eventually form the basis of the paramilitary movement began making land purchases in the Atrato region, primarily east of the Atrato in the present-day community councils of Curvaradó and La Larga-Tumaradó (Villa 2013).

By the early 1990s, a new group, the Campesino Self-Defense Force of Córdoba and Urabá (*Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá, ACCU*) began to expand their influence in Acandí and Unguía, municipalities just north of the region of this study (Hernández 2009). By 1995 the paramilitaries had defeated the guerrillas in Urabá. Hundreds of soldiers from the defeated EPL joined the ACCU, bringing with them significant knowledge of the lower Atrato (Hernández 2009). Though the FARC still maintained near-total control over the lower Atrato in the early 90s, the ACCU paramilitaries had surrounded the region, consolidating control in the north and the west.

The paramilitaries and the business interests that backed them saw the Atrato as strategically vital, both to deny the FARC their rearguard area and further break the power of the FARC's political wing, the UP, and as a point of expansion for the agro-industrial and ranching economies that fueled the paramilitaries (Villa 2013). In 1995, from their bases in Urabá, the ACCU began to project power into the lower Atrato through two key blocs: the Banana Bloc (*Bloque Bananero*) advancing west on the road to Belén de Bajirá while the Elmer Cardenas Bloc (*Bloque Elmer Cardenas*) moved south along the Atrato river (Villa 2013).

By mid-1996, joint military and paramilitary checkpoints were imposing tightening limits on the quantity of goods that residents could transport, under suspicion that the campesinos were carrying supplies to the guerrillas. To the east, the ACCU and the 17th Brigade began a major military build-up, establishing multiple control points east of the Atrato and a base of operations in Belén de Bajirá (Amnesty International 2000).

In December 1996, the paramilitaries attacked Riosucio, abducting and killing local leaders including the acting mayor (Amnesty International 2000, Hernández 2009). The paramilitary occupation of the town of Riosucio began a period of intense persecution against social leaders. All local social and

political organizations were accused of collaborating with the guerrillas. Campesino accounts describe paramilitaries moving house to house with a list of OCABA, ACAMURI and Patriotic Union leaders, assisted by former FARC soldiers who changed sides when the paramilitaries arrived. Social leaders who weren't assassinated had to flee the region (Valencia 2011). The organization OCABA was destroyed by the persecution of the paramilitaries; ACAMURI went dormant for decades (Restrepo 2011).

Operation Genesis, one of the largest single displacements in the history of Chocó, began on February 24th, 1997, with an indiscriminate bombing campaign of the campesino communities followed by the arrival of troops from the ACCU and the 17th Brigade of the Colombian military, who machine-gunned survivors and burned villages and crops (IDMC 2007, Hernández 2009). By the end of major operations a few days later, paramilitary and military troops had entered all of the major tributary rivers of the Atrato in the lower Atrato region. The operation successfully pushed the FARC out of the lower Atrato, and the paramilitaries took control over all the tributary rivers west of the Atrato (Flórez López and Millán Echeverría 2007).

Operation Genesis initiated a mass flight out of the tributary rivers west of the Atrato, referred to by the campesinos as the "Marcha de la Muerte" (the march of death). The campesinos of the communities in Salaquí, Truandó and Domingodó went east (Amnesty International 2000). They were met by the Colombian military in a community called Pavarandó, on the border between Antioquia and Chocó. The military halted the exodus and told them to establish their camp there in Pavarandó. Thus, on March 28, 1997, the approximately 6,000 campesinos from 50 fleeing communities of the river basins of Salaquí, Truandó, Domingodó, Quiparadó, Chintadó, Curvaradó and Jiguiamiandó established the Pavarandó refugee camp (Amnesty International 2000).

Conditions in the Pavarandó camp were squalid, overcrowded and desperate, with limited access to food and healthcare. The humanitarian situation inside the camp was compounded by the constant danger the displaced communities faced: the camp was surrounded by paramilitaries, who accused the communities of supporting the guerrillas and issued death threats. (Amnesty International, 2000) In February 1998, the paramilitaries massacred 6 campesinos from the refugee camp (Amnesty International 2000).

Despite the gravity of these threats, community leaders continued to actively organize inside the Pavarandó camp. By May 1997, the camp had organized elections for two leadership bodies: the Negotiation Commission, integrated by two men from each river, and the Committee of Seven, integrated by women. The Negotiation Commissions was charged with negotiating to improve conditions in the camp and create guarantees for an eventual return home (Hernández 2009). The Negotiation Commission furthermore played a key role in securing collective land titles for the displaced communities in Pavarandó who didn't already receive one, taking legal action to force commitments from INCORA to title the territories (Villa 2013). Supported by the Diócesis of Apartadó and other allies, the refugee camp renamed itself as the San Francisco de Asís Peace Community and collectively committed to neutrality and transparency towards all armed groups (Valencia 2011). Despite the hardships of life inside the refugee camp, the active organizing process "strengthened social cohesion within many communities, and...formed the political consciousness of local leaders" (Rolland, 2005, pg. 7).

A central focus of organizing inside the camps was to plan for and secure guarantees from the state for assistance. At least initially, all the returning campesinos continued to ascribe to the peace community identity and regulations. The state made promises to guarantee security for returning communities (Hernández 2009). The return process began either in late 1997 or early 1998 and was completed in late 1998. Though the return process officially ended in the end of 1998, many campesinos never returned, or returned sporadically, maintaining their permanent residence in Riosucio or other urbanized areas (Hernández 2009).

Meanwhile, the paramilitaries also began to expand further south, into the middle Atrato. In May 1997, over 100 ACCU paramilitaries led by 'El Aleman' entered the town of Vigía del Fuerte and went door-to-door in Vigía with lists of Patriotic Union members and other suspected collaborators. They also began moving in the tributary rivers of the Atrato, in particular the Opogadó river, seeking out and killing suspected collaborators (CNRR 2010). Through this operation, the paramilitaries succeeded in kicking out the FARC from the middle Atrato, consolidating their control over the region through 2000 (Reyes Posada et al 2007). The paramilitary takeover in May 1997 prompted the first wave of displacements in the Middle Atrato (Perea 2012).

Despite ever-tightening paramilitary control, both the FARC 34th and 57th fronts and the ELN “El Boche” front continued to operate in the more remote rural areas of the Middle Atrato, stealing supplies from the communities and killing suspected paramilitary collaborators (Amnesty International 2000). The ELN was especially active in the tributary rivers on the east bank of the Atrato south of Bojayá (Amnesty International 2000, Wouters 2001). Meanwhile, the Caguán peace process (1999-2002) allowed the FARC the opportunity to regain strength and again project power in the middle Atrato (CNRR 2010).

In March 2000, the FARC frentes 5, 34 and 57 made their attack on Vigía and Bellavista, succeeding in pushing out the paramilitaries and the Colombian armed forces from the middle Atrato; neither would return for two full years (Flórez López 2005). During that period, the FARC exercised almost complete control over the region spanning from Carmen del Darién and Murindó municipalities in the north through Bojayá, Vigía del Fuerte and the Medio Atrato municipality (Flórez López and Millán Echeverría 2007, Garcia Sanchez 2017). Meanwhile, the paramilitaries retreated to their strongholds in Quibdó and the Riosucio (Wouters 2002).

However, the relative stability of the FARC control in the Atrato would not go unchallenged for long. In December 2001, the AUC launched the ‘Storm of the Atrato’ (*Tormenta del Atrato*), an operation with the intention to retake control of the middle Atrato (Flórez López 2005). This paramilitary operation coincided with the collapse of the Caguán peace negotiations between the government and the FARC in early 2002, which refocused state and paramilitary efforts on military victory over the FARC (Rios Oyola 2014). These events culminated in the May 2, 2002 massacre in Bellavista, the municipal capital of Bojayá, in which a gas cylinder bomb from the FARC landed on the church and killed 79 people, including 48 minors (CNRR 2010) and displaced thousands of people, many of who have never returned (CNRR 2010).

During their four months in Quibdó, the communities of Bojayá and Vigía endured an avalanche of meetings with government functionaries, interviews with national and international journalists and petition-writing to demand sufficient conditions of health, education, food and transportation to allow for their return (Bello et al. 2008, CNRR 2010). Some stayed with family members, many others lived in the COCOMACIA headquarters (Perea 2012). In part because of the lack of dignified conditions in Quibdó,

and also because of the promises of humanitarian support from the state and international organizations, roughly 2000 of the displaced people returned in the early days of September 2002, accompanied by the military (CNRR 2010). While the people had been displaced, armed groups had entered the town of Bellavista to further pillage and rob it; the campesinos returned to find their town destroyed (Bello et al 2008, p. 85).

The Bojayá massacre helped Álvaro Uribe win the presidency on a militantly anti-FARC platform. One of his first actions was to implement the 'Democratic Security' policy, which sought to recuperate state control of peripheral territories by dramatically expanding state (military) presence (CNRR 2010). From May 2002 onwards, about 400 soldiers, 40 police and a mobile battalion of the Navy and the police have maintained a presence throughout the Atrato, operating out of permanent bases in the towns of Bellavista and Vigía del Fuerte (Bello et al. 2008, Reyes Posada et al. 2007). However, their presence did not mark the end of conflict, but rather the beginning of a new escalation with the Colombian military colluding with the paramilitaries and attempting to co-opt communities in a permanent effort to control the Atrato river (Bello et al. 2008).

The increased military presence and open collusion with the paramilitaries paved the way for the steadily increasing control of the Elmer Cardenas bloc (BEC) of the AUC paramilitaries throughout the Atrato. From their bases in the lower Atrato, the BEC consolidated their control over the course of 2004 and 2005 in a series of operations against the FARC (COVIJUPA 2006). The BEC's presence extended beyond military control to include a sophisticated illegal logging and coca project, in particular in the western side of the Atrato, with the forced cooperation of the indigenous and afro communities located there (Bello et al. 2008, Flórez López 2005). The heavy paramilitary pressure created a situation in the Atrato of "eternal return and permanent displacement" (Caicedo et al. 2006, cited in Rios Oyola 2014, p. 127) in which communities were repeatedly displaced, attempted to return given the lack of state support and miserable conditions in the cities, only to be displaced again with even less state resources available.

In this challenging context, the consejos comunitarios of the lower Atrato sought to rebuild the collective organizing platform that had been lost with the collapse of OCABA in 1997. The multi-year displacement in Pavarandó was an important organizing impulse, laying the foundations for future

organizing. In the camps, the communities formed both OIBA (the Inter-Ethnic Organization of the Lower Atrato), which played an important role in advocating for the communities' safe return from displacement, and FEDEATRATO (the Campesino Federation of the Atrato), which was a collective platform of the consejos comunitarios. However, these organizations were unable to last, riven by leadership rivalries and ongoing suspicions emerging from the conflict (Rolland, 2012; Valencia, 2011).

On the fifth anniversary of the peace communities strategy, in October 2002, key leaders from the lower Atrato once again recommitted to forming a regional organization of peace communities and consejos comunitarios. With the support of the Church and CINEP, these leaders sought an organization as a more powerful response to the conflict than individual peace communities, as a way to overcome internal leadership divisions and rivalries, and to create a strong negotiating platform to make demands on the state in support of displaced people (Valencia, 2013; Villa, 2013). The first assembly of ASCOBA (Association of Community Councils and Organizations of Bajo Atrato) was held in October 2003, marking the official birth of the organization (Valencia, 2011).

In September of 2005, the BEC announced its intention to demobilize under the government "peace process" with the paramilitaries, ongoing since 2003. In a public communication, the group announced its desire to "convert itself into an actor for peace" (Public communication of the Elmer Cardenas Block, September 15 2005, cited in Bello et al. 2008 p.29). This fragmented, co-opted demobilization process would begin the following year, creating a new period of uncertainty and violence in the Atrato region.

The paramilitary demobilization process has been widely regarded as a failure: the Colombian government did little to verify who was demobilizing, leading to widespread fraud, and did not dismantle the groups' internal networks and financing, allowing them to quickly regroup and rebuild power ("Paramilitaries' Heirs The New Face of Violence in Colombia" 2010). As such, the paramilitaries never truly left the Atrato. However, the demobilization process did have two key consequences in the region. First, the paramilitaries regrouped in many smaller, less politicized and more fractured organizations competing among themselves for control over drug routes. For the communities, it became even harder to identify the aims of the groups, their leaders and the territorial borders between them (Rolland, 2013).

Second, the split of the paramilitaries allowed the FARC to rebuild a strong presence in the region. In this time period it regained control of the timber economy on the western bank of the Atrato and fought frequently with the Colombian military. These conflicting dynamics led a longtime observer to designate the second half of the 2000s as a “time of chaos”.

War in the early 2010s was marked by three major trends. First, methods of social control through violence became more sophisticated, and in some ways more subtle. Massacres became less common; armed groups sought to seed divisions or otherwise co-opt community leaders rather than kill them; confinements of the communities, or individual *gota a gota* (drip by drip) displacement became more common than the high-visibility mass displacements (Rios Oyola, 2014).

Second, the peace negotiations between the FARC and the Santos administration began in earnest in 2012. In Chocó, this was reflected in somewhat regular unilateral truces from the FARC as gestures of goodwill. In some parts of Atrato, this created some of the most peaceful conditions people had experienced since the beginning of the war in the 1990s. However, fighting between the FARC and the government was still a frequent occurrence. In the more difficult to access rivers of Domingodó and Truandó they maintained a significant presence, continuing to kill paramilitaries and suspected collaborators (Rolland, 2012).

Finally, the early 2010s saw the re-emergence of a consolidated paramilitary organization, the AGC (Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia). The group has direct links with the Bloque Elmer Cardenas that dominated the Atrato region in the early 2000s. The AGC appeared in Chocó in 2008, in competition with other ‘neo-paramilitary’ groups such as las Paisas and los Rastrojos. They emerged as the strongest paramilitary group in the Atrato roughly by 2012, though their influence was largely concentrated on the east side of the Atrato. Backed by extensive narco wealth, the AGC recruited extensively with the promises of large joining bonuses in a very impoverished region. Their organization rapidly expanded coca production and export in the region, frequently in tacit coordination with the Colombian military.

From 2015 onwards, the dynamic of the conflict has been defined by the imminent demobilization of the FARC. At that time, the FARC still had some 1200 soldiers in the Atrato. While the FARC attempted to bring in the ELN to hold traditional FARC territories, they were met by stiff resistance from the AGC, who began crossing into the western side of the Atrato in large numbers in 2015. Even through 2015, however, the FARC continued major operations in the Atrato, including significant clashes with the Colombian military in COCOMACIA territory. Since the FARC completed their demobilization between 2016 and 2017, the conflict has focused exclusively on the competition between the AGC and the ELN for supremacy in Chocó. While the ELN was the first to arrive on the western side of the river historically controlled by the FARC, the AGC gradually expanded from its strongholds on the east side of the Atrato river southwest, into the territories of ASCOBA, ACAMURI and COCOMACIA. As of 2021, the AGC appears to be in full control of all of the northern sections of the Atrato that fall into this study.

War in Baudó

Some time in mid-1994, the first of the armed groups arrived in Baudó: a dissident faction of the EPL (Popular Liberation Army, *Ejército Popular de Liberación*) (Arocha, 1999). Virtually simultaneously, ACABA's productive projects began to collapse. An advisor for Swissaid (and well-known anthropologist) Willian Villa was captured and beaten by the EPL. Swissaid decided to pull its funding, ending the project. The deal with Carulla fell through after Rosmira Hinestroza, the treasurer of ACABA, was forced to displace to Quibdó because she refused to cooperate with the EPL (Castro & Meza, 2017). Already by mid-1995, at least 50 families had been displaced to Quibdó. Hermann Palacios, the vice president of the organization, was killed after publicly denouncing EPL guerrilla activities and irregularities in the 1994 municipal elections in Alto Baudó (Arocha, 1999).

EPL control over Baudó was short-lived. The Benkos Biohó frente, a black identity frente of the ERG (Guevarista Revolutionary Army, *Ejército Revolucionario Guevarista*) arrived in Medio Baudó via Río Pepé in early 1996, and won a quick victory over the EPL (Arocha, 1998a; Castro & Meza, 2017). However, their monopoly over Baudó was also short-lived. That same year, in 1996, the indigenista FARIP (Indigenous Revolutionary Armed Forces, *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Indígenas*) arrived in Baudó, in cooperation with Misael Soto, a politician of Alto Baudó. Following FARIP threats, the alcalde of

Alto Baudó, Ángel Ruby Rivas created his own armed group, the Popular Defense Cooperative (*Cooperativa Popular de Defensa*). This band was eventually coopted into the ACCU paramilitaries when they arrived some time in 1996 or 1997. Later testimony from the paramilitary demobilization process accused Rivas, along with Francisco Rojas Birry, a hero of the ley 70 process, of coordinating with the Bloque Pacífico paramilitaries during their political campaigns in their 1998 campaigns (Arocha, 1999; *“El Iguano” involucra a Rojas Birry*, 2011).

Following an agreement between mining interests and the ACCU in late 1995, the paramilitaries began arriving in southern Chocó in early 1996, focusing initially on San Juan and Quibdó. This was the ‘Frente Minero’, the genesis of the infamous Bloque Pacífico, which controlled most of Baudó from the late 1990s through their demobilization in 2006 (“El Baudó, Chocó: dos décadas de intensa guerra,” 2016). By 1998, Medio Baudó was under the control of the Frente Mineros paramilitaries, who imposed a ferocious ‘social cleaning’ of anyone accused of petty crimes or collaborating with the guerrilla. By the end of the 1990s, Baudó had become established as part of the drug route from the interior through Istmina to Puerto Meluk and down the river out to the ocean (“El Baudó, Chocó: dos décadas de intensa guerra,” 2016).

Meanwhile, the Benkos Biohó frente found itself in crisis: its commander was killed by the military and it lost control of its territory in San Juan. The paramilitaries finished the guerrilla off, taking control of Baudó from the midpoint of the river to the coast (Castro & Meza, 2017). The Biohó frente were replaced by the ELN, who arrived in Baudó in 1998. That same year, after the ELN killed a merchant from Medio Baudó in a community in Alto, commercial relations between Alto and Medio Baudó fractured completely, leading to a division of control that has held relatively stable through the present: guerrillas in the mountainous parts of Alto Baudó to the north, paramilitaries controlling the lower parts of the river through to where it meets the ocean (Castro & Meza, 2017).

The social and humanitarian consequences of the onset of war were devastating. Because the leader of the Biohó frente was killed by a fake doctor spying for the military, armed groups declared war on doctors and health brigades. In 1998, the blockade of the river began: the ELN began confiscating all outboard motors, limited movement and blocked commercial activities; people lived without kerosene or

salt, forced to draw on survival techniques of a hundred years earlier (Castro & Meza, 2017). Armed groups competed for control over the communities by interceding in local conflicts or attempting to impose social order, badly deteriorating traditional community-scale conflict resolution strategies (Arocha, 1999).

Baudó in the early 2000s was dominated by the Bloque Pacífico AUC paramilitaries, who disappeared perceived opponents and violently displaced dozens of communities, leading to the abandonment of entire communities along the cuenca: San Luis, Punta Katripe, Purriche, Cuevita ("El Baudó, Chocó: dos décadas de intensa guerra," 2016).

On May 23, 2001, ACABA received its land title, guaranteeing its collective ownership of a huge swath of the Baudó cuenca. Three weeks later, on June 4, paramilitaries entered Pie de Pató, the municipal head of Alto Baudó, offering the communities an ultimatum: leave within 24 hours or become a target of the AUC. They explicitly stated that people could not simply displace to neighboring communities - they must leave to Quibdó. Over 3000 people displaced, with some 2150 people arriving in Quibdó (Perea, 2012; SIVeL, n.d.).

The displaced people lived in terrible conditions in temporary settlements in soccer fields and other open spaces in the city (Abadía, 2005). After three months of displacement in Quibdó, the displaced people began meeting under the leadership of ACABA to plan their return. Between October 9 and 15th of 2001, 480 displaced families returned to Baudó, despite a total lack of formal protections or support from the state. A judicial ruling from August 2001 mandating special protections for displaced Baudoseños was never enforced. Campesinos returned to their lands to find their crops destroyed and their animals gone: "we went from poor to destitute" (Mogollon Vergara, 2002, p. 2).

Coca production began in lower Baudó in 2003 and rapidly expanded throughout the cuenca. Coca cultivation imposed a new social order in Baudó, fraying traditional social and productive practices and deepening armed group control over the communities (Castro & Meza, 2017).

On August 23, 2005, in a recreational space in Istmina, the Bloque Pacífico of the AUC officially demobilized. However, the formal disbandment of the AUC brought little peace to Baudó. Within months, new groups started springing up in paramilitary territories: 'Los Machos', 'Los Rastrojos', 'Renacer',

'Nueva Generación', 'Urabeños'. Not only did these groups inherit territory in a controlled transfer from the paramilitaries, oftentimes they were led by the same figures.

In September 2007, the head of one of the key groups, the Machos, Don Diego León Montoya, was captured and extradited, allowing their rivals the Rastrojos to consolidate control of the coca traffic in the southern coast of Chocó (*Diagnóstico de La Situación de Los Municipios Priorizados*, 2009). Beginning in June 2007, another group arrived in Medio Baudó - the Águilas Negras (Perea, 2012; SIVeL, n.d.). The origins of the Águilas are difficult to decipher, especially because many different neo-paramilitary groups adopted that name at different times, but they appear to be descendents of the Elmer Cárdenas Bloque of the AUC, active in Urabá, also using the name 'Renacer' (*Diagnóstico de La Situación de Los Municipios Priorizados*, 2009).

2009 was a year of intensifying conflict between the ELN Frente de Resistencia Cimarrón and paramilitaries. The Rastrojos remained the most powerful paramilitary group in Baudó, and the ELN fought with them in two significant encounters, in Alto Baudó in March and in Bajo Baudó in August; resulting in the displacement of thousands of indigenous people, the largest displacements in Baudó since 2005 (*OCHA Colombia Monitor Humanitario*, n.d.). However, conflict between the paramilitary groups also began to intensify: from 2010 to 2012, the conflict in Baudó increasingly concentrated on overt conflict between the Rastrojos and the Águilas Negras for control over the main drug corridors: the road from Istimina to Puerto Meluk and the river from Puerto Meluk to Pizarro, where it meets the Pacific ocean. Fighting along the road was especially intense in the consejo comunitario Pie de Pepé, located at a strategic spot on the road: their community was essentially confined for much of 2010 and 2011.

This was, however, a period of relatively low conflict between the ELN Frente Cimarrón and the Rastrojos. Arocha (2014) suggests that roughly around 2009 or 2010, the ELN and the Rastrojos had settled into a fairly stable partition of Baudó, reflecting a division of territory that had existed for over a decade at that point: the ELN preponderant in Alto Baudó, with the Rastrojos in control of the lower parts of the river and the coast; Puerto Meluk, a town in Medio Baudó, served as the dividing line (*OCHA Colombia Monitor Humanitario*, n.d.).

2013 was a turning point in the conflict: a rapidly expanding neo-paramilitary group, the Urabeños, also known as the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (AGC) entered Baudó with the stated goal to monopolize the region. The entrance of the AGC collapsed the fragile truce that had emerged dividing Baudó between the ELN in the upper part of the river to the north and the Rastrojos in the south and along the coast (Arocha, 2014). Fighting between the ELN, the Rastrojos and the military concentrated in the Purricha river, in Bajo Baudó in January and February of 2013, displacing some 500 people (*OCHA Colombia Monitor Humanitario*, n.d.).

Overall, the 2013-2015 period reflects a dramatic shift in violence from lower down the river towards Alto Baudó as the AGC consolidated paramilitary power in the lower part of the river and turned its attention to fighting the ELN in its power base in Alto Baudó. Whereas from 2004-2008, Bajo Baudó had dramatically more homicides (26:5) and displacements (2759:1436) (*Diagnóstico de La Situación de Los Municipios Priorizados*, 2009), those trends had reversed by 2015: from 2013-2015, 4541 people were displaced from Alto Baudó, compared to 2541 in Bajo Baudó (*AUTO INTERLOCUTORIO No. 0081*, 2017).

Meanwhile, the state captured some 15 Urabeños members in January who reported that they were formerly part of the Rastrojos, reflecting perhaps the beginning of a shift in power among the paramilitaries from the Rastrojos to the AGC that would become decisive by 2014. Both members from the Pie de Pepé consejo and ACABA reported to me that the Águilas Negras and Rastrojos simply merged and joined the AGC, though I haven't found outside confirmation of this. The first reported confrontation between the ELN and the AGC came in November 2013, causing the displacement of 1000 people from Batatal and Apartadó, ACABA communities in Alto Baudó (*SIVeL: Sistema de Información de Violencia Política En Línea*, n.d.). By 2015, confrontations between the ELN and AGC spread outward from Alto Baudó to the rest of the cuenca, becoming a generalized conflict throughout the region.

Post-Peace deal in Chocó

I argue that the conceptual framework of a “power vacuum” best explains the impact of the peace process in Chocó: in which armed groups that had previously established high degrees of local authority and/or control over local resources demobilize, driving competition between other groups for control over

the territory (Garzón-Vergara, 2015; Munive & Stepputat, 2015; Ruggeri et al., 2017). As early as 2015, the AGC was openly announcing to the communities that the peace deal was going to allow them to take over all of the Atrato (*Omisión, Tolerancia de Fuerza Pública*, 2015). A national Afro leader explained that throughout the Pacific, the first year and a half of the peace deal was relatively calm, “But the state didn’t arrive, even though the communities begged it to come. Slowly, the other groups started arriving”. Ariel Avila, a national Colombian political commentator, argues that “there was no systematic plan to replace the FARC presence”.

Beyond an increased military presence, a range of commentators I talked to argued that what was required was a holistic state presence in areas formerly controlled by the FARC. That is, the state had to make the investments in health, education, development and justice administration to replace not only the FARC’s military power, but its governance role in the Colombian periphery. Point 1 of the Peace Deal, on Comprehensive Rural Reform, provided the key policy infrastructure driving state ‘arrival’. Within that framework, the PDETs (Territorially Focused Development Plans) are the tool created specifically to boost the legitimacy of the peace process by rapidly delivering governance infrastructure in FARC territories. As such, the two outcomes of interest in this dissertation, post-peace violence and state implementation of the PDETs, are intimately related. The state’s failure to push forward rapid and effective PDET implementation left open space for other armed groups to compete for inroads in the communities formerly controlled by the FARC, driving a new wave of violence in the aftermath of Colombia’s peace deal.

Peace Process Impact in Atrato

Though the conflict in the Atrato could not destroy the collective processes, it deeply debilitated them. The FARC especially succeeded in building deep links within many communities across the region of this study, undercutting the legitimacy of the consejos comunitarios as an independent source of authority. Families were destroyed or divided, and communities were displaced so often that many people gave up on the idea of return. There’s been a profound loss of people’s cultural roots: “la vida ya es muy diferente”. In the aftermath of the violence, the communities are left with illegal mining, deforestation, coca crops. Their rivers are the source of ongoing competition as highly strategic drug routes out to the

Pacific. Their communities are under constant vigilance and suspicion both by the armed groups and by the military. Because of the presence of the armed groups, they face constant daily violences: recruitment, confinement, displacement, sexual violence, extortion, limited movement in their territories, hunger, assassinations.

In the Atrato, the story of the peace deal is one of dashed hopes: with the imminent exit of the FARC, communities across the region reported a “respira”, a level of tranquility they hadn’t experienced potentially since the beginning of the conflict. People returned to their communities for the first time in years, families reunited. People really believed that they had come to a transition point, that the Colombian government was going to take control in the territories. In Bajo Atrato, leaders felt that because there was a demobilization point in Riosucio, there would surely be an especially robust investment from the state and international organizations in peace actions in the area.

The leaders from ACAMURI explain to me: “When the peace process began, it was a huge joy for the peasants, thinking that now we can live in peace...those were just our illusions....Colombia celebrated peace but the truth is that here we haven’t had peace”. Instead, what they received was a rapidly worsening conflict between the AGC and the ELN, deepening social control from the armed groups, and further eroding trust within the communities who remain in the rivers. An ASCOBA leader relates that now, “we’re worse than before, we don’t know who is attacking us, who is who, and who we can count on”.

Community leaders are clear that the blame for this worsening situation sits squarely with the state. It failed on its promise to replace the FARC in governing the territories the armed group was leaving behind. A COCOMACIA leader explained that, “According to the state, they would arrive after the FARC. instead, the paras and the ELN arrived”. An ACAMURI leader told me that when the FARC left the territory, it wasn’t even 20 days before there was a new confrontation between the AGC and the ELN. A leader from ASCOBA explains:

When the FARC was about to leave, the government promised it would come occupy the territory. It generated a lot of good expectations in the communities, that there would finally be peace. But it didn’t happen like we expect, exactly the opposite, because the state didn’t do its part. So when the FARC left, the ELN came in, based on an agreement

between them for the ELN to take over FARC territories...so the autodefensas came in after them, and it generated a new conflict.

The communities are clear that when they talk about the state failure to take over FARC territories, they don't mean in just a military sense: they're seeking a *presencia holística* from the state in service of a *paz integral*. The ACAMURI leaders affirm to me: "Peace without investment, education, health, security, is not a complete peace". The youth are forced into the groups because there's no employment; 500 years after the founding of Riosucio, there's still no running water. Growing coca is the only way to survive in the communities. "Así nunca va a haber paz".

Peace Process Impact in Baudó

The conflict had incredibly devastating impacts for collective organizations and their members across the Baudó region. Armed groups basically brought the local economy to a halt for the better part of two decades, with devastating humanitarian consequences: Baudó has one of the highest concentrations of extreme poverty and malnutrition in the entire country.

The introduction of illegal economies, including logging and especially coca production, has had likely permanent consequences on the traditional production relations that underlay community cooperation and collective action in Baudó. The consequences have been enormous: young people especially are increasingly disconnected from their land and look to the cities as their only viable opportunities. Agricultural practices that granted communities autonomy and food security have been lost. The traditional moral authority of elders is no longer respected in many communities: communities are divided because young people want the easy money of coca and logging, and elders can't prevent youth from becoming involved in armed groups.

The processes of the *consejos comunitarios* have been systematically weakened. Their leadership had been systematically threatened and pushed out of the territories if not killed. Virtually all of their most promising projects to bring improvements to the quality of life of their constituents were destroyed by direct threats from the armed groups, or by the indirect consequences of the conflict: mistrust, fracturing and the emergence of illegal economies.

The peace deal brought little relief to Baudó: “For us, the positive effects of the peace agreement have not arrived”. As leaders throughout the region pointed out to me, various sections of the peace process could have direct application in building peace in the region. The coca substitution program (*Programa Nacional Integral de Sustitución de Cultivos de Uso Ilícito*, PNIS), was eagerly anticipated in Baudó as an opportunity to transition away from the coca economy. Yet following a big meeting in Baudó in 2017, government officials only returned once to take some information and never came back. No further mention of government support for coca substitution in Baudó has surfaced; instead people are once again worried about the return of poisonous aerial fumigation in their lands.

Furthermore, as another local leader explained, none of Baudó was included in the PDETs, the signature peacebuilding program stemming from the 2016 Accords promising to repair the damages of the conflict:

We expected the peace process to reach every corner of the country. But we were not included in the 12 [PDET] municipalities of Chocó that are receiving projects from the state, which has the potential to reduce the impacts of violence.

Leaders openly suspect that Baudó has been overlooked by the peace process implementation and by the PDETs in particular because, as with other parts of Chocó along the coast and in Alto Atrato who were left out of the PDETs, the FARC never really had much presence in Baudó: “It’s been mostly ELN and [paramilitary] self-defense groups [in Baudó], for that reason there has not been an impact...the FARC wasn’t here”. Thus, despite the devastating impacts of the conflict in Baudó and the pressing need for economic opportunities and state services, the region has not been seen as a strategic priority in implementing peace.

Nevertheless, this is not to imply that the peace deal has had no impact: the FARC exit, combined with the broken negotiations with the ELN has sharpened the competition between the ELN and the AGC across the department. ACABA leaders explained that the collapse of negotiations with the ELN in effect forced the ELN to go back to intense fighting with the AGC. Leaders from Bajo Baudó agreed, explaining that, “Without the ELN there will be no peace. The failure of negotiations with the ELN made everything worse, it destabilized everything”. The promise and subsequent failure of coca substitution reinforced armed group control over the region: the campesinos committed themselves to

manual eradication, but when no funds came through for replacement crops, economic desperation forced people even more to rely on armed group economies: “the government is directly responsible for this failure”.

In the Bajo Baudó CCs of ACONOCIP, leaders hoped for relief (*alivio*) after the peace – a chance to breathe. But instead, the other groups have gotten stronger since the FARC left, increasing their presence throughout ACONOCIP territory. A Pie de Pepé advisor reflected that while things got a little better for them in the mid 2010s, since the peace deal, “other groups are getting stronger with the FARC gone. We have not had a post-conflict period. The groups are still there.” They’ve seen more troops around since the peace deal in Pepé, but it’s ineffective: the territories are way too big to control just with military force; plus, the military still collaborates with the paramilitaries.

An ACABA leader explained that armed groups have become even harder to talk to: “ACABA needs to negotiate with ELN...but it’s been very hard to get a meeting with them. It’s been years since an official meeting”. An ACABA leader from Alto Baudó expressed that since the peace deal, things have gotten worse: “more displacement, more violence, more narcotráfico and illegal cultivation”.

Meanwhile, the people of Baudó continue to suffer in the midst of an unmitigated humanitarian crisis, pressing leaders from the region to look outside for help:

In Baudó, there have been no material actions that would allow the campesino to live in peace, there has never been a real presence of the state...We need help from the state to restart the economy, we require the presence of public, private, international investments...I invite the armed groups to permit development in Baudó, that they allow the free mobility of the people, that the economy flows, that someone protects the campesinos so that they do not have to pay taxes to the groups. That way, we will have a region in peace.

Conclusions

The intent of this chapter is to offer an overview of the historical context that this dissertation project exists within. My dissertation seeks to understand what explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation, and offers variance in the organizational structures of regional campesino organizations as a possible explanation. As such, I’ve sought to provide three key pieces of context: a broad overview of the Colombian civil conflict, more specific histories of the formation

processes of the organizations under study, and the experiences of those organizations in the conflict and transition to 'post-conflict'.

I also argue that this historical chapter lends insights into two key issues for the validity of my study. There are two types of endogeneity threats to controlled comparisons: differences in the control variables between the cases, and the non-random assignments to treatment.

First, a key possible difference in the relevant control variables worth exploring here is the possible differences in conflict histories. For example, if some communities under comparison were targeted for violence more than others (because of the local presence of a natural resource, or because that community offered more strategic value, etc.), weaknesses that might be attributed to their organizational structure could be better understood as a result of the conflict.

In the Atrato, the communities have faced comparable conflict trajectories, though their differences are worth noting. Armed groups arrived to the lower Atrato (in the areas of the more independent organizations ACAMURI and ASCOBA) perhaps a decade earlier than they did in the middle Atrato, the area of the more integrated organization COCOMACIA. In that early era of the war, the FARC also had a more lasting, though ambivalent impact on collective organizing in the lower Atrato area. When the conflict truly began, in the late 1990s, it hit the lower Atrato harder: the COCOMACIA communities did not have to displace as completely, or as long, as the ASCOBA and ACAMURI communities in the rivers Domingodó and Truandó. Since then, the conflict has arguably been more intense in the lower Atrato. A Quibdó diocese representative told me that the COCOMACIA territories didn't have the same level of guerrilla control as the lower Atrato communities. A leader from the Colombian NGO Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz observed to me, "The hard war (*la guerra dura*) is not in [the COCOMACIA territories of] Bojayá, it's in the Bajo Atrato".

Nevertheless, a number of factors point to similar trajectories in the conflict. All of the communities in this study have suffered repeated experiences of violence; all of the communities have been displaced multiple times. The COCOMACIA communities in this study are cited alongside those from the lower Atrato as having similar territorial affectations from the conflict through the middle 2000s

(Flórez López & Millán Echeverría, 2007). All the communities experienced a similar pattern of territorial control, beginning with a combination of guerrilla organizations led by the FARC through the mid-90s, complete territorial control by the paramilitaries from 1997-2000; FARC reconquest that lasted until 2002, then paramilitary dominance under the Elmer Cardenas block until their demobilization in 2006, followed by patchwork territories and shifting zones of control between the FARC and smaller paramilitary groups, leading to the present-day competition between the AGC and the ELN. Nevertheless, the possibility of stronger territorial affectations from the conflict in the lower Atrato communities is a relevant concern to the validity of my findings.

In Baudó, differing conflict trajectories is less of a concern. As discussed in the Baudó conflict section, the most significant territorial division in the region was between the ELN in the upper part of the river, and the paramilitaries in the lower part of the river, a dynamic that has endured for decades. All of the specific communities of focus are in the lower part of the river, and thus subject to similar armed groups and patterns of violence. Historically, the FARC did have more presence in Bajo Baudó, in the communities of ACONOCIP, than in the rest of Baudó. However, they never had any enduring control in Bajo Baudó, and stopped being a significant presence in the region after 2011, so it is unlikely that the demobilization of the FARC affected Bajo Baudó differently than the rest of the region. Furthermore, the most intense violence over the course of the conflict in Baudó has tended to concentrate in Alto Baudó, in ACABA communities. This investigation predicts the more regionally integrated ACABA to be better positioned to defend its communities from violence than the other organizations. As such, the fact that they have historically faced more violence lends more credence to any evidence I find to suggest stronger ACABA self-protection capacities.

I argue that a second endogeneity threat is the non-random assignment to treatment; that is, communities were not randomly assigned an organizational structure; they chose them for a combination of circumstantial and strategic reasons.

In the Atrato, all of the collective organizing processes began with support from the Church, though in the lower Atrato, the JAC processes and FARC political organizing are also a key part of their organizational history. Crucially, all of the communities had significant experience with “2nd-level”

regional-scale organizing before the titling process: in the lower Atrato there was the association of JACs and then the organizations OCABA and ACAMURI; in the middle Atrato there was ACIA. A second crucial point: all of the communities made their titling decisions in the mid-1990s, before the conflict truly began, meaning that their decisions were made largely independently of armed group pressure.

Nevertheless, there are relevant differences. First, the influence of the logging companies was significantly stronger in the lower Atrato, potentially creating a freer environment for collective organizing in the middle Atrato. One reflection of this is the organizational history of ACAMURI, in Truandó, which possibly broke away from the regional organizing effort due to the influence of the logging companies. Furthermore, COCOMACIA has a unique organizational history as one of the referent social movement organizations in Colombian history, and as such carries an important organizational legacy. This is somewhat counterbalanced by the fact that the particular COCOMACIA communities I focus on in the northern extreme of the COCOMACIA territory were never that closely involved in the formation of the organization. They joined late in the organizing process, and only because they fell within the boundaries of the Quibdó Diocese. In fact, some historical evidence suggests that before titling, they were more closely aligned with the lower Atrato organizing processes (though I have been unable to verify this) (Valencia, 2011). As such, one can argue that their entry into the COCOMACIA organization was somewhat attributable to geographical chance.

In Baudó, the organizing process was started entirely due to the efforts of the organizers that went on to form ACABA, the regionally integrated organization. The organization ACABA went on to support the rest of the region in forming their own consejos comunitarios. As such, one might argue that ACABA has a significantly longer organizational trajectory that has allowed it to consolidate its organizing efforts more than the other organizations in the study. This is perhaps best evidenced by the fact that a leader from ACONOCIP, the association of consejos comunitarios of Bajo Baudó, told me that they might have wanted to form a single title of all of Bajo Baudó, but he says that they were unaware this option existed at the moment of titling. That points to the fact that the organizing process in Bajo Baudó had barely started at the moment of titling, while the organization ACABA was already very consolidated. As such, the more instructive comparison is potentially with Pie de Pepé, the independent consejo

comunitario in Medio Baudó. As discussed earlier, Pepé was part of the ACABA organization before titling, but opted out of the titling process in order to preserve its autonomy.

All of these issues bear further consideration in my empirical chapters: what has been the impact of the more intense conflict in the lower Atrato, or the influence of the logging companies at the point of organizational formation in the lower Atrato, or the shorter organizational histories in bajo Baudó?

CHAPTER 6

POST-PEACE VIOLENCE IN THE ATRATO: DASHED HOPES AND COLLECTIVE RESISTANCE

In the Atrato, the story of the peace deal is one of dashed hopes: with the imminent exit of the FARC, communities across the region reported a “respira”, a level of tranquility they hadn’t experienced potentially since the beginning of the conflict. People returned to their communities for the first time in years, families reunited. People really believed that they had come to a transition point, that the Colombian government was going to take control in the territories.⁴² The leaders from the organization ACAMURI, in the Bajo Atrato region, explain to me: “When the peace process began, it was a huge joy for the peasants, thinking that now we can live in peace”. However those hopes proved to be illusory: “Colombia celebrated peace but the truth is that here we haven’t had peace”.⁴³ Instead, what they received was a rapidly worsening conflict between two powerful armed groups, the rightwing paramilitary AGC (Gaitanista Self-Defense Forces of Colombia) and the leftist guerrilla ELN (National Liberation Army), deepening social control from the armed groups, and further eroding trust within the communities who remain in the rivers. An ASCOBA leader relates that now, “we’re worse than before, we don’t know who is attacking us, who is who, and who we can count on”.⁴⁴

The area of the Atrato under focus, in the municipalities of Riosucio, Carmen del Darién, Bojayá and Murindó (map below) has since the 1980s been a zone of strong (though only occasionally exclusive) FARC control. For well over two decades, two powerful FARC Frentes, the Frente 34 operating in the Middle Atrato, and the Frente 57, operating towards the Panama border have maintained powerful economic and social influence in the river zones under focus. These frentes were among the most

⁴² Fieldnotes, AHY conversatorio, 7/9/2020

⁴³ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

⁴⁴ ASCOBA comision de jovenes, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

profitable in the entire FARC structure, in particular through their control of the cross-border drug and arms trade, as well as taxes from gold mining in the region. Although the strength of the two frentes had been declining since their peak in the late 2000s, both remained undefeated, dangerous fighting forces up until the start of the peace process. In 2014 the Frente 34 captured a Colombian general near Quibdó. In 2015 the Frente 57 and the Colombian military engaged in major fighting; the Colombian military succeeded in killing the commander of the Frente (“El Atrato: dos décadas de guerra,” 2014; “FARC 57th Front in Panama,” 2017).

By late 2015, it had become clear that a peace deal between the government and the FARC was imminent and that the FARC frentes in the Atrato would soon demobilize. However, the structural drivers of violence in the region remained unchanged. Principally, the rivers on the west bank of the Atrato river that this study focuses on are strategically vital drug corridors connecting coca production zones in the interior with the Pacific ocean export routes. Gold and timber provide additional opportunities for enrichment. Weak state infrastructure, high poverty rates and a corrupt military presence facilitate recruitment and freedom of movement.

As such, it was possible to anticipate that the exit of the FARC would be followed by other armed groups seeking to replace them. As early as 2015, a year before the peace deal was even signed, social leaders and international organizations warned that the imminent demobilization of the FARC was likely to generate violent competition between other armed groups seeking to control former FARC territories (*Situación Humanitaria En Riosucio*, 2015).

In September 2015, the first major confrontations between the ELN and the AGC began in the region, in Truandó and Domingodó, two of the areas of focus for this study. The two fought repeatedly for control over the area in the municipalities of Riosucio and Carmen del Darién until the AGC managed to push the ELN out of the zone in mid-to-late 2018. At that point, the conflict shifted south, into Bojayá and Murindó, which the ELN had taken over from the FARC (*Calming the Restless Pacific*, 2019). As of my

visit in late 2021, the AGC had gained control in the large majority of the communities under study, with pockets of continuing ELN resistance.⁴⁵

This chapter seeks to understand how the communities in the region have sought to defend themselves from the daunting new threats caused by the demobilization of the FARC. Within the broader context of my research question – “what explains variation in community autonomy and influence⁴⁶ in local peace implementation” – I explore variance in the strategies and efficacy of post-conflict community self-protection in the Atrato region. I adopt as the key explanatory variable ‘regional integration’, defined as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. Regional integration varies from *independent communities*, which maintain retain all legal authority over their territory as well as representational duties at the community level, to *associations*, which retain legal authority at the community level, but participate in an association to represent their interests externally, to *Consejos Comunitarios Mayores (CCM)*, highly integrated bodies which concentrate both legal authority and representational powers at the regional level.

In my theory chapter, I predict that variation in regional integration generates a key set of tradeoffs: while increasing integration generates more organizational capacity, regional cohesiveness and external legitimacy, it would also be likely to create gaps in participation, flexibility and local decision-making control. I predicted that these differences are likely to have serious impacts on capacity and strategies for community self-protection: greater integration creates safety in numbers and increased capacity to manage internal projects and relationships with external actors. However, it also leads to gaps in participation and local legitimacy, inhibiting the ability of communities to respond with agility to localized threats.

⁴⁵ Procuraduría official, personal communication, 10/1/2021

⁴⁶ By influence, I mean the capacity of communities to shape the outcomes of broader political processes: the implementation of a government policy; the decision-making of an armed group. By autonomy, I mean the capacity of communities to maintain free and independent control over decisions of direct relevance to the community – over natural resources, cultural and social life, justice administration – which may also be understood as a form of limited self-rule within the context of a broader state (De la torre, 2000; Kaplan, 2017; Ortiz-Guerrero et al., 2017; Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019).

This chapter assesses the impact of regional integration on community self-protection through a controlled comparison of three groups of Afro-Colombian communities in neighboring sub-sections of the Atrato river. All of the communities are organized as *consejos comunitarios*, collective land titles ranging in size from 1 to 100+ communities, charged with governing the territories and communities within each title. Each group of communities represents a different degree along the continuum between independence and integration.

Furthest to the south, in the municipalities of Bojayá and Murindó are the fifteen communities of the 'Zona 9', the northernmost part of the Consejos Comunitarios Mayor COCOMACIA (Greater Community Council of the Integral Peasant Association of the Atrato River, *Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato*), a highly regionally integrated organization. Immediately to their north, in the municipality Carmen del Darién are the eight communities of the tributary river Domingodó, which are divided into four different consejos comunitarios belonging to a looser regional association, ASCOBA (Association of Community Councils and Organizations of Bajo Atrato, *Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios y Organizaciones del Bajo Atrato*). Just to the north of Domingodó, at the far end of the integration-independence continuum, are the five communities of the tributary river Truandó. These communities don't belong to any regional organization; rather, they have formed a small, loose association called ACAMURI (Campesino Association of the Riosucio Municipality, *Asociación Campesina del Municipio de Riosucio*), exclusively of the Afro communities of the Truandó river.

I begin by introducing each of the three cases, focusing on the differences in their structure as they relate to variation in the divisions of rights and authority between the community and regional scales. I then examine the effects of those structural differences on their approaches to and capacity for civilian self-protection following the 2016 peace deal. I finish with an evaluation of civilian autonomy and security in each of the three organizations at the present. I find that despite relative advantages in the level of participation and flexibility of the more independent communities, the greatest level of community self-protection was generated in the more integrated organization, COCOMACIA.

Introducing the Cases

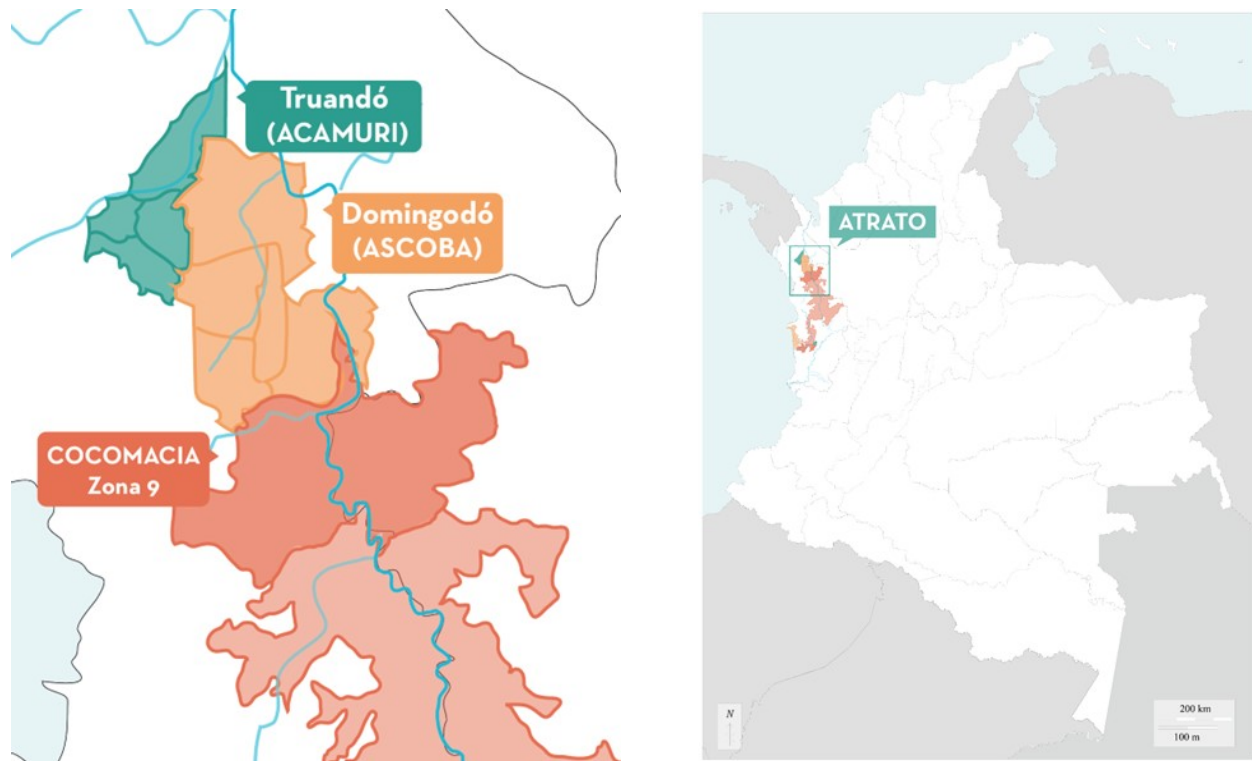


Figure 9: Zooming in on the cases in Atrato

COCOMACIA

COCOMACIA is the largest and most populous consejo comunitario in Colombia, comprising 120 communities of approximately 40,000 people in a collective title of 695,245 Ha. Despite its size, COCOMACIA has the same basic structure as any other consejo comunitario (asamblea, junta and representante). The general assembly is made up of five representatives per community, three of which have “voice and vote”; in total some 500-600 people who meet at least every three years. The general assembly is the ultimate authority within the consejo comunitario; it is responsible for making key decisions facing the organization and electing the organizational leadership.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ COCOMACIA advisor 1, personal communication, June 2019

The key structures of the *consejo mayor*, or the regional leadership body of COCOMACIA, operate out of the Quibdó office and include the Junta Directiva, the Disciplinary Committee and the commissions. The junta directiva, elected by general assembly, is responsible for making general decisions for the organization in its day-to-day functions: seeking external support, maintaining contact with government agencies, designing and implementing internal projects. The nine members of the junta directiva represent the nine zones of the organization; as such they also carry the responsibility to represent their zone in the central decision-making of COCOMACIA.⁴⁸ The disciplinary committee is a three-person body charged with control and oversight for the organization, in particular over the junta directiva and the fiscal operations of COCOMACIA. The commissions are bodies within the *consejo mayor* charged with taking a leadership role on a particular theme. The COCOMACIA commissions include: Territory and autonomy, Ethnoeducation, Ethnosalud, Economic solidarity projects, Gender, Human Rights, Culture, recreation and sport, Youth, Communication and Administration.

The 124 communities of COCOMACIA are divided into 9 zones to facilitate easier management of the territory (zone 1 being the closest to Quibdó, zone 9 the furthest). Each zone has a committee in which the communities of the zone are represented, which meets 1-3 times per year to strategize and discuss shared issues. Each community has its own CCL, repeating the structure of the CCM, with a president, junta and asamblea. This study focuses on Zona 9, the northernmost COCOMACIA zone.

COCOMACIA is a regionally integrated organization that maintains all official decision-making and external representation functions at the level of the Consejo Comunitario Mayor (CCM) on behalf of the communities in the Medio Atrato region. However, the day-to-day life of the organization takes place at the community level, run by the consejo comunitarios locales (CCLs). There is a specified division of labor here: the CCM is responsible for offering accompaniment to and exercising oversight over the CCLs, and for managing the organization's external relations. Meanwhile, the CCL addresses specifically local issues: local development projects, conflict resolution and internal management of the communities.

⁴⁸ COCOMACIA Territorial Commission Rep, Personal Communication, July 2019

I use the term ‘accompaniment’ to capture the various forms of support that the organizational leaders in the CCM offer to the communities: leadership development, technical support and physical and moral accompaniment during periods of extreme stress and danger. First, the COCOMACIA CCM works to build expertise, knowledge and leadership skills among its members on issues including human rights, post-conflict and the peace deal, the Ley 70 and ethnic rights, the COCOMACIA reglamento, among others: “The *consejo mayor* capacitates the CCLs, and reminds them of their job as the authorities in the territory”.⁴⁹ For example, the Gender Commission strengthens women’s leadership in the organization through the *escuela de lideresas* (women’s leadership school), a rotating series of leadership training workshops. The ethnosalud commission works to preserve and transmit traditional health practices; a leader from zona 9 recalls these health trainings as a source of education for his community.⁵⁰

Furthermore, COCOMACIA provides technical support in development projects. A community leader explained to me: “We can create projects, but we require support” so the CCM gives technical advice (*asesoría*).⁵¹ For example, the centerpiece project of the economic solidarity commission is ASPRODEMA (*Asociación de Productores del Medio Atrato*), an economic cooperative that seeks to guarantee food security and fair economic opportunities for the farmers of COCOMACIA. The cooperative has its own rice processing mill and *trapiches* to process sugar cane and make traditional liquors (*viche* and *balsámica*), and its own storefront in Quibdó (García Sánchez 2017). One of the communities I visited had one of these *trapiches*.⁵²

The CCM leadership offers direct support to communities endangered by the conflict, through their physical presence, ability to bring external attention and their technical know-how in making denunciations and planning for displacement and return. Regular visits (referred to as *giras* or *recorridos*)

⁴⁹ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 4, personal communication, July 2019

⁵⁰ COCOMACIA zona 9 leader, personal communication, 10/7/2021

⁵¹ Zona 9 CCL 1 meeting, personal communication, 10/8/2021

⁵² Zona 9 CCL 6, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

led by the Human Rights commission “shine a light on the communities”, using the prestige and weight of the collective organization to bring external attention.⁵³ The goal of COCOMACIA is always to find ways to keep communities in place and prevent displacement. However, if displacement can’t be avoided, then it is the responsibility of the organization as a collective to accompany the displacing communities, generate (*gestionar*) resources to sustain the community and to organize the return through dialogue with the state.⁵⁴

The CCM is also responsible for maintaining the overall internal control and governance of the territories, which it undertakes through creating, disseminating and enforcing its rules (*reglamentos*), including rules for negotiations (*protocolos de relacionamiento*), anti-recruitment protocols, ethno-development plans and environmental land use plan (*plan ordenamiento territorial ambiental*, POTA).⁵⁵ Within these overall set of rules, each community also defines its own set of reglamentos; the CCM offers technical support in making the adjustments. For example, along with the missionary team of Bellavista, CCM leaders did a *recorrido* in 2018 to revise and adjust the reglamentos of the CCLs of Zone 9.⁵⁶

The CCM also has a direct role in enforcing the reglamentos in the territories. COCOMACIA has an established hierarchy of conflict mediators and reglamento-enforcers, beginning with the CCLs in the communities; problems that a community can’t address on its own are passed to the zonal committee, then the CCM junta directiva, then the disciplinary committee, and in the rare cases in which the issue still can’t be resolved (for example, persistent or high-level corruption within the organization), the issue comes before the general assembly.⁵⁷

⁵³ COCOMACIA asesor 1, personal communication, June 2019; COCOMACIA junta directiva member 4, personal communication, July 2019

⁵⁴ COCOMACIA asesor 1, personal communication, June 2019; COCOMACIA Disciplinary Committee representative, Personal Communication, July 2019

⁵⁵ Field notes, Quibdó, Chocó, April 27, 2019

⁵⁶ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 2, personal communication, July 2019

⁵⁷ COCOMACIA Disciplinary Committee representative, Personal Communication, July 2019

The third role of the CCM is to represent the interests of the communities of COCOMACIA externally, to NGOs, IOs, commercial interests, other civil society actors and the state. This can be conceptualized through three interrelated kinds of actions: denunciations (*denunciar*), generating resources for projects (*gestionar*) and generating state responses to local needs (*generar incidencia*).

Through public denunciations, the organization makes direct demands on all the actors: that the armed groups leave the collective territories alone and respect ethnic authorities; that the government fulfills its obligations to its citizens with respect to the rights of ethnic people living in conflict areas, and that international allies continue to provide political and material support. IOs, INGOs and the Quibdó Diocese are the key allies in disseminating and supporting these denunciations. ACNUR, MAPP (part of the OAS) and SWEFOR frequently accompany COCOMACIA fact-finding trips.⁵⁸ The CCM is also responsible for finding the money to support its projects within the territory.⁵⁹ In mid-2021, for example, COCOMACIA found USAID and OIM support to update the reglamentos in multiple communities in Zona 9.⁶⁰ Finally, the CCM is responsible for “bringing the state to Chocó”, representing the needs of the communities to municipal, departmental and national actors and demanding effective responses to the pressing issues of poverty and violence.⁶¹

Within COCOMACIA, each community has its own community-level leadership body, the *consejo comunitario local* (CCL). The function of the CCLs is “to watch over the people, defend the territory and do activities”. The CCL is the first line of defense for the territory, and must, “be aware of who enters, to ensure that no one outside the community can take advantage of the territory”.⁶² The reglamentos are the

⁵⁸ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 3, personal communication, July 2019

⁵⁹ COCOMACIA asesor 2, personal communication, June 2019

⁶⁰ Zona 9 CCL 2, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

⁶¹ COCOMACIA youth leader, Personal Communication, July 2019

⁶² Zona 9 CCL 5, Personal Communication, 10/9/2021

key tool the CCLs have available to them: “If the CCL regulates its people, outsiders can’t control them”.⁶³ Each community is charged with collectively developing their specific reglamentos internos, which have to fall within the bounds of the reglamento de ACIA; rules regulate social coexistence as well as territorial use (where to fish, how much logging each family is allowed).

The CCLs are also the first responders in resolving intra-community problems and conflicts. Conflicts are usually not serious: “Most of us are family here, we try to get along”.⁶⁴ However, if a conflict escalates, the CCL’s job is to intervene, verify and attempt to mediate the conflict. These mediators have the ability to impose social punishments for wrong-doing; for example, someone found guilty of a minor offense might have to spend some days cleaning the soccer field (*cancha*) or the community paths.⁶⁵

The CCL also functions as the link between the communities and the broader organization. As such, they have a key role in transmitting information between the two: “the CCL is the face of the community”, they communicate the needs of the community to the broader organization and report back from meetings and workshops.⁶⁶ The CCL will try to resolve any problem internally, but, “if the problem is very big, we call the headquarters in Quibdo and they will help”.⁶⁷ CCL leaders serve an accountability role over the organizational leadership through the general assembly.

ASCOBA

The second organization I will analyze in this chapter is ASCOBA (*Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios y Organizaciones del Bajo Atrato*) is an association that spans about 450,000 ha in the rivers Larga Tumaradó, Quiparadó, Curbaradó, Salaquí, Domingodó, Pedeguita, and Mancilla, all

⁶³ COCOMACIA Territorial Commission Rep, Personal Communication, July 2019; COCOMACIA junta directiva member 3, personal communication, March 2020

⁶⁴ Zona 9 CCL 1, Personal Communication, 10/8/2021

⁶⁵ Zona 9 CCL 1, Personal Communication, 10/8/2021

⁶⁶ Zona 9 CCL 4, Personal Communication, 10/10/2021

⁶⁷ Zona 9 CCL 5, Personal Communication, 10/9/2021

tributaries rivers of the Atrato. ASCOBA is an association that incorporates 14 consejos comunitarios, in total some 56 communities. It represents an intermediate strategy between integration and independence. The 14 consejos comunitarios are in many ways legally and functionally independent, each with their own representante, junta and asamblea with full decision-making authority. However, they participate in ASCOBA as a platform for external representation and support. This study focuses on four of those consejos comunitarios located in the Domingodó river, a tributary river of the Atrato immediately to the north of the COCOMACIA Zona 9.

ASCOBA uses the same structure of general assembly as the ultimate authority within the organization, Junta Directiva as the day-to-day decision-makers and the Representante Legal as the external representative of the association. The asamblea also elects both the junta and the representante; elections are structured to balance representation from each of the rivers. At their organizational headquarters in the town of Riosucio, ASCOBA maintains offices for its array of commissions: Ethnoeducation, Ethnosalud, Gender, Territory, Youth, Sports and Culture and Human Rights. Accompanying the commissions and the junta are a number of advisors, who either have a long trajectory in the movement or have professionalized knowledge.

ASCOBA's purpose is, "the defense of life in the territory", work that requires them to "represent, defend, capacitate and coordinate" the communities in the organization.⁶⁸ Thus, much like COCOMACIA, ASCOBA supports its members through accompaniment, oversight and external representation. However, because in an association the division of legal rights over the territories are weighted more towards the communities rather than the regional body, ASCOBA's main role is external representation.

Nevertheless, ASCOBA plays a crucial role in accompaniment, especially in building capacity among the membership of the consejos comunitarios, through workshops and trainings about Afro

⁶⁸ ASCOBA leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

territorial rights.⁶⁹ ASCOBA leaders were certified by the Colombian government to offer training in mine education.⁷⁰ ASCOBA trainings, including workshops with *Viva la Ciudadania* and ACNUR, played a role in increasing the representation of women in one of the Domingodó CCs; currently, 6 out of the 7 members of the junta are women. A member of the community told me the strength of women's leadership in the community: "was the work of sensitizing women as leaders, many hours of workshops on women and gender, and also workshops on other topics, workshops from ASCOBA, the parroquia, international orgs, and others".⁷¹ In terms of economic development, the organization plays more of an advisory role. For example, its biggest development project in Domingodó was in supporting the CCs of the river in building their ethno-development plans. The document establishes "where we want to go as a community"; it's a tool to orient the community in their own projects and in negotiations with the government.⁷²

The association also accompanies the consejos comunitarios in the defense of the territories against the impositions of the armed groups. Whenever possible (resources and international support permitting), the association organizes giras to visit the communities. ASCOBA played a key in organizing the 2019 "Caravana Humanitaria para la Vida", visiting rivers across Bajo Atrato along with the Church and international partners.⁷³ In partnership with FISCH, ASCOBA denounces armed group activities whenever possible. This work provides valuable protection for the communities: in Domingodó, in the middle of fighting several years ago: "None of the institutions could enter except for ASCOBA, which came to Domingodó to support the communities and prevent displacement".⁷⁴

⁶⁹ ASCOBA meeting, Fieldnotes, 10/13/2021

⁷⁰ ASCOBA comision de jovenes, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

⁷¹ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

⁷² ASCOBA leader (from Domingodó), Personal Communication, 10/17/2021

⁷³ Salaquí CC leader, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁷⁴ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

In terms of oversight, ASCOBA plays a role with a noticeably lighter touch than COCOMACIA, given the necessity to respect the territorial authority of the individual CCs within the association. ASCOBA has a similar structure to COCOMACIA, with a disciplinary committee for internal accountability, and a territorial committee focused specifically on boundary issues. However, there is a key difference with COCOMACIA: “ASCOBA cannot intervene without consent from the CC”. Even then, it plays a more limited role in conflict resolution: “the work of ASCOBA is to give advice”.⁷⁵ In Domingodó, this support is mostly felt during the elections, where ASCOBA acts as an observer to guarantee fair conduct.⁷⁶

Where I observed that ASCOBA at its strongest was in its political work externally representing the interests of the communities. The process of the Sentencia T-622, which establishes the Atrato River as subject to rights from the state, was born out of a training between ASCOBA and the NGO Tierra Digna. ASCOBA submitted a tutela to the courts regarding the damages to the river because of mining, logging and pollution, and eventually brought in COCOMACIA and FISCH, among other organizations. While implementation has been far from satisfactory,

The sentencia has created a space for incidencia and dialogue with the states. Before it was really hard to get meetings with govt officials. Now we meet every 4 months with the Min Ambiente, and the ministry helps us set up whatever meeting we want, with the *alcaldes* (mayor), governor, whoever.⁷⁷

The organization is also advancing the *Champalanca* education project, strengthening ethno education in all the ASCOBA rivers. In partnership with the Ministry of Education the organization is building curriculums and training teachers.⁷⁸ The Youth Commission successfully negotiated with the

⁷⁵ ASCOBA leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁷⁶ Domingodó CC rep 2, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

⁷⁷ ASCOBA leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁷⁸ ASCOBA Etnoeducación Commission, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

Riosucio *alcaldía* (mayor's office) for youth training programming and are currently negotiating in Carmen del Darién.⁷⁹

The four consejos comunitarios of Domingodó are all made up of either a single or a few small communities. In many ways they function the same as a CCL of COCOMACIA, attempting to resolve the day-to-day problems and build up the knowledge and cultural identity of their community. The general assembly of the consejo comunitario collectively creates and enforces their reglamentos. These rules regulate both economic and social activities: "for the hunters, whoever kills two animals is sanctioned, because you can't kill more than one, it's decided where you can fish, fights are also sanctioned, whoever fights has a penalty, cleaning community lands".⁸⁰ If there are conflicts, "the junta directiva are the first to respond"; if they can't solve it, it goes to the assembly; if not the assembly, then the police. However, the assembly can almost always resolve the problem: "The Assembly is a few hundred people, if a few hundred people tell you something, it's very hard to deny them".⁸¹

Unlike the COCOMACIA communities, the more independent communities in ASCOBA have much more latitude to decide how to deal with outsiders who want to enter the territory:

Any new person in the community, you have to look at what their plans are, if the person comes in good faith, you give them territory, and if not, you remove them...if they want a position in the junta, they need at least 10 years living here, those are the coexistence reglamentos that we use here.⁸²

And in contrast to the CCLs of COCOMACIA, who deal fairly infrequently with outside actors, the CCs in Domingodó have to represent their communities frequently and seek out resources:

⁷⁹ ASCOBA comision de jovenes, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

⁸⁰ Domingodó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁸¹ Domingodó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁸² Domingodó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

As a representative of the community, it's a big responsibility, one has to see the necessities of the community and go out and find things, if someone is sick, how to get to the hospital, if the river is blocked, who will pay for that.⁸³

ACAMURI

The final group of communities I focus on in this chapter is ACAMURI (Asociación Campesino Del Municipio Riosucio), a collective of the five consejos comunitarios of the river Truandó: Taparal, Dos Bocas, La Nueva, Clavellino and Truandó Medio. In total, the organization incorporates six communities and about 70,000 ha. The association ACAMURI represents the more independent end of the continuum between independence and integration. While the communities of Truandó are not fully independent, and maintain an organization amongst themselves, as discussed in the history chapter they deliberately opted out of participating in the broader regional organizing project ASCOBA in order to maintain more community-level independence.

Nevertheless, they maintain a somewhat similar organizational structure as ASCOBA. The Junta Directiva and the Representative of the association are elected every three years by an assembly made up of the five CCs that belong to the organization; each CC sends ten delegates, for a voting total of 50 people.⁸⁴ In their organizational headquarters in the town of Riosucio, the junta is accompanied by several commissions: the youth commission, gender commission, work commission and disciplinary commission (currently under formation). Here, I focus on the entire association, all six communities in the Truandó river.

The mission of ACAMURI is to “protect the well-being of families and the territory, ensure development, conserve biodiversity, and advise the CCs”.⁸⁵ ACAMURI offers some accompaniment to the communities: the youth commission brings together young people for soccer tournaments. ACAMURI

⁸³ Domingodó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁸⁴ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁸⁵ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

is involved in the Champalanca education project, though it is primarily managed by ASCOBA.⁸⁶ A women's commission potentially exists that might offer some training, though I was unable to verify. There is also a 'work commission', that supports the communities, for example, if the river becomes blocked, the group "brings people together, helps with the logistics, looks for gasoline, etc."⁸⁷

ACAMURI has tried to remain active in strengthening the collective defense of the CCs of Truandó. In terms of the protection,

Whenever there's a problem, ACAMURI issues a denunciation and defends the territory, based on the ley 70. It helps with self-protection, so as not to put one individual's life at risk...a few years ago, there was fighting between the AGC and the ELN, and displacements of the population. The organization took the lead, we all met and discussed and we issued a denunciation on behalf of all the communities.⁸⁸

Whenever possible, ACAMURI also undertakes "humanitarian visits, with international embassies, so that internationals can understand what is happening".⁸⁹ ACAMURI was also involved in organizing the 2019 Caravana Humanitaria, which brought in diplomats, the defensoria, international organizations, "to make things visible that otherwise the community would be unable to talk about, out of fear". One result was that international actors had a better understanding of the degree of damage in the Truando river, which blocks up with alarming frequency.⁹⁰

ACAMURI doesn't have a territorial commission, and its disciplinary commission is (ostensibly) currently forming; as such, it plays only an informal role in conflict resolution in situations where individual leaders are seen as trusted advisors. However, it does offer some support to communities in attempting

⁸⁶ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

⁸⁷ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁸⁸ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁸⁹ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁹⁰ Because of over-logging and erosion, the Truandó river, along with many other smaller rivers on the left bank of the Atrato, frequently becomes blocked with floating logs and debris and becomes impassable, requiring significant work to clean up. ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

to resolve tricky issues of inter-ethnic conflict over overlapping land claims on the borders between consejos comunitarios and indigenous resguardos. Such overlaps are common throughout the Pacific, the results of an often rushed and imprecise territorial demarcation process in the 1990s and 2000s that failed to account for the frequently intermixed population dynamics among Afro and Indigenous communities. A community leader told me that they're working "in coalition" with ACAMURI to dialogue with indigenous leaders but isn't very optimistic: "we've been in countless reuniones with indigenous leaders to calm the situation, there's no point in continuing to meet".⁹¹

The focus of much of ACAMURI's work is on building relationships with outside actors, seeking state, commercial and international support to respond to the serious unmet needs in the communities they represent. The work is pretty difficult: "right now, nothing is moving". There was a project for more sustainable wood processing,⁹² but the proposal fell apart for reasons that weren't clarified to me; there was also a proposal for a rice processing plant that the organization presented to the governor, "but it's been forgotten".⁹³ The organization does receive some support from the Church, the Defensoría and the internationals. The Defensoria and the parish support denunciations, ACNUR and the ICRC accompany recorridos of the territory, PMA and the Pastoral Social offer food subsidies for communities in confinement.⁹⁴ However, the leadership of ACAMURI was candid with me that they didn't have enough international support, asking me for help: "we need allies to strengthen the accompaniment of the organization".⁹⁵

The leaders of the Truandó CCs were very clear about the division of responsibilities between themselves and the association ACAMURI: the association works on anything involving the whole river of

⁹¹ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁹² Truandó has for decades been a key center of the logging economy in the Bajo Atrato.

⁹³ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁹⁴ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁹⁵ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

Truandó, “projects that benefit all of us”. However, “we (the CCs) give the last word to where we are going”.⁹⁶ When I asked what that limit was, the leaders told me that specifically, the CCs independently define their own reglamentos: “the reglamentos are exclusively created by the CCs themselves. Each one with their title makes their own rules”.⁹⁷ The same with conflict resolution: “The CC is the only ones who are positioned to make decisions for internal conflicts. When there are fights within the community, the junta directiva makes the decisión, with sanctions if necessary”.⁹⁸

The reglamentos and conflict resolution work of the CCs play a fundamental role in maintaining the communities’ self-protection. A leader from one of the Truando CCs expresses, “the reglamentos are a defense mechanism for the human rights of women and the population in general, in which we have established rules that allow us to live together in the community and to defend the rights of women.”⁹⁹ The CC leaders told me that the people respect the community rules because, “it’s those same communities who make and approve the reglamentos”. However, later on, they shared with me that there is very little effective control over logging, and that armed groups impose their own set of rules in many of the communities.¹⁰⁰

Comparison

In the previous section, I introduced the three comparison groups of communities, focusing on the variation in the degree of regional integration in the organizational structures of these communities. Communities around the tributary rivers Opogadó and Napipí on the western bank of the Atrato belong to the Zona 9 of the highly integrated CCM COCOMACIA. Just to the north, the communities of the river Domingodó participate in a looser regional association of similar territorial scope in ASCOBA. Their

⁹⁶ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁹⁷ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁹⁸ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁹⁹ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

¹⁰⁰ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

neighbors to the north in the river Truandó, however, maintain their own independent organization, ACAMURI. In this section, I examine the effects of those differences in organizational structure and their consequences for the self-protection capacity of these communities in the wake of violence following the 2016 peace deal.

Integration Advantages

Increasing regional integration should generate more organizational capacity: defined as an organization's resources and the expertise and administrative capability to implement relevant programs (Zald et al. 2005).

First, increasing regional integration allows organizations a larger pool of people and resources to draw on, facilitating mobilization. In the Atrato, I found that this afforded the more integrated regions more political weight and greater safety in numbers. The communities I visited explained to me that the leadership of COCOMACIA commands very different attention than an individual community would, utilizing that influence to push political actors to respond to community needs:

The CCM is the mother, it's our voice, it represents us...COCOMACIA has a different political weight (*peso*) than the communities do. If some project isn't moving forward, they figure out which door to knock on.¹⁰¹

You know that unity is strength, nobody listens to just one individual.¹⁰²

Members of the other organizations see COCOMACIA similarly. An ASCOBA leader explained to me that, "COCOMACIA moves like an *alcaldía*, it has that level of strength" and for that reason "COCOMACIA generates more projects".¹⁰³ A Truandó leader shared a similar perspective: "A legal representative of COCOMACIA is like a mayor, maybe they have even more power than a mayor".¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Zona 9 CCL 3, Personal Communication, 10/8/2021

¹⁰² Zona 9 CCL 4, Personal Communication, 10/10/2021

¹⁰³ ASCOBA leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

¹⁰⁴ Truandó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

Members of ASCOBA in Domingodó see themselves as disadvantaged relative to COCOMACIA in terms of bringing in large-scale projects, given that their titles are broken up into many different communities: “Institutions like the macro-projects. It’s harder to bring a project to just one community of a few hundred people”.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, ASCOBA, for its part, has proven an effective negotiator with the state, generating the remarkable court sentence in defense of the Atrato river, advancing an educational reform project (the *Champalanca* project) that allows a voice in shaping school curriculums and passing a new policy with the Riosucio alcaldía that directs funding towards youth educational and cultural projects. Domingodó CC leaders found that their organization, ASCOBA, clearly had more political weight than ACAMURI in Truandó: “ACAMURI has been more quiet. ASCOBA is more involved, it brings more to the communities”.¹⁰⁶ ACAMURI leaders from Truandó also recognize the benefits of ASCOBA’s greater regional integration as generating more opportunities for growth:

I think ASCOBA works better than us. Because it’s bigger, there’s more opportunities for growth, more things may arise. We’re just 5 CCs, they have more population, they get more things. It’s a different scale.¹⁰⁷

The second key advantage of increasing regional integration is increased safety in numbers. COCOMACIA developed a human rights commission specifically to strengthen the collective safety of the communities: their main job is to, “be present, observe, show the communities that they’re not alone...and also to show the armed groups that the communities are not alone. People are watching what is happening in the communities”.¹⁰⁸ CCLs are not authorized to independently make denuncias: only the COCOMACIA CCM can make denuncias in partnership with their international allies, allowing the broader

¹⁰⁵ ASCOBA leader (from Domingodó), Personal Communication, 10/17/2021

¹⁰⁶ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹⁰⁷ Truandó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

¹⁰⁸ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 3, personal communication, July 2019

organization to take the heat from the relative safety of Quibdó rather than a few individual leaders in a community.¹⁰⁹

In comparison, leaders from Domingodó see themselves as more vulnerable than COCOMACIA communities:

A disadvantage of more independent CCs is for example in the armed conflict, it is not the same as an organization that unites many communities as a single community. An independent community can't make denunciations, which makes vizibilizing very difficult. A small CC can be very isolated (*puede quedar solo*). It's better to be in a bigger group.¹¹⁰

Both ASCOBA and ACAMURI see their role as speaking on behalf of the communities they represent, to reduce the pressure the individual communities face in the territories. From ASCOBA: "We help the CCs in the defense of the territory...it's hard to face the situation alone";¹¹¹ from ACAMURI: "We help with self-protection, to not put individuals at risk...the org makes the denunciations on behalf of everyone".¹¹² However, an ally from the Church told me that out of fear, both organizations only rarely denounce the actions of the armed groups, "both understand the things you cannot say".¹¹³

In addition to their greater power in numbers, regional integration generates advantages in professionalization and specialization to better handle complex tasks. I found that these advantages manifested as stronger project planning and management capacity and deeper knowledge-building among the membership. COCOMACIA has an impressive base of highly professionalized leaders, including development experts, accountants and lawyers. Their territorial commission, responsible for resolving land conflicts, is made up of two elected officials and a full-time paid professional who handles

¹⁰⁹ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 3, personal communication, July 2019

¹¹⁰ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹¹¹ ASCOBA leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

¹¹² ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

¹¹³ Parroquia de Riosucio 1, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

the technical aspects such as GPS mapping. By comparison, ASCOBA's territorial commission doesn't have a technical expert; ACAMURI doesn't have a territorial commission at all.¹¹⁴

Though not on the same level as COCOMACIA, ASCOBA is well-equipped to offer professionalized support to the member CCs. In fact, that was a driving force behind ASCOBA's formation: "As consejos comunitarios, we don't have lawyers, accountants, professionals, because we're a non-profit, so we don't have professionals, but ASCOBA does, that's why we created it".¹¹⁵ Another leader from Domingodó agreed: "ASCOBA is an organization *for* the consejos comunitarios, it offers financial and accounting services, help doing projects".¹¹⁶ While the leaders of the more independent ACAMURI that I met with are very capable and knowledgeable, the organization doesn't benefit from the same kind of professionalized advisors. An ASCOBA leader explains, "ASCOBA has a lot more experience and capacity".¹¹⁷

The differences between the organizations are also apparent in terms of task specialization. COCOMACIA has by far the largest array of specialized commissions¹¹⁸ focusing on a broad range of tasks in support of the communities in the organization. I summarize the work of a few of the commissions here in order to illustrate the range and depth of the work the organization takes on from its headquarters in Quibdó: the territorial commission works on anything to do with territorial delimitation, and helps resolve territorial conflict that the communities cannot resolve internally. It also exercises oversight over large land sales, helps plan COCOMACIA resource use and dialogues with state institutions. The Gender commission has built enough external alliances and support since its inception in 2000 to operate almost as a parallel entity within the organization; it works to strengthen women's leadership in the organization

¹¹⁴ ASCOBA Territorial Commission, Personal Communication, 10/20/2021

¹¹⁵ Domingodó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

¹¹⁶ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹¹⁷ ASCOBA leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

¹¹⁸ By my count, COCOMACIA has 9 committees, compared to 6 in ASCOBA and 3 in ACAMURI

and develop responses to gendered violence in the territories.¹¹⁹ The ethno-salud commission supplements weak state-provided healthcare in remote rural communities with access to information on plant-based medicines, drawing on the traditional knowledge of the elders of their communities.¹²⁰

This ability to allocate resources to advancing a broad range of tasks *simultaneously* offers a range of advantages to communities. I saw more evidence of organization-supported development projects in the communities I visited, including a chicken-raising cooperative and a sugar mill.¹²¹ Furthermore, communities in COCOMACIA, “have a big difference in political education (*formación*) [compared to Bajo Atrato]...Young people have grown up hearing about Law 70”.¹²² As an example of COCOMACIA’s leadership development work, leaders are planning a “soccer for peace” project supported by the Selección de fútbol de Colombia. The project brings together young people from across COCOMACIA Zona 9 (the area under study) offering peace and human-rights focused workshops.¹²³ Furthermore, COCOMACIA is poised to offer more support to the communities in response to the complex needs generated by confinement and displacement. A leader from a displaced community in Zona 9 explained:

The organization, as the mother of the territory, does not want the territory to be abandoned. The junta works to show the problem to the institutions, bring in NGOs, the church, and others to support and accompany the return.¹²⁴

While ASCOBA has fewer commissions, and their commissions are less well-resourced than those of COCOMACIA, I found them to be effective in advancing projects with direct benefits to their communities. The youth commission, for example, visits schools throughout the territory, doing

¹¹⁹ COCOMACIA Gender Commission Rep, Personal Communication, July 2019

¹²⁰ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 4, personal communication, July 2019

¹²¹ Zona 9 community visits, fieldnotes, 10/8-10/10/2021

¹²² Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

¹²³ Bojayá leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/30/2021

¹²⁴ Bojayá leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/7/2021

workshops on drugs, counter-recruitment, and human rights. ASCOBA also had a youth leadership training program: “the organization had a great impact for young people in gaining knowledge of law 70 and governance”.¹²⁵ Their territorial committee supports the mine education programming and is also developing a project to map the territory, though their work has been slower during the pandemic.¹²⁶

ASCOBA reps argue that in terms of the work performed by the organization, there are marked differences with the less integrated communities in ACAMURI: “ASCOBA is more organized. ACAMURI doesn’t really have committees doing work like ASCOBA does, that’s why we’re stronger, there’s more projects”.¹²⁷ ACAMURI does have several committees, but I was unable to verify if they existed in more than name. There’s no doubt that ASCOBA has much more professionalized staff; there’s much more movement and life in the ASCOBA office on a day-to-day basis, the ACAMURI office was frequently closed at the times of my visits.

I predicted that increasing regional integration would enable communities across a wide territory to act as a unified body, enhancing their ability to coordinate, share information and enforce rules internally. Given that a highly integrated CCM has legal decision-making power over its territories while an association must defer to the individual consejos comunitarios, leaders shared with me that an integrated CCM like COCOMACIA can take decisions much faster and easier: “COCOMACIA has just one title, while ASCOBA has 14 consejos comunitarios with 14 different leadership bodies (*juntas directivas*) to manage”. As a result, “COCOMACIA has more decision-making power. We [as ASCOBA] have to connect and bring everyone together, get everyone to agree. Some of our leaders are very far away”.¹²⁸

Both the associations ASCOBA and ACAMURI were formed to improve coordination among the independent CCs that make up their primary membership: “ASCOBA’s role is to bind together (*aglutinar*)

¹²⁵ ASCOBA comision de jovenes, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

¹²⁶ ASCOBA Territorial Commission, Personal Communication, 10/20/2021

¹²⁷ ASCOBA Territorial Commission, Personal Communication, 10/20/2021

¹²⁸ Quibdó Diocese 1, Personal Communication, 3/16/2020

the CCs”.¹²⁹ Likewise, ACAMURI helps the CCs of Truandó to face collective problems: “if each CC asks a different institution for something different, what’s going to happen?”¹³⁰ However, both face strong disarticulation pressures stemming from their structure as an association: because the associations themselves have no legal power over the territories, they risk collapse if the CCs themselves don’t invest attention into them.

In the Bajo Atrato, the juntas of the individual CCs have become more aware of their legal power relative to ASCOBA. Given the prospect of an imminent wave of carbon credit dollars coming into the community, they have begun to guard their independence much more closely

“ASCOBA’s at risk of becoming a fifth wheel (*rueda suelta*), without function. As the CCs get stronger in their independence, they are no longer interested in ASCOBA. Many CC leaders say that ASCOBA does not speak for me, so what is its function?”¹³¹

Likewise, a Truandó leader explained to me that the communities in their river are more and more advancing their own individual projects and putting less attention into the organization ACAMURI: “Starting a few years ago, the consejos comunitarios began to use their independence, [realizing] ‘we have the title, we can do our own thing’”. As such, the relationship between the organization and the CCs is weak, “they don’t let ACAMURI enter in a lot of decision-making spaces, they feel that they don’t really need ACAMURI”.¹³² A leader from a neighboring river states, “in Truandó, everybody goes their own way”.¹³³

Beyond cohesion issues, I argued that regional integration should promote the flow of information to and from the communities. COCOMACIA has multiple spaces that serve to collect information from the communities and share with the state and other actors: for example, both the gender commission and the

¹²⁹ ASCOBA leader (from Domingodó), Personal Communication, 10/17/2021

¹³⁰ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

¹³¹ Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

¹³² Truandó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹³³ Salauquí junta directiva member, Personal Communication, 10/21/2021

ethnosalud commission make visits to communities and submit reports and demands to relevant government institutions. Another important information sharing body is the Justice and Peace Group of the Quibdó Diocese, a weekly meeting space of COCOMACIA, the Church, IO representatives and representatives of the Defensoría del Pueblo to share information about human rights violations and coordinate responses.¹³⁴ In a meeting I attended, the stakeholders discussed collective responses to rising levels of domestic violence, paramilitary control of the campesino economy in the Medio Atrato municipality and slow-footed responses from the municipal governments to new forced displacements.¹³⁵ COCOMACIA also maintains its own radio station to broadcast important information, though the signal isn't strong enough to reach the communities in this study.¹³⁶

The annual general assembly of the organization is also a crucial mechanism to share information. García Sánchez (2017) documents the 2016 COCOMACIA general assembly, which included discussions of the implications of the new peace deal with the FARC by the leadership of the organization, some of whom were present for negotiations in Havana. A COCOMACIA CCL leader explained that compared with an independent CC, "it's easier to share what is happening here at the national level" because COCOMACIA can communicate it with their allies.¹³⁷ A member of the department-wide ethnic organization Foro Interétnico Solidaridad Chocó (FISCH) observed that relative to the other ethnic organizations, the members of COCOMACIA are more active and informed, "they have more access to information, they're in the capital (Quibdó) so they know more about what's happening in the country".¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Fieldnotes, Quibdó, Chocó, June 11, 2019

¹³⁵ Diócesis Grupo Justicia y Paz, Fieldnotes, 6/11/2019

¹³⁶ Fieldnotes, Quibdó, Chocó, 3/6/2020

¹³⁷ Zona 9 CCL 4, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

¹³⁸ FISCH AHY rep, Personal Communication, 3/10/2020

The third component of organizational cohesion is internal control. I predicted that more integration would allow for a more bureaucratic, rules-oriented structure that facilitates top-down oversight. As a COCOMACIA leader explained to me, “we maintain authority over the territories. We have our own sanctions and punishments to maintain order. We are the police and the inspector in our territories”.¹³⁹ On the issue of mining, a member of the disciplinary committee offered me a comparison of COCOMACIA in Rio Atrato, with Rio Quito, which is divided into independent communities. He argues that whereas in Rio Quito, the river is ruined and the communities are all controlled by armed groups who run the mining operations, COCOMACIA mining communities have developed a mining reglamento that has mitigated much of the damage and maintained community control over the mining economy.¹⁴⁰

One community I visited told me a story of how relying on their rules and the relative lack of community independence in an integrated structure can offer the communities a measure of protection. They told me that a logging company arrived and sought permission to log around the community; the leaders rebuffed them by pointing to their reglamentos, and said that based on their rules, they couldn’t give permission (since that is the exclusive right of the organizational leadership in Quibdó).¹⁴¹ The communities also benefit from a very professionalized territorial commission, which has extensively mapped the COCOMACIA territory. One community explained to me a conflict with the neighboring community over fishing rights in the cienaga; they will dialogue on the issue with the support of the territorial commission: “they have the maps, they know the limits (between the territories)” The maps will allow the communities to determine the specific territorial extent of each community’s fishing rights.¹⁴²

In addition to its role as a support to the community, the CCM also enforces the reglamentos and seeks to curb community violations. For example, Richard Moreno, one of the most visible leaders of

¹³⁹ COCOMACIA Asesor 3, Personal Communication, June 2019

¹⁴⁰ COCOMACIA Disciplinary Committee representative, Personal Communication, July 2019

¹⁴¹ Zona 9 CCL 5, Fieldnotes, 10/9/2021

¹⁴² Zona 9 CCL 5, Fieldnotes, 10/9/2021

COCOMACIA, explained the relationship between the communities and the organization thusly in the 2016 general assembly meeting:

[The communities] will always be the child, and the child does not have the rights over the territory, in territorial terms the adult is COCOMACIA: the legal representative, junta directiva and general assembly, it's there that the decisions are made. No one has said that a community is empowered to give a mining permit, that it is empowered to negotiate what happens with the territory, no community has been told "this is your bit, do whatever you want". (García Sánchez 2017, p. 273)

As one might imagine, the community leaders in the CCLs don't all necessarily love this level of control that the organization takes over what happens in the communities, but leaders argue that it has succeeded in maintaining community control over the land. A long-time leader with experience in multiple processes expresses:

Whether or not we like it, we're in COCOMACIA. In Truandó, communities do whatever they want without ACAMURI knowing. In COCOMACIA, the communities don't have that independence, COCOMACIA has a control over the territory, people don't sell their land to outsiders, they stay in the territory...the difference between COCOMACIA and [ASCOBA and ACAMURI] is that there are much less outsiders in the territories, the organization has prevented people from selling. Whereas in the Bajo Atrato, the people are ceding a lot of space to outsiders, and that weakens the process, what today is consejo comunitario, tomorrow will be empty.¹⁴³

ASCOBA also maintains both a territorial commission and a disciplinary committee, so it maintains the same formal bureaucratic structures for internal control as COCOMACIA. As has been discussed, however, the crucial difference is that ASCOBA has no legal authority over the CCs in the association. Thus while it has reached a level of bureaucratic sophistication to allocate resources to multiple committees for internal control and conflict resolution, these bodies work purely on the invitation of the consejos comunitarios. A longtime ASCOBA leader explained to me: "ASCOBA can't obligate or punish, because it's the CC that has the title. It's role is more to support, to advise and build capacity to avoid the problem" He offered me an analogy of an 18 year old with legal ID — if they want to spend a night out, what can his parents do? If the police find them, they have their document, they have the right

¹⁴³ Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

to be outside. The same with the CCs; at the end of the day, they have the right to make their decisions.¹⁴⁴ In Domingodó, a leader told me that her previous experiences with ASCOBA interceding in conflicts was ineffective, so she doesn't look for their help. When her community had a border issue with a neighboring CC, "we resolved it ourselves".¹⁴⁵

The situation in Truandó reflects the real limitations of community-level independence. ACAMURI doesn't have the organizational strength to create territorial or disciplinary commissions to build internal social and territorial control; even if it did, the CCs fiercely guard their independence and don't allow the organization much entry into their internal affairs. There's "effectively no control over logging (the main economy)".¹⁴⁶ In the elections of the CC leaders, "people are buying votes, alcaldes are giving money to support candidates, there's fights".¹⁴⁷ And even worse, armed groups have taken control away from the CC authorities:

The authority was taken away from us, by the [armed] groups. It is a difficult life, we are merely a figurehead, we cannot move as we want, only when they say we can. We have lost independence and autonomy. A lot of us have left, and the few that remain in the territory cannot challenge the [armed] groups. We continue to resist, but from [the town of] Riosucio.¹⁴⁸

As a final advantage of increased regional integration, I argued that larger and more consolidated organizations would gain more attention and respect from other actors. Of the three organizations in this study, COCOMACIA has clearly developed the most respect from other actors, as an organization well-known throughout the Pacific region. Community leaders of in COCOMACIA explained to me, "It is important to be part of COCOMACIA, an org that at the international level has strength, recognition";¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ ASCOBA leader (from Domingodó), Personal Communication, 10/17/2021

¹⁴⁵ Domingodó CC rep 2, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

¹⁴⁶ Truandó CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

¹⁴⁷ Truandó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹⁴⁸ Truandó CC leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

¹⁴⁹ Zona 9 CCL 4, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

“The CCM has international recognition, which results in projects, that get implemented with the NGOs and the Church”¹⁵⁰. That recognition and respect (sometimes) extends to armed groups, something I heard from COCOMACIA leaders from Zona 9 as well as from the Defensoría: “Everyone respects the voice of COCOMACIA when it speaks, even legal and illegal armed groups”.¹⁵¹

This increased recognition allows COCOMACIA to bring in significantly more attention to their humanitarian projects: at a humanitarian fact-finding mission in the municipality of Bojayá, I counted the presence of ACNUR, OCHA, the UN Verification mission, MAPP-OEA, Lutheran World Mission, multiple state agencies and representatives of five European embassies. As one of my friends from Baudó who was accompanying the process remarked, “Bojayá can’t complain” – they receive a far outsized amount of international attention, not just because of COCOMACIA but also because of the 2002 massacre, a touchstone event in the Colombian conflict. This generates significant NGO fatigue among the population “it’s like a parade of vests” – meaning that the communities deal with an unending stream of different organizations who visit, taking community members’ time with uncertain benefits in return (NGO and IO workers wear characteristic vests to identify themselves). Yet there’s no question that these communities also bring in more projects; for example, when I visited, a USAID and OIM project was updating reglamentos in Napipí, one of the zona 9 communities in COCOMACIA.¹⁵² I asked a leader of ASCOBA if he thought COCOMACIA got more attention: “Probably. They got a lot of NGO accompaniment, a lot of international attention”.¹⁵³

ASCOBA also has strong international recognition as the pre-eminent Afro organization of the Bajo Atrato, with a history of support from UNDP, OIM, MISEREOR and other international organizations. Even a community leader who was sharply critical of ASCOBA acknowledged that the relationship his

¹⁵⁰ Zona 9 CCL 1, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

¹⁵¹ Defensoría member, Personal Communication, March 10, 2020

¹⁵² Fieldnotes, Bojayá, Chocó, 10/5/2021

¹⁵³ ASCOBA leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

community had with ASCOBA is important because of the recognition ASCOBA gets from international organizations.¹⁵⁴ Certainly, both the leaders of ASCOBA and the more independent ACAMURI believe that ASCOBA as a larger, more integrated organization receives more international attention. From an ASCOBA leader: “ASCOBA is much more recognized, from the local to the international [level], it has stronger leadership, it gets more projects”. From an ACAMURI leader: “ASCOBA represents many more communities in Bajo Atrato. Their very name attracts a lot of attention – it's the organization of the Bajo Atrato. Whereas ACAMURI is just for Truandó. So they get more international attention”.¹⁵⁵

ACAMURI has had some previous support from ACNUR and the ICRC, among others. However, they currently feel that they are without international support. The organizational representatives told me that at this moment, “Truandó doesn't really have connections”.¹⁵⁶ The leaders of ACAMURI make it clear that the association needs much more support:

We need allies who can strengthen the organization. We don't have a sponsor (*padrino*) to support us...we have the human capacity to support the CCs but the economic issue is very hard, we don't have projects to bring to the communities, we have no way to move.¹⁵⁷

Independence Advantages

Despite these advantages in organizational capacity, cohesion and external relations, regional integration creates serious trade-offs for communities in their self-protection capacities. Specifically, highly integrated movements suffer democratic and participatory deficits and are frequently overly rigid. As such, greater community-level independence can often generate more committed membership and more flexible organizational responses to problems. I explore these trade-offs in this section.

¹⁵⁴ Salaquí CC leader, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

¹⁵⁵ Truandó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

¹⁵⁶ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

¹⁵⁷ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

In more independent organizational structures, rank-and-file members have more direct opportunities to participate in decision-making. In the ACAMURI CCs in Truandó, “in the elections, everyone must participate, not everyone participates in a CCM”.¹⁵⁸ Likewise, in the ASCOBA CCs of Domingodó, “everyone over the age of 14 participates in the elections”.¹⁵⁹ Because an integrated CCM includes thousands of people spread across a massive area, it is logistically impossible for most members of the organization to participate in the general assembly, where the key decisions for the organization are made. Instead, each community of COCOMACIA sends five representatives who vote on behalf of the communities they represent.

These decision-making differences shape everyday participation as well. In COCOMACIA, leaders in the capital, hours or even days away from the community by boat, have the final decision-making authority over a community’s territory. Meanwhile, in Truandó and Domingodó, the communities only participate in ASCOBA or ACAMURI projects by consent and internal consensus.¹⁶⁰ In the communities of Domingodó,

To make any decision, we just have to bring together the *asamblea* and the *junta* and the community can make its decision on whatever issue. In a CCM, the community only has a voice through its delegates. For us, we bring it directly to all the families in the community and make a decision.¹⁶¹

From the perspective of a Truandó leader, the more opportunities for direct participation, “makes the people more united”; the quality of participation is more respectful, because it’s built on personal relationships. People participate more actively, whereas in the more integrated CCMs, people are unmotivated to be involved because they don’t have much voice. He argues that this makes the

¹⁵⁸ Truandó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹⁵⁹ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹⁶⁰ ASCOBA leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

¹⁶¹ ASCOBA leader (from Domingodó), Personal Communication, 10/17/2021

communities respect the reglamentos more, because rather than an external mandate, the communities have total decision-making power to define their own rules.¹⁶²

I observed that the distance between the COCOMACIA decision-making bodies in Quibdó and the communities in the north of Bojayá generates significant miscommunications and mistrust within the organization. From the perspective of the organizational leadership in Quibdó, oftentimes the communities don't understand the purpose or function of the *consejo mayor*. Communities often demand that COCOMACIA resolve infrastructure issues like inadequate schools or hospitals, which are state responsibilities, far outside of the COCOMACIA budget: "People imagine that COCOMACIA is full of money, it's a lack of information, people don't really know what our resources or capacity is".¹⁶³ The communities also feel a problem of insufficient communication: "how can you defend us if you don't even know what we want?".¹⁶⁴ Beneath the communication gaps, there is a deep mistrust of the CCM in Quibdó, which is perceived as distant, politicized and corrupt, the same as the *alcaldes*:

One feels that COCOMACIA used to be a communal thing, of the communities. And now it is all about projects for the benefit of a few.¹⁶⁵

ACIA is losing itself to *politiquería*, it wasn't made for that, it's like an *alcaldía*, the leaders are only interested in money, for personal benefits.¹⁶⁶

If COCOMACIA isn't for profit, then why is there so much money in the elections? The organization has fallen into *politiquería*.¹⁶⁷

The clearest difference between the communities of COCOMACIA and the communities of ASCOBA and ACAMURI is the degree of independence in the hands of the community, something all the leaders in Domingodó (ASCOBA) and Truandó (ACAMURI) were obviously proud of. When asking an

¹⁶² Truandó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹⁶³ COCOMACIA youth leader, Personal Communication, July 2019

¹⁶⁴ Zona 9 CCL 3, Personal Communication, 10/8/2021

¹⁶⁵ Zona 9 CCL 1, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

¹⁶⁶ Zona 9 CCL 2, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

¹⁶⁷ Zona 9 CCL 7, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

ACAMURI leader about the comparison with COCOMACIA, he told me, “The advantage of the more independent consejos comunitarios of Truandó is that each community is autonomous within its territory”.¹⁶⁸ While the communities of Truandó participate in the association ACAMURI, “we (the communities) give the last word to where we are going”.¹⁶⁹ Likewise, in ASCOBA, even the harshest critics of ASCOBA I spoke with, a CC who is considering leaving the organization, admitted to me that even though they’re not seeing any benefits from the association, it also doesn’t limit them: “We have our independence, they don’t limit us in any way, we don’t have to ask them permission to do anything”.¹⁷⁰

Compared with COCOMACIA, the members of ASCOBA and ACAMURI see the benefits of independence manifesting in greater control and more direct benefits from projects, quicker and more nimble organizational responsiveness to local problems, and greater organizational flexibility and adaptability. First, greater independence means that any project that arrives benefits the communities more directly. Because ACAMURI is only five communities, “we don’t have to share whatever arrives here between so many people. What comes here is enough to distribute for all of us”.¹⁷¹

Meanwhile, the communities in Domingodó feel some loss of resources because of their participation in ASCOBA.

Ascoba ends up being an intermediary of resources that could go directly to the community councils. All CCs can seek their own projects. But the CCs affiliated with ASCOBA remain weak because what is recognized is ASCOBA, not the community councils.¹⁷²

This issue is magnified in COCOMACIA, a title that incorporates some 120 communities and faces extreme challenges to generate enough projects to touch all the communities it represents. As a

¹⁶⁸ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

¹⁶⁹ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

¹⁷⁰ Salauquí junta directiva member, Personal Communication, 10/21/2021

¹⁷¹ Truandó CC leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

¹⁷² Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

CC leader from Domingodó observes: “You have to have a lot of projects to reach all the communities [in COCOMACIA]. There are some that benefit more than others. There are several who want to be independent because they do not feel they are represented.”¹⁷³

Furthermore, the individual communities of COCOMACIA cannot advance any project without the consent of the regional CCM leadership in Quibdó. A community leader from COCOMACIA reflected that, “Having our own title would be better, our communities would be able to generate projects (*gestionar*) directly”. He explained to me that not only is the process of getting CCM approval for a project cumbersome and bureaucratic, the regional leaders end up taking a cut of the project, for studies, planning, etc. (though others strongly implied that there was significant corruption here as well).¹⁷⁴ COCOMACIA CCM leaders explained to me that from their perspective, the perception from the communities that the organization blocks and/or steals from development projects can in large part be attributed to lies and distortions from outside actors with commercial interests in the territories:

The local leaders sometimes feel like the CCM is blocking development projects, because the outside actors will come in and talk to the community and never tell about all the bad things that will happen, like ‘everything will be beautiful and nothing bad will happen’. So when the CCM comes in and explains the risks, we’re the bad guys.¹⁷⁵

The complaints of the CCLs of the challenges to move forward their projects point to a broader problem in the highly integrated structure of COCOMACIA – as a highly bureaucratic organization, it is prone to rigidity and slow responsiveness. These issues are magnified by the fact that the organization lacks the capacity to maintain a regular presence in all of its communities, in particular the very distant communities such as those in the Zona 9. This presents the communities in the Zona 9 with a challenging dilemma: they are dependent on an organization that can only infrequently reach them.

¹⁷³ Domingodó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

¹⁷⁴ Zona 9 CCL 7, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

¹⁷⁵ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 1, personal communication, July 2019

COCOMACIA CCM leaders in Quibdó admitted to me that “because of a lack of resources, we can’t go to all the communities”.¹⁷⁶ Some communities are many hours or even days away from Quibdó by boat; a member of the youth commission told me it’s almost a waste to go to faraway communities like Zona 9, because you have to spend the entire project budget on gasoline.¹⁷⁷ Thus, while COCOMACIA has developed a rich array of support systems to defend the CCLs, how much do the more peripheral CCLs really benefit? For example, in discussing conflict resolution approaches with the communities, the leader accompanying me would remind local leaders that because of the distance and cost, they shouldn’t expect to receive a lot of help from the disciplinary committee in Quibdó: “the best approach is to avoid the problem”.¹⁷⁸ In the Zona 9, the CCLs felt that COCOMACIA “has abandoned us”¹⁷⁹; “forgotten us”¹⁸⁰. They don’t accept that resources alone fully explain the absence: “The most important thing is the will (*la voluntad*). If the organization really wanted to be here, it would be”.¹⁸¹

Interestingly, almost every community I visited recalled to me that the relationship used to be much better, that the organization used to be much more present and attentive. The leaders accompanying me explained that there was a period of great organizational strength in the early to mid 2000s, when the war in Colombia dominated international headlines and the international organizations poured money and projects into the area. Now that much of that international attention has moved on, the organization has much less mobility.

The same story applied to ASCOBA: what was a flood of international support in the early 2000s has declined significantly, leaving CC leaders in Domingodó also complaining about the absence of

¹⁷⁶ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 1, personal communication, July 2019

¹⁷⁷ COCOMACIA youth leader, Personal Communication, July 2019

¹⁷⁸ Zona 9 CCL 2, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

¹⁷⁹ Zona 9 CCL 7, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

¹⁸⁰ Zona 9 CCL 8, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

¹⁸¹ COCOMACIA zona 9 leader, personal communication, 10/7/2021

ASCOBA in their territories: “We have a good relationship with ASCOBA, but there’s not a lot of political support (*incidencia*) here, the support from ASCOBA is very little”.¹⁸² However, the more flexible, decentralized structure of ASCOBA is in some ways better positioned to adapt to ebbs in international support. First, because the individual communities in Domingodó have their own titles, the relevant leaders with decision-making power are more present and available in the communities. While representatives elected to the COCOMACIA junta directiva either already live in or relocate to Quibdó, the leaders of the Domingodó consejos comunitarios are in Domingodó (as I found out when attempting to interview some from Riosucio). As such, the leaders of ASCOBA are, “more connected with the territory, the leaders are closer, so there is more organizational spirit”.¹⁸³ Second, the decision-making structure of ASCOBA is less rigid; whereas the in COCOMACIA everything must pass through the regional leaders in the CCM for approval, ASCOBA can measure its support to the individual CCs depending on their relative levels of capacity, and allow more autonomous CCs to move independently:

Some CCs need more capacity, ask for more input from ASCOBA than others in developing their reglamentos...Some CCs have more capacity, and are more autonomous, so our work is more to advise, they need less help.¹⁸⁴

Organizational gaps in COCOMACIA generate consequences for community self-protection both through challenges in territorial control and in low participation in the communities. Several leaders from both Truandó and Domingodó argued that in their more independent consejos comunitarios, interpersonal social relationships generated more control, while in the integrated CCMs, the lack of presence of the leaders made communities vulnerable:

A small CC is easier to manage. A big title is more complicated, with so many communities and absent leadership. In a community like ours in Domingodó, everyone knows each other, it’s just one community. While in a CCM, in a large title, the junta

¹⁸² Domingodó CC rep 2, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

¹⁸³ ASCOBA leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

¹⁸⁴ ASCOBA Disciplinary Committee, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

cannot supervise all of its territory, it's too expensive...so in a big CCM, there is more displacement because the title is so big and internal management is difficult.¹⁸⁵

Furthermore, the combined impact of minimal opportunities to participate in decision-making and limited independence for the communities in COCOMACIA can easily generate community-level apathy (*desánimo*) towards the organizing project. CCM leaders tended to describe their relationship with the CCLs as a relationship between parent and child. For example, Richard Moreno, one of the most visible leaders of COCOMACIA, explained in the 2016 general assembly meeting: “[The CCLs] will always be the child, and the child does not have the rights over the territory, in territorial terms the adult is COCOMACIA” (García Sánchez 2017, p. 273). Reflecting that logic, a Zona 9 leader explained to me that at some point, you have to let your children walk on their own, or they'll never grow.¹⁸⁶ I frequently heard sentiments of serious apathy in the COCOMACIA communities:

People don't believe in the organization anymore, they don't have much presence, there isn't much information, the people are very discouraged...they've abandoned us.¹⁸⁷

In my CCL, COCOMACIA has declined a bit (*ha caído un poco*). People have lost their desire to participate...Many leaders have forgotten us, they go to Quibdó and hardly come back.¹⁸⁸

As a church leader explained to me, this kind of stagnation is dangerous: a community that doesn't organize, that stays with its *brazos cruzados*, is extremely vulnerable to armed group pressure.¹⁸⁹

Evaluation

During the process of my dissertation, I attempted to quantitatively evaluate the differences in organizational structure on violence outcomes. I abandoned this line of inquiry because gaps, unreliability and over-aggregation in the data prevented me from making any definitive causal claims. Nevertheless,

¹⁸⁵ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

¹⁸⁶ COCOMACIA zona 9 leader, personal communication, 10/7/2021

¹⁸⁷ Zona 9 CCL 7, Personal Communication, 10/10/2021

¹⁸⁸ COCOMACIA zona 9 leader, personal communication, 10/7/2021

¹⁸⁹ Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

there is evidence to suggest that there is currently less violence in COCOMACIA than in the ASCOBA or ACAMURI communities. The COCOMACIA Zona 9 has 15 communities; in Domingodó there are 8 communities and in Truandó 6 communities, all with comparable population density. Between 2016 and the end of 2021, OCHA monitor records 15 incidents of violence in the relevant COCOMACIA territory, 10 each in the ASCOBA and ACAMURI territories. Each area has had two homicides over the period; there have been more major displacement events in ASCOBA (4) and ACAMURI (3) than in COCOMACIA (2) over that time (*OCHA Colombia Monitor Humanitario*, n.d.). Over the same time period, the Defensoría has issued more *Alertas Tempranas* for Truandó (6) and for Domingodó (5) than for the larger COCOMACIA territory (4) (*Alertas Tempranas*, n.d.). The Defensoría publishes *Alertas Tempranas* (Early Warnings) to signal an imminent risk of grave affectations to the human rights of a group of communities. As such, it functions as somewhat of a proxy for the quantity of violence a community is experiencing. These numbers are compared in Table 7, below; averages per community are in parentheses.

Table 6: Violent Events in Atrato, 2016-2021

	OCHA monitor	Homicides	Mass Displacement	Alertas Tempranas
COCOMACIA	15 (.94)	2 (.13)	2 (.13)	4 (.25)
ASCOBA	10 (1.25)	2 (.25)	4 (.5)	5 (.63)
ACAMURI	10 (1.67)	2 (.33)	3 (.5)	6 (1)

COCOMACIA

I found that COCOMACIA, despite serious problems of internal corruption and politiquería, an at-times cumbersome bureaucracy and uneven presence in the communities, remains the most forceful Afro organization in the Atrato. In COCOMACIA, regional integration has allowed for more, bigger, and better organized projects to support its people, powerful leadership throughout Chocó, and, ultimately, increased protection from the armed groups in the Medio Atrato region.

From the perspective of CC leaders in Domingodó, COCOMACIA has the experience, capacity and political weight to manage huge projects and negotiate effectively with the state.

COCOMACIA has very extensive experience, and such a globalized territory that it encompasses several municipalities, it is totally different with us, it can compete directly with the state...the difference [from us] is that they manage much bigger projects, COCOMACIA manages more projects than ASCOBA.¹⁹⁰

The Zona 9 communities that I visited, who in general were extremely critical of COCOMACIA, still recognized that, “the CCM is the mother, our voice, it represents us...the little that arrives here is because of [COCOMACIA]”.¹⁹¹ Through the support of the projects and training that COCOMACIA is able to bring in, despite state neglect and ongoing violence, “people kept producing and organizing, which allowed them to stay in their territories”.¹⁹²

Furthermore, the size and history of COCOMACIA grants it a national and international reputation, a privileged position as perhaps the most powerful Consejo Comunitario: “it orients the collective territories in the rest of the country”;¹⁹³ “all other CCs look to what COCOMACIA does”.¹⁹⁴ One way the actions of COCOMACIA are felt far beyond its own territories is through its leadership of the Foro Interétnico Solidaridad Chocó (FISCH), a department-wide platform that defends the rights of ethnic peoples of Chocó. COCOMACIA led the founding of FISCH; the presidents of FISCH have all been from COCOMACIA, its offices are in the COCOMACIA building. Following the 2016 peace deal with the FARC, FISCH has advanced a broad regional proposal for peace, the *Acuerdo Humanitario ¡Ya! Para el Chocó*, which serves as a platform to push for negotiations with the armed groups that remain in the territories and bring national and international attention to the humanitarian crisis in Chocó. The project has also

¹⁹⁰ Domingodó CC rep 2, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

¹⁹¹ Zona 9 CCL 3, Personal Communication, 10/8/2021

¹⁹² COCOMACIA asesor 2, personal communication, June 2019

¹⁹³ IEANPE member, Personal Communication, 2/20/2020

¹⁹⁴ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 2, personal communication, July 2019

generated tangible benefits in COCOMACIA communities, spurring a demining effort by the Colombian military in Bojayá.¹⁹⁵

Despite the work of COCOMACIA to build community protections, AGC paramilitaries permeate the communities of Zona 9; their people are in basically every community, '*puntos*' that surveil the communities and ensure control over a valuable cocaine trade route. Their graffiti is on the houses in every community, they were present at some of our meetings. Some of the community-level leaders in the CCLs are completely controlled by the group, such that the community has no autonomous economic or social decision-making, and has to pay taxes to the group.¹⁹⁶

Nevertheless, communities in COCOMACIA Zona 9 continue to suffer displacement. I spoke with a leader from the community of Carrillo, who two years ago suffered their fourth massive displacement; the community is empty, the people mostly displaced to nearby towns. They're afraid of the armed groups in the territory and there's no real support from the state to return — the military has offered to accompany them, but after they leave, it just puts the community in more danger. They're shaping a return plan with the Unidad de Víctimas, the Church and COCOMACIA, but there's no set timeline. And they're not the only one; at least three other communities in Zona 9 are currently empty.¹⁹⁷ COCOMACIA has historically been a force in pushing for return; in 2010, COVIJUPA, an organization of the Quibdó Diocese evaluated that the partnership between the Diocese and the organization allowed for the return of over 80 communities (Covijupa 2010). New forms of violence, which slowly push people out of the territory "*gota a gota*" rather than in massive displacements, have rendered previous strategies less effective.

However, the situation in the COCOMACIA Zona 9 is still distinct from the less integrated ASCOBA and ACAMURI communities in the Truandó and Domingodó rivers, just to the north. Whereas in

¹⁹⁵ FISCH AHY Conversatorio, Notes, 7/9/2020

¹⁹⁶ Zona 9 CCLs, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

¹⁹⁷ Carrillo leader, Personal Communication, 10/6/2021

Riosucio, “almost all the CCs are physically not there”, either permanently displaced to the bigger towns or staying only temporarily in the communities, “Bojayá has COCOMACIA”, which maintains the communities despite internal fractions.¹⁹⁸ This evaluation is shared by COCOMACIA leaders: “In Bajo Atrato, people were removed from their territories, but not us”. A COCOMACIA CCM leader in Quibdó explained that even Zone 9, the furthest from Quibdó, maintains its adherence to the COCOMACIA reglamento, and as such has been able to maintain much more of its autonomy and minimize displacement relative to their neighbors to the north.¹⁹⁹ Even in a situation of extreme resource scarcity, “with or without money, COCOMACIA has been able to advance returns”.²⁰⁰

I heard similar opinions from the Defensoría (“the independent CCs are more affected by violence, easier to co-opt”²⁰¹), Church leaders (“It would be difficult to survive here without the organization, which gives protection to the communities”²⁰²) as well as from the communities themselves, (“Because of COCOMACIA, there is a respect for the territory. Outsiders cannot impose themselves however they want, there’s a protection”²⁰³).

ASCOBA

I found ASCOBA to be a nimble organization with effective projects, generating benefits throughout the Bajo Atrato region. However, the organization faces threats of disintegration and the river of Domingodó is heavily controlled by the AGC paramilitaries, leaving little space for the autonomy of the consejos comunitarios.

¹⁹⁸ Kroc Institute, Personal Communication, 2/26/2020

¹⁹⁹ COCOMACIA Disciplinary Committee representative, Personal Communication, July 2019

²⁰⁰ Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

²⁰¹ Defensoría de Chocó, Personal Communication, 3/10/2020

²⁰² Bellavista Parroquia, Personal Communication, 10/5/2021

²⁰³ Zona 9 CCL 1 meeting, personal communication, 10/8/2021

ASCOBA plays an active leadership role throughout the region of the Bajo Atrato. I've discussed a few of its main projects such as the *Champalanca* education project, mine education for the communities, and pushing forward the T622 sentence in protection of the Atrato River. Demonstrating the enduring relevance and reputation of ASCOBA, the consejo comunitario of Unguía, in the northern tip of Chocó, is seeking membership into the ASCOBA organization. The consejo comunitario sought out ASCOBA as a source of accompaniment and training to strengthen their process and respond to the incursions of wealthy cattle ranchers.²⁰⁴

However, ASCOBA faces a serious problem of fragmentation within its own communities, a worrying trend in which increasing defensiveness from the individual consejos comunitarios over their independence within the organization, especially with the prospect of soon-to-arrive carbon credit money, has weakened the unity of the organization. At this point, communities in multiple rivers, including some in Domingodó “don’t participate in the activities of ASCOBA, everyone is going their own way...If something happens to the organization, they won’t speak up to defend it”.²⁰⁵ Thus the same flexibility that makes ASCOBA adaptable also makes it vulnerable: if the consejos comunitarios that the organization represents no longer support it, its very survival quickly comes into question. The leaders of ASCOBA told me, “some don’t feel reflected in the ASCOBA process, but the organization tries its best”.²⁰⁶

The security situation in Domingodó is very serious; I couldn’t personally visit, because ASCOBA leaders felt that the risk was too high. With the support of ASCOBA, people have to some degree been able to remain and survive in the communities in the river; ASCOBA has proven that at times when no other organization can enter Domingodó, it can still maintain a presence and limit displacement.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ ASCOBA leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

²⁰⁵ Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

²⁰⁶ ASCOBA meeting, Fieldnotes, 10/13/2021

²⁰⁷ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

Nevertheless, there's a fierce AGC control over the river, putting the communities under huge pressure and dramatically reducing the autonomy of the consejos comunitarios:

Here we've never had a post-conflict, we had a transformation, from the FARC to the AGC. I thought that with just one group, it would be less complicated...but the group has only increased its control and demands more from the community. There's nobody with a counter-pressure.²⁰⁸

The communities in Domingodó are in a permanent state of semi-displacement. People returned after the first massive wave of displacements in the late 1990s, but just as soon as they began to recuperate their communities, there was another displacement, and then another. Now people don't invest so much in returning, they come back occasionally to visit or work their land. This has undercut the effectiveness of CC authority: "the reglamentos are loose (flojo) because of displacement. Before they were enforced with sanctions, but now that the people aren't so much in the community..."²⁰⁹ A pastor tells me that throughout the Bajo Atrato, displacement has fragmented the consejos comunitarios, people don't see much of a future in rural life: "The CCs are there, but they're no longer resistant". People don't talk about resistance in the territory, they talk about how to get a better life for their children in the cities.²¹⁰

ACAMURI

Out of the three areas of focus in this comparison, the individual communities of Truandó have prioritized independence over integration the most, creating a loose, small association that only includes the six communities of the Truandó river, and has little authority over those communities. As a result, I heard very little about internal conflicts over issues of organizational presence, politiquería and bureaucracy of the kind that I heard in ASCOBA and especially in COCOMACIA. But neither was it apparent that the organization ACAMURI was making a significant impact in the defense of the

²⁰⁸ ASCOBA leader (from Domingodó), Personal Communication, 10/17/2021

²⁰⁹ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

²¹⁰ Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

communities. The organization is weak, the CCs and the territories are controlled by outsiders and the communities are in large part displaced.

In a meeting with the ACAMURI leadership, they asked me to broadcast the precarity of the organization, the lack of support from the state and internationals, in the hopes of generating projects that could build their strength:

For ACAMURI, which does not have a budget, it's difficult to respond to violence. Acamuri does not have economic muscle to act quickly, to move around. We're stuck, with no capacity to respond...there's power in associations to act when there's a problem, but we don't have the strength to enter, to respond.²¹¹

For many years, ACAMURI didn't even have an official leadership, the threats were so bad that nobody wanted to attach their name to it. Even though the organization has begun to recuperate, for the Truandó CCs: "From the organization, what we feel is weakness".²¹²

The consejos comunitarios of Truandó are fiercely proud of their independence, but as a COCOMACIA Zona 9 leader told me, independence has its benefits and risks:

On the one hand it is good having more independence, but on the other hand not. Imagine that [an outside actor] offers a productive project, if [the decision] was in the hands of the communities, they would do it without knowing who the person is, they offer whatever money and the community accepts...because of all the threats, it's dangerous to be an autonomous CC.²¹³

Leaders from ACAMURI agreed, explaining to me that their communities are more exposed, because they have the responsibility of making decisions in the territory.²¹⁴ Inside the CCs in Truandó, control over the territory and the communities has been taken over by the armed groups.

²¹¹ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

²¹² Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

²¹³ COCOMACIA leader, Personal Communication, 7/6/2021

²¹⁴ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

As community councils, we do not have control of the territories. To preserve life, it is no secret that we cannot do certain things.²¹⁵ There are groups in the territory that, although the CC does not want to, they impose their rules, they override (*sobrepasan*) our reglamentos. They have taken us away from the role of sanctioning and imposing rules.²¹⁶

We are losing our autonomy to the armed groups. We are the owners (of the territory), but they impose their rules, because they have the weapons. And you are dead if you don't follow what they want.²¹⁷

Perhaps the key challenge of the Truandó CCs is to figure out how to function effectively given the massive displacement that Truandó has faced since early in the peace process: "The river is basically empty, everyone displaced to Riosucio since 2015/2016".²¹⁸ As the CC leaders, "We continue to return, but with a lot of fear. We have to keep an eye on the territory, and try to fight for its development".²¹⁹ Another leader shares with me that the CC leaders are more often outside of the territories, "but we're trying to move, so that the communities feel our presence...with the support of the parroquia, to continue going to the communities so that we can build confidence".²²⁰ Living in the city undercuts the culture and traditional knowledge; the young people don't know how to live collectively, raise crops, chop wood or where the limits of the territory are. But there's no conditions for return, the groups are still there, and there's no support from the state.²²¹ Nevertheless, the CCs continue to fight to build a dignified life in the territories for their communities: "Our strength is that we resist, and that we have the ley 70".²²²

²¹⁵ He heavily implied that this referred to attempting to intercede in any way in the coca economy.

²¹⁶ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

²¹⁷ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

²¹⁸ Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz 1, Personal Communication, 02/2020

²¹⁹ Truandó CC leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

²²⁰ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

²²¹ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

²²² Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

Alternative Explanations

My case selection was able to address a number of threats to causal inference: I selected geographically proximate consejos comunitarios with similar organizational histories. Nevertheless, there are two sources of alternative explanations for the outcomes I observe, or threats to causal inference that I was unable to fully address through case selection: imperfect comparisons and non-random assignment to treatment. I discuss each in turn and outline my strategies to address these alternatives.

First, the three comparison cases are situated in three different municipalities: the COCOMACIA Zona 9 communities are in Bojayá and Murindó, the ASCOBA communities of Domingodó are in Carmen del Darién and the ACAMURI cases of Truandó are in Riosucio. One might imagine that key economic, geographic and political differences across the municipalities might drive some of the variation in violence outcomes. For example, stronger internal economic development could potentially lead to less violence; the inverse relationship between economic development and violence has been extensively documented (Braithwaite et al., 2016). As discussed in greater depth in the research design chapter, the communities across the study are in virtually the same economic position of extreme poverty.²²³ Furthermore, differences in the political leadership in each of three municipalities that the communities are part of might play a role in shaping the results. None of the communities had anything consistently positive to say about their mayors. However, I heard at least one example of positive coordination with the communities of ACAMURI and ASCOBA with their respective mayors, and remarkably none from COCOMACIA, suggesting that the outcomes observed can't be attributed to more favorable relationships with politicians.

On a related note, geographic accessibility is also a factor: physical remoteness might serve to increase the vulnerability of communities by making them more difficult for the state to access (Hendrix,

²²³ IPM (Indice de Pobreza Multidimensional, Multidimensional Poverty Index) rates from the last census in 2018: Bojayá (77.1%), Murindó (81.5%), Carmen del Darién (77.8%), Riosucio (70.9%). IPM is a weighted multidimensional poverty indicator developed by the Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI). It assesses poverty levels based on a combination of indicators within the categories: educational conditions, childhood conditions, work, access to health, access to public services and housing conditions. Households with at least a third of the deprivations (accounting for weights) are categorized as poor. Further discussion of methodology available: (Alkire et al., 2013).

2011). In the Atrato, none of the communities in the study are accessible by road. However, more of the communities in COCOMACIA were located along the main Atrato river, which potentially reduced their isolation. In my investigation, I found that the more distant communities were more exposed to violence from the armed groups: in many, perhaps most cases, the communities located further into the tributary rivers, away from the main Atrato river, had mostly displaced to the more accessible communities along the Atrato river.

However, in exploring the mechanisms of isolation and collective protection, I found that organizational structure still played a clear role. Leaders from the more independent communities in ASCOBA and ACAMURI argued that communities that participate in larger collectives are more difficult to isolate and threaten.²²⁴ The human rights commission of COCOMACIA illustrates how this operates in practice: it is their job to consistently visit their more vulnerable communities, to “show the armed groups that the communities are not alone. People are watching what is happening in the communities”.²²⁵ Individual communities are not allowed to publicly denounce armed groups; only the broader organization does that from the relative safety of Quibdó.²²⁶

Furthermore, even though the three cases are neighboring communities, the trajectories of the conflict have not been exactly parallel. The conflict arrived earlier in Carmen del Darién (ASCOBA communities) and Riosucio (ACAMURI communities) than in Bojayá and Murindó (COCOMACIA communities); Carmen del Darién and Riosucio are closer to a key paramilitary power center in Urabá. Multiple observers I spoke with argued that the conflict has been more intense in Carmen del Darién and Riosucio than in Bojayá and Murindó: “The hard war (*la guerra dura*) is not in Bojayá, it’s in the Bajo

²²⁴ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

²²⁵ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 3, personal communication, July 2019

²²⁶ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 3, personal communication, July 2019

Atrato”.²²⁷ The data don’t necessarily reflect this, and suggest that the amount of violence proportional to the populations is relatively similar.²²⁸

Nevertheless, I take seriously the possibility that the war has been more intense in Carmen del Darién and Riosucio. This possibility would impact my findings by disproportionately weakening the organizations of ASCOBA and ACAMURI and exposing their communities to disproportional armed group violence relative to the COCOMACIA communities. It is very possible that more intense violence in the ASCOBA and ACAMURI regions at least partially explains the variance in violence outcomes that I observe.

In response, I argue that the specific mechanisms I have explored related to organizational structure still point to the explanatory power of regional integration separate from exposure to violence. For example, COCOMACIA’s ability to offer greater leadership development and more economic programs to distant communities may partially be issues of access, but also reflect greater internal professional development within the organization related to its increased bureaucratization. One might also imagine that an area of greater violence would attract more consistent international attention, but I have shown that the increased legitimacy of the more integrated COCOMACIA allows it to create more extensive relationships with international actors. Crucially, these differences carry over in the comparison between the more integrated ASCOBA in Domingodó and the more independent ACAMURI in the neighboring river of Truandó. Both organizations are located in the same Bajo Atrato region, yet the more integrated ASCOBA has demonstrably more political weight in negotiations, greater professionalization and specialization, increased internal discipline and more extensive external relationships than the more independent ACAMURI communities.

²²⁷ Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz, Personal Communication, 2/14/2020

²²⁸ The Unidad de Víctimas database registers total violent incidents over the course of the war: 43,000 instances of displacement and 465 homicides in Bojayá (pop ~12,000); 5,000 instances of displacement and 113 homicides in Murindó (pop ~5,000); 115,000 instances of displacement and 1552 homicides in Riosucio (pop ~53,500); and 20,000 instances of displacement and 305 homicides in Carmen del Darién (pop ~18,500) (Registro Único de Víctimas, n.d.).

A final endogeneity threat lies in the non-random process by which each of the cases were assigned a 'treatment', that is, the process by which the communities entered into one of the organizational types along the spectrum from integration to independence. Thus it is fair to wonder if the outcomes I observe may be attributable to the processes that generated these variations in organizational structure, rather than the variance in structure itself. I argue that it is possible to dismiss a number of 'agent-focused' alternative explanations such as greater social capital, easier interconnections because of favorable geography, longer histories of collective action that might simultaneously explain the greater integration of COCOMACIA and the reduction in current violence. As I discussed in greater depth in my history chapter, a regional-scale organization emerged in the lower Atrato, in the areas of present-day ASCOBA and ACAMURI, even before it did in the current COCOMACIA territory.

However, while the historical accounts I could find attribute the more independent structures of present-day ASCOBA and ACAMURI to autonomous decisions made before the violence, the increasing armed group presence in the mid-1990s did play some role in undercutting collective organizing in the region even before those communities received their collective land titles in 1996. Furthermore, some historical accounts (e.g. Valencia, 2011) hint that Truandó chose a more independent organizational form because it was co-opted by logging interests. Both stories point to the possibility that factors that prevented the emergence of more regionally integrated collective organizing in the mid-1990s (extractive interests or armed groups) continue to inhibit active community mobilization into the present.

In addition to the arguments made above, I add two points. First, Kaplan (2017) confronts a similar endogeneity problem in his research and concludes that violence has an indeterminant effect on organizational formation: it makes organizing more dangerous but also serves as a motivator to organize. Second, the evidence presented in this chapter doesn't necessarily suggest that the more integrated COCOMACIA is 'stronger' than the more independent ASCOBA: it points to the relative strengths and weaknesses that can be tied specifically to differences in organizational structure. For example, COCOMACIA can maintain stronger internal control over the communities specifically because it has the legal authority over the territory. However, as discussed above, these advantages come at the costs of participation and flexibility, advantages provided by ASCOBA's more independent structure.

Atrato Empirical Chapter Conclusions

For the communities of the Atrato, the peace process offered a real opportunity for peace. With the exit of the FARC, leaders foresaw a chance to “rebuild the social fabric”;²²⁹ to “build a type of politics that would generate a *desarrollo propio*, to break the colonial mentality, build a peace from the ground”.²³⁰ For a moment, it appeared that opportunity would be matched by tangible gains, the most important improvements in people’s everyday security perhaps since the start of conflict in the mid-1990s. Many people I talked to spoke of a “moment for the communities to breathe”²³¹; a “momento dulce”²³² in the region in 2015 and 2016.

However, that moment quickly passed. The exit of the FARC did not shift the structural incentives that have brought armed groups to the Atrato region for decades: rich natural resources, multiple access points to the Panama border and the Pacific ocean through the many branches of the Atrato river, and a weak, highly corruptible state presence. As such, when the FARC left, two other groups, the ELN guerrillas and the AGC paramilitaries almost immediately began a ferocious conflict for control of the Atrato. Both groups are more decentralized with less defined political goals than the FARC; as such, it is harder than ever for communities to carve out spaces of respect for civilian autonomy from the conflict. An ASCOBA leader relates that now, “we’re worse than before, we don’t know who is attacking us, who is who, and who we can count on”.²³³

Community leaders are clear that the blame for this worsening situation sits squarely with the state. It failed on its promise to replace the FARC in governing the territories the armed group was leaving behind. A COCOMACIA leader explained that, “According to the state, they would arrive after the FARC.

²²⁹ Chocó politician, Personal Communication, 04/2019

²³⁰ Red Departamental de Mujeres Chocoanas leader, Personal Communication, 06/2019

²³¹ Procuraduría Regional de Chocó, Personal Communication, 06/2019

²³² UIC Barcelona Professor, Personal Communication, 03/2019

²³³ ASCOBA comision de jovenes, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

instead, the paras and the ELN arrived".²³⁴ An ACAMURI leader told me that when the FARC left the territory, it wasn't even 20 days before there was a new confrontation between the AGC and the ELN.²³⁵

A leader from ASCOBA explains:

When the FARC was about to leave, the government promised it would come occupy the territory. It generated a lot of good expectations in the communities, that there would finally be peace. But it didn't happen like we expect, exactly the opposite, because the state didn't do its part. So when the FARC left, the ELN came in, based on an agreement between them for the ELN to take over FARC territories...so the autodefensas came in after them, and it generated a new conflict.²³⁶

In the absence of meaningful support from the government, communities have had to fall back on the mechanisms of self-defense gained through hard-won experience over the course of a multi-decade conflict. These mechanisms of active neutrality (*neutralidad activa*) across all the communities in the study are all rooted in the culture, lifeways and survival mechanisms passed through generations of African slaves and their descendents. As such, the foundations of resistance in each of the groups of the communities is fundamentally the same, built on a rich, organic connection with the land and the knowledge necessary to survive there with very little external support.

However, the differing choices these three groups of communities made regarding their regional-level organizational structures, decisions that pre-date the conflict, still significantly shape their approaches to and capacity for self-protection in the post-acuerdo era. The empirical evidence I collected strongly suggests that the more integrated groups of communities experience less overall violence. I have explored mechanisms that I argue explain this variance: more integrated organizations have greater political weight and attract more external attention, benefit from more safety in numbers, and have the professionalization and division of labor to manage the challenging tasks of self-protection: providing for communities' economic needs, resolving conflicts and enforcing internal rules, and negotiating with the

²³⁴ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020

²³⁵ Truandó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

²³⁶ ASCOBA leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

state in favor of community interests. However, I also sought to illustrate that despite these advantages in organizational capacity, cohesion and external relations, regional integration creates serious trade-offs for communities in their self-protection capacities. Specifically, highly integrated movements suffer democratic and participatory deficits and are frequently overly rigid. As such, greater community-level independence can often generate more committed membership and more flexible organizational responses to problems.

What implications do these findings have for peacebuilding practice? This study is built at the meeting point of two relatively young but rapidly expanding bodies of literature at the intersection of conflict and non-violent resistance. The first focuses on civilian resistance to conflict, and generally focuses on community-level strategies to resist armed actor control (Arjona, 2016; Barter, 2014; Idler et al., 2015; Kaplan, 2017; Mouly & Garrido, 2017). The second set of literature focuses on civil resistance in peace processes, and tends to focus on national-scale mobilization to advance and enforce peace deals (Dudouet, 2017; Dudouet & Lundström, 2016; Wanis-St. John & Rosen, 2017). My work focusing on regional-scale responses to post-peace deal violence offers multiple linkages between and enrichments for both sets of literature. First, by translating insights on how communities resist war to how they manage peace, my work shows both the enduring relevance of wartime resistance strategies and the specific new challenges that communities face in a rapidly shifting environment.

Furthermore, my work offers insights on the scale and structure of post-peace deal social movements. Civilian resistance to war tends to focus on individual communities in resistance and notes that these efforts are limited by their inability to address broader power asymmetries. In contrast, the nonviolence in peace processes literature focuses on national-scale mobilizations, but has limited explanations for translating these gains to the local level. I adopt insights from the social movement literature to offer increased attention to the meso-scale as a point of linkage or “scale shift” that both localize peace and add collective weight to community concerns. In doing so, I offer a rich examination of the relative trade-offs of different structures. Drawing from the literature on organizational structure in social movements, my research recognizes variation in organizational forms as thoughtful decisions made for instrumental and ideological reasons to respond to a specific set of circumstances facing

activists. As I have shown, however, these decisions create path dependent trade-offs for collective protection.

CHAPTER 7

POST-PEACE VIOLENCE IN BAUDÓ: AN OVERLOOKED REGION BUILDS ITS OWN PEACE

The people of Baudó explained to me that the 2016 peace deal has forgotten them. Since the beginning of the violence in the 1990s, the conflict has had a devastating impact on the region. A succession of different paramilitary groups have fought (and continue to fight) with the ELN (National Liberation Army, *Ejército de Liberación Nacional*) for control over a vital drug corridor connecting the Colombian interior with the drug routes moving north through the Pacific ocean. The combination of multiple decades of conflict and structural racism and state neglect has left the three municipalities of Baudó among the poorest in all of Colombia (*Mapa De Pobreza Para Los Municipios*, 2021). Yet, leaders from the region feel that because there was only a relatively minimal FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) presence in the region, the peace deal has overlooked them. “It’s been mostly ELN and [paramilitary] self-defense groups [in Baudó], for that reason there has not been an impact...the FARC wasn’t here”.²³⁷

Thus, despite the devastating impacts of the conflict in Baudó and the pressing need for economic opportunities and state services, the region has not been seen as a strategic priority in implementing peace. The coca substitution program (*Programa Nacional Integral de Sustitución de Cultivos de Uso Ilícito*, PNIS), was eagerly anticipated in Baudó as an opportunity to transition away from the coca economy. Yet following a big meeting in Baudó in 2017, the program completely halted and has made no progress in the more than four years since. The participatory development project PDET (Territorially Focused Development Plans) doesn’t include the Baudó municipalities.

²³⁷ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020

Thus, despite initial optimism following the signing of the peace accord, whatever promise the peace accord might have initially held has faded in the face of a rising wave of violence in the region: “Here, we’ve never had a post-conflict, the groups are still here”.²³⁸ Nevertheless, this is not to imply that the peace deal has had no impact in Baudó. The demobilization of the FARC combined with the collapse of negotiations with the ELN in 2019 has sharpened the competition in Baudó between the two major armed groups that the peace deal didn’t include, the ELN and the AGC (Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, *Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia*): “without the FARC, the other groups are getting stronger”.²³⁹ Where there was previously a relative measure of stability created by de facto territorial divisions between the ELN in the upper part of the river and the paramilitaries in the lower end, conflict between the two groups spilled over into Baudó beginning in 2015, with significant fighting between the two groups in Bajo Baudó that gradually shifted upriver as the AGC pushed the ELN back to its traditional strongholds in Alto Baudó (*OCHA Colombia Monitor Humanitario*, n.d.). At the moment of my visit in late 2021, the AGC had won a string of victories over the ELN and held control over most of the region.

This chapter seeks to understand how the communities in the region have sought to defend themselves from the daunting new threats brought on by the end of the peace deal. Within the broader context of my research question – “what explains variation in community autonomy and influence²⁴⁰ in local peace implementation” – I explore variance in the strategies and efficacy of post-conflict community self-protection in the Baudó region. I adopt as the key explanatory variable ‘regional integration’, defined as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. Regional integration varies from *independent communities*, which maintain retain all legal

²³⁸ Pie de Pepé junta directiva leader, Personal Communication, 07/2019

²³⁹ Pie de Pepé junta directiva leader, Personal Communication, 07/2019

²⁴⁰ By influence, I mean the capacity of communities to shape the outcomes of broader political processes: the implementation of a government policy; the decision-making of an armed group. By autonomy, I mean the capacity of communities to maintain free and independent control over decisions of direct relevance to the community – over natural resources, cultural and social life, justice administration – which may also be understood as a form of limited self-rule within the context of a broader state (De la torre, 2000; Kaplan, 2017; Ortiz-Guerrero et al., 2017; Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019).

authority over their territory as well as representational duties at the community level, to *associations*, which retain legal authority at the community level, but participate in an association to represent their interests externally, to *Consejos Comunitarios Mayores (CCM)*, highly integrated bodies which concentrate both legal authority and representational powers at the regional level.

This chapter assesses the impact of regional integration on community self-protection through a controlled comparison of three neighboring groups of Afro-Colombian communities in neighboring subsections of the Baudó river (see Map 1, below). Each group of communities represents a different degree along the continuum between independence and integration. In the lower stretches of the Baudó river are three similar clusters of communities. The communities that border the Baudó river belong to the “Zona 3”, the southernmost section of the highly regionally integrated Consejo Comunitario Mayor ACABA (General Community Council of the Rio Baudó and its Affluents, *Consejo Comunitario General del Río Baudó y sus Afluentes*). Immediately to the west are six smaller rivers that flow directly into the Pacific ocean. These communities have formed a looser association of consejos comunitarios ACONOCIP (Norsiviria Association of Community Councils, *Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios de Norsiviria*). To the east, the community of the tributary river Río Pepé has formed its own independent consejo comunitario, and does not participate in any regional organization.

I begin by introducing each of the three cases, focusing on the differences in their structure as they relate to variation in the divisions of rights and authority between the community and regional scale, before discussing the effects of those structural differences on their approaches to and capacity in civilian self-protection strategies following the 2016 peace deal. I finish with an evaluation of civilian autonomy and security in each of the three organizations at the present. The empirical evidence I collected suggests that increasing integration offers greater protection to communities through increasing political power, safety in numbers and increased bureaucratic sophistication. However, I found that those advantages are significantly mitigated by the relative advantages of more independent structures, namely, greater internal participation and community-level flexibility and decision-making control.

Introducing the cases

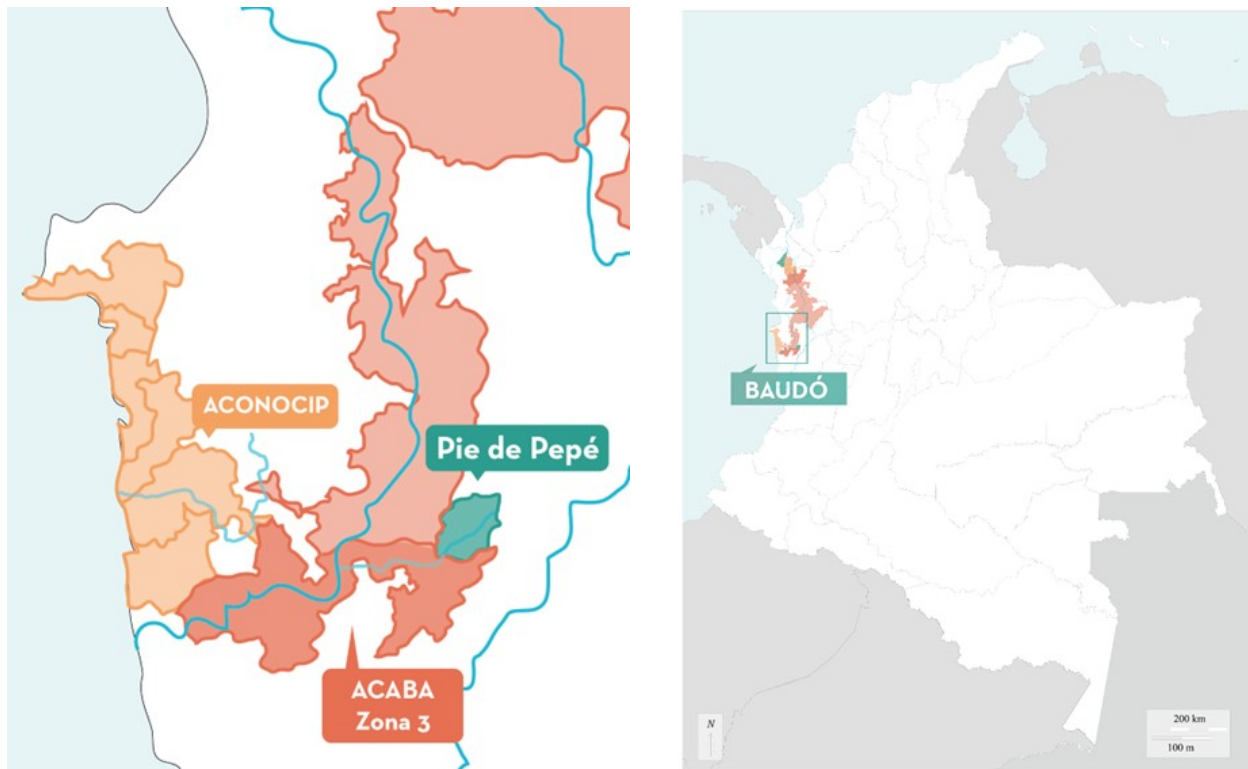


Figure 10: Zooming in on the cases in Baudó

ACABA

ACABA is a highly regionally integrated consejo comunitario mayor formed along the majority of the Baudó river cuenca, including 73 communities and 174,000 ha. The organization's structure is divided into two key bodies, the consejo comunitario mayor (CCM), which holds the legal authority over the collective land title and represents the interests of the 73 communities externally, and the consejos comunitarios locales (CCL), which operate at the community level²⁴¹, problem-solving issues of individual communities and representing their interests within the organization.

Like every consejo comunitario, ACABA is led by a junta directiva (board of directors) and a legal representative, with 9 elected seats serving 3 year terms. This group leads the day-to-day management

²⁴¹ A CCL in some cases represents a geographically proximate group of 2-3 communities. ACABA has 42 CCLs to administer 73 total communities.

of the consejo comunitario. Supporting the junta directiva is the advisory group, an unelected mix of historical founders of the organization and younger professionals who provide advice and technical support in project implementation. The highest authority within the consejo comunitario is the general assembly, which is made up of five representatives from each community. The general assembly meets on an annual basis (and can meet ad hoc, if necessary) to exercise oversight over the junta directiva and discuss and approve the major decisions of the consejo comunitario. Every three years, the assembly elects the junta and the legal representative. The CCLs reproduce the structure of the CCM, with a president, junta directiva and asamblea.²⁴²

When I asked a former ACABA president what the organizational leadership in the CCM do, he explained to me, “we govern”.²⁴³ In pursuit of those goals, the CCM plays three critical roles within the organization: accompaniment, oversight, and maintaining external relationships for the organization.

By accompaniment I mean all the various forms of support that the CCM offers to the communities: leadership development, technical support in development planning, and physical and moral accompaniment during periods of extreme stress and danger. Meetings between the CCM and the CCL dedicate significant attention to collective history and identity, touching on themes such as *cimarronaje*²⁴⁴ to deepen the political consciousness of the organization. The CCM holds workshops in different ACABA communities to strengthen and develop local leadership. International allies - in recent years, ACNUR and the Embassy of Norway - provide the funding and offer technical support for workshops on human rights, the ley 70, self-governance, their reglamentos, agricultural development projects and more. The organization also generated a project in partnership with the Ministry of Culture to

²⁴² ACABA junta directiva members, personal communication, May 2019

²⁴³ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020

²⁴⁴ a *cimarron* (escaped slave) hero from the early 17th century who established one of the first free communities of black people in the Americas.

create workshops on rescuing traditional practices around midwifing, funeral rights and productive practices.²⁴⁵

The CCM also seeks to strengthen the capacity of its membership through education programs.²⁴⁶ The organization established a program of scholarships for students from Baudó in partnership with the Technical University of Chocó (UTCH), offering five full scholarships and three partial scholarships per year, funding the education of about 40 students. In exchange, the students have to do social work for the ACABA communities. In partnership with ICANH (*Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia*, Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History), ACABA is working with teachers in Medio Baudó to strengthen their understanding of ethno-education, with workshops on the ley 70, Afro culture and history and racism in Colombia.²⁴⁷

The organization also offers a significant amount of technical support to its member communities focused on building successful agricultural development projects. They offer support both in design and implementation: they formulate the plans for agricultural projects, seek funding (*gestionar*) and send technicians to advise (*asesorar*) their agricultural development projects.²⁴⁸

During times of more extreme stress and danger, such as following a major displacement, the organization will seek to organize fact-finding missions (*giras*) with their international allies, in order to collect information on local needs and make public denunciations.²⁴⁹ These *giras* also provide an opportunity for the organization and its allies to help communities with the legal processes such as

²⁴⁵ ACABA former junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, July 2019

²⁴⁶ (ACABA junta directiva leader 4, personal communication, July 2019

²⁴⁷ ACABA fieldnotes 11/4/2021

²⁴⁸ ACABA junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, June 2019

²⁴⁹ ACABA Members, personal communication, March 2020

derechos de peticiones (right of petition), which allows citizens to demand institutional responses when their rights are being violated.²⁵⁰

The main tool for the CCM exercise oversight is through its *reglamentos*, or bylaws, addressing resource management, social coexistence and neutrality rules regarding the conflict. The CCM creates an overarching set of reglamentos; within those reglamentos, the CCL of each community shapes its own set of rules. The CCM offers support in the regular process of *adjustes* (updates): in November 2021, members of the CCM visited each of the CCLs to advise the communities in updating their own reglamentos.²⁵¹

To enforce the reglamentos, ACABA focuses on socializing the communities as to the contents of the reglamento rather than disciplining infractions.²⁵² This is both out of preference as well as necessity: for example, the CCM cannot safely denounce coca growth in the communities. However, this is not to imply that the CCM is powerless to intervene: in difficult conflicts involving tricky border disputes or suspected corruption, the CCM acts as a respected mediator: “When the community can’t resolve a problem, it goes to the CCM”.²⁵³ And in dealing with corruption, the CCM has the power to bar individuals from holding positions within the organization.²⁵⁴

In addition to its functions of internal control and accompaniment, the CCM manages all the external relations of the consejo comunitario. An ACABA leader expressed that the ACABA CCM, “is the father of the CCLs. And just like a father, it has to go out to look for food for its children”.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁰ ACABA junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, June 2019

²⁵¹ ACABA fieldnotes, 11/3/2021

²⁵² ACABA junta directiva leader 4, personal communication, July 2019

²⁵³ ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 3

²⁵⁴ ACABA members, personal communication, July 5, 2019

²⁵⁵ ACABA junta directiva leader 4, personal communication, July 2019

The main point of interaction between ACABA and the state is through the mayors (*alcaldes*), a relationship that the CCM tries to mediate, with some mixed results. For example, when the Medio Baudó municipality began a new rice exportation project, *Arroz Baudó*, ACABA offered support in designing the plan and locating a space for a processing plant.²⁵⁶ The organization also has occasional success with involvement in municipal electoral politics, including a prominent ACABA leader who won a position as *concejal* (member of the municipal legislature) in Medio Baudó. Involvement in electoral politics can also backfire: ACABA endorsed an alcalde candidate in 2019; the candidate lost and the new alcalde is openly hostile to the organization. In general, “people support ACABA, but not politically” as in: people support the organization, but not enough for it to overcome the machine politics that dominate municipal elections.²⁵⁷

The central state is mostly felt as a distant, unresponsive entity that has abandoned the people of Baudó.²⁵⁸ Nevertheless, a key role of the CCM is to build relationships with government contacts. ACABA has had some success in building linkages and securing support for various parts of the state: partnerships with the Ministry of Education and ICANH have been described above. The *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Human Rights Ombudsman) frequently works fairly closely with ACABA, offering material support for meetings and accompanying fact-finding giras.²⁵⁹ Since 2017, ACABA has been working with the Unidad de Víctimas on a collective restitution order for the organization; the negotiations are in advanced stages. In the meantime, the organization has been provided with three cars with armed guards for the constant use of the junta directiva, a new motor for the ACABA boat and cell phones for all of the CCL leaders.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁶ ACABA members, personal communication, July 5, 2019

²⁵⁷ ACABA member, personal communication, July 3, 2019

²⁵⁸ ACABA junta directiva leader 4, personal communication, July 2019

²⁵⁹ ACABA junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, June 2019

²⁶⁰ ACABA junta directiva leader 4, personal communication, July 2019

International actors provide crucial support for workshops, agricultural development projects and accompanying the organization in making denunciations against the armed groups and the state. ACNUR, OCHA and the Norwegian embassy have also been critical allies over the last decade, working with the CCM to observe and denounce human rights violations by the state and nonstate groups—homicides, confinements, displacements—taking place in the territory.²⁶¹

In visits to the community-level CCLs, leaders in these spaces explained to me that their role was to “watch over (*velar*) and defend our community” through an interrelated set of responsibilities: as a link between the CCM and the communities, territorial administration, conflict resolution and training and culture building.²⁶²

As an ACABA leader explained to me: the CCLs are, “the figure that we use to manage the territory. A consejo comunitario mayor is very big...ACABA can’t be everywhere at once”. As such, the CCLs are, “the intermediary between the *consejo mayor* and the people”.²⁶³ Thus, the CCL has the responsibility both of sharing information with the community, as well as bringing community needs and interests to the CCM.

Each CCL is responsible for administering their territory by developing their land use reglamentos.²⁶⁴ The reglamentos may also seek to protect natural resources: in community 3, the CCL forbade fishing with poison after they saw the effect it was having on the fish population. Perhaps even more importantly, the CCL watches over their territory, ensuring that nobody in the community sells the

²⁶¹ ACABA junta directiva leader 4, personal communication, July 2019

²⁶² Fieldnotes: ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

²⁶³ ACABA former junta directiva 1, Personal Communication, July 2019

²⁶⁴ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020

land to outsiders, reports to the CCM on threats to the community, and negotiates directly with the armed groups if necessary.²⁶⁵

In general, these dialogues are preemptive, attempting to maintain open channels of communication and generate respect for humanitarian rights of the communities. However, if an armed group has abducted a member of the community, the leaders must be more proactive. As a local leader explained to me, “we have saved a lot of lives like that...sometimes a person who makes a mistake has to leave the territory, but they stay alive”.²⁶⁶ At times, these interactions are highly confrontational. Armed groups will frequently hold meetings with the community to explain their political goals or seek to build relationships. In these meetings, the groups expect submissiveness from the communities, but one ACABA member told me that her and others from her community would make their position clear to the ELN, yelling that they don’t want the group in their community.²⁶⁷

The CCL is responsible for resolving conflicts as they emerge in the community; it takes the role of ‘amigables componedores’, or impartial mediator. In cases of fights, conflict within families or between neighbors, and especially land disputes,²⁶⁸ community members will seek out the CCL for help.²⁶⁹ The CCL will seek out testimonies from both sides, and talk with the elders of the community before offering a decision. In cases where someone has violated the community reglamentos, the CCL also can issue punishments, with fines or public works.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁵ Fieldnotes: ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 3

²⁶⁶ ACABA membership, personal communication, June 2, 2019

²⁶⁷ ACABA membership, personal communication, June 2, 2019

²⁶⁸ Two frequently heard examples: the animals of a neighbor cross into another person’s land and destroy their crops, or a person crosses into someone else’s land to log.

²⁶⁹ Fieldnotes: ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2 and 3

²⁷⁰ Fieldnotes: ACABA recorrido 11/6/2021, Community 4

ACONOCIP

ACONOCIP is an association of consejos comunitarios of the northern half of the municipality of Bajo Baudó, including the communities of Pilizá, Villa Maria De Purricha, San Augustin De Terrón, Pavasa, Virudó and Cueva. Each of these individual communities has its own legal title for the community's lands, and its own functionally independent consejo comunitario to administer the territory. However, they collectively participate in an association, which has as its function to represent the communities externally regarding issues that involve the entire region. As such, this group of communities represents an intermediate approach between integration and independence: while the communities have their own independent legal control over their lands, they do participate in a regional organizing project to strengthen their collective representation at the regional level with external actors.

The role of the association ACONOCIP is to represent the interests of the member consejos comunitarios. Recall the main functions of the ACABA CCM: accompaniment, oversight and maintaining external relationships. Because ACONOCIP doesn't have the same legal authority over the communities, its role is almost exclusively weighted towards the third: its job is to build relationships with outside actors and dialogue with the state:

The goal [of ACONOCIP] is to seek alliances with other national and international organizations, NGOs, establish agreements and contracts, with entities at the local, regional and national level, present proposals and projects that aim towards the development of its six consejos comunitarios.²⁷¹

Historically, the organization has generated a number of agricultural development projects in partnership with government entities and NGOs, including a project with pigs and sharing seeds for rice cultivation.²⁷² ACONOCIP represented the interests of the 6 consejos comunitarios in negotiations in the REDD+ project²⁷³ for the carbon credits: individually each consejo comunitario was too small to manage

²⁷¹ ACONOCIP Leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

²⁷² Pilizá Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

²⁷³ The REDD+ project is a carbon credits scheme in which communities receive payments from international funders to prevent deforestation and build environmentally sustainable local economies. This

its own carbon credit project, so the platform was a vital tool to advancing a collective project. However, the project collapsed following a spate of violence in the communities of Virudó and Terrón, after which the zone was deemed too insecure to advance with the project.²⁷⁴

ACONOCIP is currently in negotiations with a Chinese business for a large-scale exportation project focusing on papa china (taro root) and lulo. The project has already completed initial quality studies, and the two sides are moving forward with a trial production stage of 100 Ha of production spread out among the 6 member consejo comunitarios. ACONOCIP is in negotiations with the alcaldía to provide the seeds for the project, though the mayor has so far not been forthcoming.²⁷⁵

ACONOCIP would like to play a greater role in accompanying the communities, though its role at this point is fairly limited. The ACONOCIP leaders live and work in the communities and offer informal advice in some²⁷⁶ of the consejos comunitarios. The ACONOCIP leaders I spoke with were among the most knowledgeable leaders I met in Bajo Baudó regarding the Ley 70 and the legal rights and responsibilities of the consejos comunitarios. ACONOCIP also plans to support the communities in formulating ethno-development plans (*plan de etnodesarrollo*)²⁷⁷ to guide their economic activities, but thus far has been unable to locate funding for the project.²⁷⁸

carbon credits scheme has brought an important influx of resources into the consejos comunitarios in Chocó.

²⁷⁴ Fieldnotes, Pizarro, 11/6/2021

²⁷⁵ ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

²⁷⁶ In a number of the member consejo comunitarios, there are overt leadership conflicts, and ACONOCIP leaders are not very welcome.

²⁷⁷ Planes de etnodesarrollo are plans that define the economic vision of a consejo comunitario, and are intended for use as a development roadmap and a tool in negotiations with the state.

²⁷⁸ ACONOCIP Leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

In response to emerging security threats, ACONOCIP partners with the department-wide ethnic organization Foro Interétnico Solidaridad Chocó (FISCH) and the Istmina diocese to put out denunciations of the actions of the armed groups and demand a state response:

Through the interethnic forum [FISCH] we make joint denunciations...that makes the situation visible, it gives results because as they are public complaints, it at least reduces pressure from the armed actors, because the church has a respected voice and the forum too.²⁷⁹

On occasion, the organization seeks out the leaders of the armed groups directly to demand respect for the ethnic rights of the consejos comunitarios they represent:

ACONOCIP has interceded on multiple occasions, talking with the heads of those [armed] groups that we are an ethnic group, poor people, that we have nothing to do with the war, but we are the ones who have to pay...we have tried to influence this situation by getting these people to recognize our rights.²⁸⁰

In terms of internal control and conflict resolution, ACONOCIP would also like to play a larger role than it currently occupies. An ACONOCIP leader explained: “If a community requests help for a conflict, that is one of the key roles (*ejes*) of the organization, we give our point of view, recommendations, etc.”.²⁸¹ However, when I discussed this with the leadership of the individual consejos comunitarios, they told me that conflict resolution is the work of the communities themselves, that the role of ACONOCIP association is more externally facing (*para gestionar*). Even in conflicts between different communities: “the consejo leaders meet with each other to resolve, ACONOCIP cannot enter into that”.²⁸²

Much like the CCLs of ACABA, the role of the consejos comunitarios within ACONOCIP is to defend the interests of their community, through the same internal structure (legal representative, junta directiva and asamblea). However, there is a crucial difference. While the community-level CCLs within ACABA are dependent on the broader organization, the consejos comunitarios inside the association

²⁷⁹ ACONOCIP Leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

²⁸⁰ ACONOCIP Leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

²⁸¹ ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

²⁸² CC Terrón Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

ACONOCIP “are independent, legally equal to CONCOSTA²⁸³ or COCOMACIA”. While ACONOCIP represents these consejos comunitarios in their external relations, all legal decision-making power is held by the individual consejos comunitarios of each community: “The association is our representation, but it does not act for us...ACONOCIP does not participate in the decisions, it just represents us in projects”.²⁸⁴ As such, while the association is empowered to seek out relationships with the state and other actors, any legally binding decision regarding the territories is held by the consejos comunitarios of the individual communities. This legal power held in the individual consejos comunitarios generates important differences in their approach to territorial administration, conflict resolution and ethno-development.

Despite their membership in ACONOCIP, the consejo comunitarios of Bajo Baudó see external work as a shared task between them and the association. The objective of the consejos comunitarios is to “bring benefits to the community, represent the community, go wherever to see what you can bring in (*que puede conseguir*)”.²⁸⁵ The communities within ACONOCIP have had only inconsistent success in generating resources and projects. Pilizá, the southernmost consejo comunitario in ACONOCIP, was able to join the Redd+ carbon credit program currently ongoing in the south of Bajo Baudó. The other consejo comunitarios in ACONOCIP have tried to generate their own projects, with little results: “We’re waiting for results, but we’re tired of meetings, we’ve been knocking on all the doors, but there’s nothing to show for it”.²⁸⁶

Beyond external-facing work, a leader from Pilizá explained to me that a key objective of the consejos comunitarios is to administer the territory: “As a consejo comunitario, the ley 70 gave us the territory, our administration comes from that, to defend the territory”. In order to do so, Pilizá is involved in a project of officially demarcating their territorial boundaries, to clarify the limits of their authority and

²⁸³ CONCOSTA is an integrated consejo comunitario mayor in the southern part of Bajo Baudó.

²⁸⁴ CC Terrón Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

²⁸⁵ CC Terrón Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

²⁸⁶ Field notes, Purricha CC Meeting 11/7/2021

reduce boundary disputes. If the state or any other entity wants to do anything within that territory, they need to get the official permission of the consejo comunitario.²⁸⁷ Part of that work includes dialogue with the armed groups: “The consejo comunitario will face any situation and talk to anyone” though the junta has to realize “up to what point” they can dialogue.²⁸⁸

Like the community-level CCLs of ACABA, the consejos comunitarios in ACONOCIP are also involved in everyday conflict resolution within the community, in disputes between neighbors or issues over boundaries between land holdings, resolved through discussion and fact-finding. To a degree, the consejos comunitarios also make use of reglamentos to reduce internal conflict: in Pilizá, the reglamentos create internal price controls for everyday staples, guiding the prices of plantains, fruits, etc. The reglamentos also determine eligibility for leadership roles within the consejo comunitario: aspirants must be able to show consistent participation in some aspect of the consejo comunitario in the years prior to running for a position in the junta.²⁸⁹

Pie de Pepé

Pie de Pepé is an independent consejo comunitario of a single community: it has no membership in a regional-level organization with which it divides the responsibilities of governing the community or its territory. Thus, Pepé maintains all the representative functions and legal decision-making power at the community level. As a consejo comunitario, it maintains the same internal structures as all other consejo comunitarios: a legal representative, junta directiva and asamblea general.

²⁸⁷ CC Pilizá Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

²⁸⁸ Bajo Baudó leader, Personal Communication, 11/2021

²⁸⁹ CC Pilizá Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

Like any other consejo comunitario, the function of the Pepé consejo comunitario is to defend its territory and its people, maintain its culture and traditions, represent the communities to external institutions and generate development.²⁹⁰

By far the largest day-to-day work of the Pepé junta directiva is to implement alongside with the community the various projects emerging from the Redd+ carbon credits project. These include a number of agricultural production projects, including projects on chicken, aquaculture, pigs, cacao and achiote. The leadership is also developing a tourism project to take advantage of the natural beauty of the Pepé river, with a restaurant and casetas for tourists.²⁹¹

The junta directiva is also active in building the capacity and collective identity of the community. With the support of the Redd+ project, they have held workshops on issues of collective governance and the ley 70. They maintain cultural projects such as the program *Sabores de Ayer* (flavors of yesterday), a monthly event where they cook traditional foods and explain to the young people the recipe, history and the specific benefits of those foods.²⁹² The junta supports an annual Festivo de Agua, a traditional space to celebrate their river and educate community members on the need to protect it. The Redd+ project has also allowed the Pepé consejo comunitario to develop new groups focused on knowledge and capacity-building, including a woman's group and a group called environmental conservators (*conservadores de medio ambiente*), focused on water management and the environment.²⁹³ An advisor for the Pepé junta explained to me that these development and cultural programs are a key way that they seek to resist armed groups, by working with vulnerable young people and linking them to the programs of the consejo comunitario.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁰ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

²⁹¹ Pie de Pepé advisor, Personal Communication, 10/28/2021

²⁹² Fieldnotes, REDD+ meeting, July 5, 2019

²⁹³ Pie de Pepé advisor, Personal Communication, 10/28/2021

²⁹⁴ Pie de Pepé Advisor, personal communication, July 2019

The consejo comunitario is also in charge of internal control, both by administering the territory and in resolving internal conflicts. The consejo comunitario regulates who can enter the territory: “No outsider or state entity can come in without permission. No one can use it without our permission, because the territory is ours, we are the authority in the territory”.²⁹⁵ Over the last few years, the junta learned about their right to demand the *consulta previa* (prior consultation) for any project in their territory from a training workshop from the Ministry of the Interior, and are resolute in the necessity of the consultation (“*sin consulta, nada*”). They recently initiated a prior consultation in advance of a new cell antenna built in their territory.²⁹⁶

Pie de Pepé has a set of reglamentos that reflect its commitment to maintaining peaceful coexistence within the community and avoiding all forms of entanglements with armed groups. The reglamentos also create a set of punishments for violations of the rules, though the junta told me these weren’t really in use, because, they say, they haven’t really been necessary.²⁹⁷

The Pepé junta directiva also plays an important role as a conflict mediator in the community. Within the consejo comunitario, there is a mediation committee that community members bring their disputes to. If the committee can’t resolve the problem, they bring it to the junta directiva; the junta will write an agreement and have both parties sign it.²⁹⁸ Especially over land issues, however, the junta directiva won’t necessarily have the final say in resolving the conflict. It’s the community elders who hold the knowledge of the borders between family plots and who make the ultimate decision, in conversation

²⁹⁵ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

²⁹⁶ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021. This is fairly notable - even some more integrated consejos comunitarios mayors have been unable to push the cell companies to hold consultas previas, as the mayors often put pressure on the community leaders to skip such meetings in the name of more rapid development (Fieldnotes, COCOMACIA Zona 9, 10/8/2021).

²⁹⁷ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

²⁹⁸ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

with the rest of the community, as to how the conflict will be addressed. If no recourse can be found, or if the conflict involves illegal activity, the junta involves the local police.²⁹⁹

Comparison

In the previous section, I explored the variation in the degree of regional integration among communities within three organizations in the lower part of the Baudó river: some communities belong to the highly regionally integrated CCM ACABA and others to intermediate strategy, an association of consejos comunitarios ACONOCIP, while the community of Pepé remains fully independent. In this section, I examine the effects of those differences in organizational structure and their consequences for the self-protection capacity of these communities in the wake of the 2016 peace deal.

Integration Advantages

I argue that increasing regional integration generates increased organizational capacity, internal integration and external legitimacy. In turn, these advantages should produce a degree of safety in numbers, more economic and cultural projects for communities, broader training and access to information among the membership, and stronger mechanisms of internal control.

Increasing regional integration should generate more organizational capacity: defined as an organization's resources and the expertise and administrative capability to implement relevant programs (Zald et al. 2005).

First, increasing regional integration allows organizations to call on more people and resources, which I predicted would enhance autoprotection strategies by reducing the dangers of isolation, increasing the costs of protests and increasing negotiation leverage with other actors. While mass protest is a fairly infrequent tactic in general in Baudó, I found significant evidence of the other two factors.

²⁹⁹ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 1, personal communication, July 2019

I predicted that highly integrated CCMs would have the collective strength to limit armed groups from entering the territory, while the leaders of independent consejo comunitarios would face greater risk of coercion from armed groups since they are easier to identify and single out. Although ACABA has struggled to maintain a unified commitment to the neutrality norms enshrined in their reglamentos, their greater numbers enables a stronger collective response to armed group pressure than their counterparts in ACONOCIP and Pepé. I asked a community leader within ACABA what the advantages of membership in a big regional organization like ACABA were. He didn't immediately respond, but rather grabbed a few pieces of paper and began ripping them into thin strips. He passed a single strip to a leader sitting with us and invited her to rip it - she did so with ease. Then he stacked the rest of the strips of paper and handed them to another community member who was sitting with us. They were impossible to rip. "¿Vea?" he asked. "Which was the more difficult to break? That's the difference with ACABA, we have more weight, more muscle, more strength, and more protection".³⁰⁰

Most often, this collective protection function manifests as the regional CCM ACABA supporting individual community leaders under pressure. A CCL leader recalled a story of when he was facing threats and seriously considering fleeing the territory, the junta directiva offered him constant support, monitored his safety and enabled him and the rest of the community to stay in place.³⁰¹ However, the communities can also offer collective protection to the CCM. In a meeting in Baudó in November 2021, the leaders of all the CCLs gathered to discuss a crisis: two members of ACABA's junta directiva had been forced out of the territory by threats from an armed group under accusations of mismanagement of the Redd+ carbon credits money. The 42 CCL leaders in the meeting determined that the groups can threaten a few leaders, but not all of ACABA, not all of the 40+ CCLs, and that as the communities they also had to defend (*respaldar*) the CCM. The leaders put together an open letter denouncing the threats and saying that their leaders have the support of the CCLs, and that they be permitted to move freely in

³⁰⁰ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 3

³⁰¹ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/2/2021

Baudó. With the support of the CCLs and other allies, the leaders are planning an imminent return to Baudó.³⁰²

Despite some level of regional integration, I saw little evidence that membership in the intermediate strategy, the association ACONOCIP, granted the communities any increased degree of collective protection. In short, this is because the members of the association see the organization more as a negotiation platform for projects rather than a source of support in moments of crisis. In comparing the communities of ACONOCIP with the more integrated ACABA, a leader of Pilizá reflects that, “Yes, we have our independence, but we’re isolated, abandoned”.³⁰³ However, ACONOCIP does serve as a conduit for denunciations of armed group actions through their ties to the Istmina Diocese and to FISCH.

In general, an ACABA leader notes that the independent consejos comunitarios of Baudó are especially penetrated by violence and armed group control: there is more coca growth, violence and the consejos are co-opted by the armed groups.³⁰⁴ In Pie de Pepé, despite the presence of a police station in town, armed groups exercise direct pressure on the junta directiva, demanding that the junta directiva collaborate with them on community projects and asking for bribes.³⁰⁵ Armed groups have informants within the community, and people know they can’t talk freely. For that reason, the Pepé consejo comunitario very rarely denounces the armed groups present in their territory. As an advisor explained to me, “[the Pepé consejo comunitario] does not go and make denunciations out of fear, because the armed groups live there in the same place as them”.³⁰⁶

A second clear advantage of the increased power in numbers afforded by greater regional integration is increased leverage in negotiations with other parties, and thus more consistent avenues to

³⁰² Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/1/2021

³⁰³ Pilizá Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

³⁰⁴ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020

³⁰⁵ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 1, personal communication, July 2019

³⁰⁶ Pie de Pepé Consejero, personal communication, July 2019

securing external support. A junta directiva leader from Pepé explained to me that he felt that because ACABA had many more people than Pepé, they had much more weight in the negotiations with the state.³⁰⁷ When I asked a politician from Baudó to compare ACABA to the other consejos comunitarios of Baudó, he answered simply, “they get more projects”.³⁰⁸

This difference was demonstrated clearly in the lead-up to the carbon credits program, shared by both ACABA and Pepé. A coordinator from the REDD+ program explained to me that because Pie de Pepé was so small, they have very little negotiating leverage: nobody would be very interested in doing a project in their little chunk of land, so the project couldn’t move forward without bringing in ACABA.³⁰⁹ Another functionary in the REDD+ program explained to me that ACABA will always be more commercially interesting to outside companies because there’s much more potential for territorial expansion for a successful project.³¹⁰

The desire for more weight in negotiations with the state and other entities has been a driving force behind the organization ACONOCIP as well: “The institutions (*entidades*) say, ‘we’re not going to invest in just one small consejo comunitario’, so the strategy has always been, even though there are 6 independent consejo comunitarios, just one consejo comunitario alone can’t do much, but unified, we can do bigger projects”.³¹¹ A leader of the CC Terrón, a member of ACONOCIP, observes that, “it’s easier to invest in a bigger population”. For example, an agricultural project in progress led by ACONOCIP requires 100 Ha for planting. A leader from one of the consejos comunitarios explained that if they were alone, it

³⁰⁷ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 1, personal communication, July 2019

³⁰⁸ Baudó Politician, personal communication, March 2020

³⁰⁹ REDD+ coordinator, personal communication, July 5, 2019

³¹⁰ Redd+ tecnico, personal communication, 7/8/2021

³¹¹ ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

would be difficult for an individual consejo comunitario to find the land and manpower to do such a project.³¹²

In addition to raw numbers and resources, Zald et al. (2005) define organizational capacity in terms of expertise and administrative capabilities: as I explored in previous chapters, regional integration generates advantages in professionalization and specialization to better handle complex tasks. I found that these advantages manifested as stronger project planning and management capacity and deeper knowledge-building among the membership.

First, regional integration allows ACABA to draw on a larger pool of professionals. At least four people either serving on or advising the junta directiva are professionally trained as agricultural engineers or technicians, and a big part of their job with ACABA is to offer professional input in planning development projects. The rest of the junta directiva and their advisors are highly professionalized: lawyers, accountants, environmental engineers and management experts. Beyond its larger size, the bureaucratized structure of ACABA allows for a complex division of labor, most visibly present in the tiered relationship between the community-level CCLs and the regional leadership body in the CCM. While local leaders focus on the everyday administration of the territory, the CCM leadership is freed up to focus on developing projects and building relationships with external actors. As a Pie de Pepé leader explained to me, “ACABA has more leaders, more expertise, more ability to build outside relationships, and gets more projects”³¹³.

While the rest of the consejos comunitarios of Baudó are virtually dependent on the carbon credits as the exclusive source of external projects, ACABA has pushed forward a much wider portfolio of projects, including a cacao project with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a fishing project in partnership with the consejo comunitarios of Bajo Baudó, and a contract with the United Nations World

³¹² CC Terrón Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

³¹³ Pie de Pepé Consejero, personal communication, July 2019

Food Programme (WFP) to deliver humanitarian assistance in the region.³¹⁴ A crucial example of ACABA's stronger project management capacity is the Arroz Baudó project, a rice production and processing project spearheaded by the former alcalde in partnership with ACABA. After the newly elected alcalde tried to undermine the project for political purposes, ACABA took over some aspects of managing the mill to ensure the project's survival.³¹⁵

Specialization and a stronger leadership pool allow ACABA to make more active investments in leadership development, through workshops, leadership training sessions and scholarship projects for education. Additionally, the CCM body itself is a massive leadership training opportunity, in which local leaders come to Quibdó and interact with other ethnic leaders as well as politicians and international actors.³¹⁶ Even a CCL leader who strongly criticized ACABA's lack of presence in his community related to me that from the CCM "we have learned a lot, a lot of training, how to defend ourselves and our rights".³¹⁷

The association ACONOCIP, which represents the intermediate strategy between independence and integration, does have a few leaders offering professional assistance in the process of negotiating with the state or developing agricultural development projects.³¹⁸ Nevertheless, the level of knowledge and capacity among the leadership in ACONOCIP is noticeably lower than in ACABA. A leader from Pilizá related to me that, "We are more or less at zero, even the consejo comunitario leaders do not know much about the ley 70".³¹⁹ From their perspective, ACABA has developed a significantly stronger political and economic vision:

³¹⁴ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

³¹⁵ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/1/2021

³¹⁶ ACABA junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, July 2019

³¹⁷ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

³¹⁸ Pilizá Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

³¹⁹ Pilizá Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

Here we get easily tangled up (*enredado*) negotiating with the entities of Bogotá...ACABA is very clear about their development vision, they have the knowledge. More than waiting and receiving projects, they propose their own projects, they have much more capacity to manage projects.³²⁰

They [ACABA] have had very good advisers, their advisers have been lawyers, they have had accountants, project professionals, well, great people have led ACABA, on the other hand ACONOCIP has not had the privilege of having this level of advising.³²¹

Meanwhile, ACABA leaders note that in the independent consejos comunitarios, the leaders have less formation and less training, and as a result are less fortalecido (strengthened).³²² Of all the independent consejo comunitarios in the Baudó river region, ACABA leaders note that Pepé has developed the greatest level of sophistication, jump-started by the arrival of the carbon credits programs and the numerous trainings that accompanied the project.³²³ Almost all of the professional work required in the carbon credits program is provided by people from Pepé, whenever possible.³²⁴ Nevertheless, there are still knowledge gaps in the Pepé consejo comunitario: people in leadership positions have less depth of knowledge regarding the ley 70 and the functions and limits of the consejo comunitario's powers relative to ACABA. These knowledge gaps can have serious consequences: for example, in 2016 there was a significant conflict over the election rules to the junta directiva in Pepé that caused fissures in the organization.³²⁵

I predicted that increasing regional integration would enable communities across a wide territory to act as a unified body, enhancing their ability to mobilize, share information and enforce rules internally. Effective resistance to armed groups is basically a massive coordination problem, which regional

³²⁰ ACONOCIP advisor, Personal Communication, 11/6/2021

³²¹ ACONOCIP Leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

³²² ACABA former junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, July 2019

³²³ Another important factor in Pepé's relatively high level of professionalization: they are located on the road, less than an hour away from the city of Istmina, so they have relatively easy access to the educational and job opportunities afforded by the city.

³²⁴ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³²⁵ ACABA junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, July 2019

integration potentially resolves by creating a centralized leadership body. ACABA played an essential role in coordinating the last major protest mobilization, *Baudosiando*, in 2014, creating consensus on strategies and sharing out information on the event throughout Baudó.³²⁶ The integrated structure of ACABA also vastly reduced the complexity of the carbon credits program by creating a single voice to coordinate projects for 73 communities, and allows them to build broader-scale projects with more reach. While the independent Pepé has mostly focused on small-scale agricultural projects, ACABA projects include a multi-community caña commercialization project, a collective seed bank and a micro-loan bank.³²⁷

The intermediate association ACONOCIP was formed specifically in response to coordination problems in the region: a collective platform creates more efficiency in leadership:

It makes it easier to dialogue with the state...to bring together all the 6 leaders of the different consejo comunitarios often is too difficult, or too expensive. It's much more efficient if just 1 or 2 people can represent all of us.³²⁸

In the absence of a regional organizing body, these deficiencies become apparent. For example, the Unidad de Víctimas is working on a collective restitution project with all of the consejos comunitarios of Bajo Baudó, including the consejo comunitarios of ACONOCIP and a number of others: it's going very slowly, because it's challenging to bring together and work with so many different authorities simultaneously.³²⁹

I also argued that regional integration also creates channels of communication across membership. ACABA serves as an information link between the communities of Baudó and the state agencies (Defensoría) and international actors (ACNUR) who track the conflict: community leaders are the eyes on the ground, sharing information about emerging threats to the CCM leadership, who pass

³²⁶ ACABA junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, July 2019

³²⁷ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/3/2021

³²⁸ ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

³²⁹ ACONOCIP leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/6/2021

that information on, make denunciations or take other actions as necessary. Information also flows downward, as the CCM is responsible for transmitting information to the communities. For example, the CCM held a series of workshops explaining the initiatives of the Humanitarian Accord (*Acuerdo Humanitario*) to the CCL leaders.³³⁰ ACABA also manages a radio station based in Puerto Meluk, “Radio Étnico”, which serves as an important vehicle to disseminate information.³³¹ One of the ACONOCIP leaders also works as the Baudó representative for the Chocó-wide Humanitarian Accord project, and thus serves as a crucial disseminator of the humanitarian initiative throughout Baudó. ACONOCIP also serves as a vehicle to share denouncements upwards, with department-wide platforms like FISCH and the Church.³³²

Finally, I argued that regional integration allows for more bureaucratic procedures to monitor and enforce neutrality rules and resolve internal conflicts. Within the highly integrated ACABA, the regional body, the CCM, is charged for holding the community-level CCLs accountable. The CCM does this by socializing the communities about the contents of the reglamentos (through workshops and other educational tools), intervening as mediators (such as sending an official letter mandating that a community member stops logging on his neighbor’s land), or enforcing punishments (such as barring individuals from holding positions within the organization). The bureaucratic nature of these reglamentos can assist in insulating the organization from outside capture: in the early 2010s, when ACABA faced attempts at organizational capture from the ELN guerrillas, the ACABA CCM leadership were able to defend their organization in part through their reglamentos, which specifically prohibits outsiders from holding positions within the consejo comunitario.³³³

³³⁰ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020

³³¹ Fieldnotes, Puerto Meluk, 11/1/2021

³³² Fieldnotes, Pizarro, 11/6/2021

³³³ ACABA former junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, July 2019

ACABA's advantages in territorial control are made clear in discussing with the communities within the organization the limitations of their independence. One community in ACABA explained to me that they don't have the authority to sell any territory or make any deals with companies regarding their territory without the permission of the ACABA CCM. Another community told me that if they were an independent consejo comunitario, they would be allowed to log freely, but they can't because ACABA doesn't allow it (because of the carbon credits program).³³⁴ I sat in on a meeting between an energy company and the CCM of ACABA; the company had been attempting to contact the leaders of the individual communities, the CCM brought in representatives to make the decision-making process very clear to the company:

The CCM of ACABA is the highest authority in the territory, when a commercial or state entity wants to intervene in the territory, before you go talk to the CCL, you have to talk with CCM, because we make the decisions.

Because they don't have legal control over the territory, there is much less that ACONOCIP can do to maintain territorial control. Across ACONOCIP consejo comunitarios, a new generation of leaders has entered into leadership positions in the communities, and has little interest in ceding any authority to the association:

We lost dialogue with the new juntas of this area, now the communication is isolated...the org [ACONOCIP] does not manage the territory, as a representative of ACONOCIP, one cannot enter the territory without the support of the consejo comunitarios, so we have to see how to move forward.³³⁵

Without support from a regional body, the capacity for internal control within the consejo comunitarios of ACONOCIP is weak. Pilizá is the only one of the six consejo comunitarios within the association to have defined reglamentos, and that's because they received funding through the REDD+ program to create them. The community Purrichá told me there isn't the resources or the interest to put

³³⁴ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5, Communities 2 and 3

³³⁵ ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

together their reglamentos.³³⁶ Even in Pilizá, where the reglamentos do exist, respect for the rules is fairly low: “As the junta, people don’t pay us much attention, we’re not the police, or the state, so people don’t give us much attention”.³³⁷ And even though Pilizá participates in the carbon credits program, “in terms of logging, it’s a mess here”.³³⁸

In Pepé, what was a fairly fragile process in terms of internal control has been significantly strengthened by the Redd+ project. For example, as discussed earlier, the junta has built experience around the consulta process and is committed to using it to maintain their territorial control. However, I noticed less confidence in Pepé than in ACABA regarding the reglamentos and their effectiveness. A Pepé advisor shared with me that some members of the junta directiva often don’t know much about their reglamentos or even where exactly to find them.³³⁹ Pepé also seems less bound to bureaucratic procedures of internal control. For example, a leader from the junta explained to me that in resolving a conflict, “The elders (*mayores*) will have the ultimate call, not the consejo comunitario. It’s not a decision of the junta”.³⁴⁰

Finally, I argued that regional integration creates more external legitimacy for organizations. The size of a movement organization, its resource pool and its level of formalization are signals to outside actors of a movement’s legitimacy and confer tangible benefits: more access to funders, media attention and state institutional spaces. An ACABA leader explained in comparing the integrated ACABA with the independent consejos comunitarios: “The difference is very notable in the participation of the NGOs...The little consejo comunitarios don’t have the same ability to make allies internationally or bring in the

³³⁶ Fieldnotes, Purrichá CC meeting, 11/7/2021

³³⁷ Pilizá leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

³³⁸ Pilizá leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

³³⁹ Pie de Pepé Consejero, personal communication, July 2019

³⁴⁰ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 1, personal communication, July 2019

involvement of the state”.³⁴¹ This is reflected in ACABA’s relationships with a wide range of international actors, including ACNUR, OCHA, Swefor, FAO and PMA.

Both ACONOCIP and Pepé representatives shared the view that ACABA received a lot more external attention than they did. In ACONOCIP:

“The difference with ACABA is that here is the lack of accompaniment, they have much more, and that results in more resources, that is why they are more advanced, we are more limited with the state, with international NGOs...Unfortunately we have not had much support, we need someone from outside who believes in us, to carry out projects”.³⁴²

The consejo comunitarios here don't have the constant accompaniment that ACABA or COCOMACIA has. In Bajo Baudó, neither the Red Cross nor the Defensoria comes. We don't see ACNUR...We need accompaniment, a friend or an ally, but they're not coming.³⁴³

Members of the independent Pie de Pepé also told me that ACABA secures more external support from international actors and greater responsiveness from the state than Pepé. Sometimes the institutions don't even realize that Pepé is an independent consejo comunitario, they think that it is a member of ACABA.³⁴⁴ A member of the junta directiva explained that, “ACABA, because they are a bigger council, they get more [external attention]...For example international NGOs, they concentrate on ACABA, but not on us”.³⁴⁵

Independence Advantages

Despite these advantages in organizational capacity, regional cohesion and external relations, regional integration creates serious trade-offs for communities in their self-protection capacities. Specifically, highly integrated movements suffer democratic and participatory deficits and are frequently

³⁴¹ ACABA former junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, July 2019

³⁴² ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

³⁴³ Fieldnotes, Purrichá CC meeting, 11/7/2021

³⁴⁴ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³⁴⁵ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 2, personal communication, 7/7/2021

overly rigid. As such, greater community-level independence can often generate more commitment and stronger social ties as well as local flexibility. I explore these trade-offs in this section.

In more independent organizational structures, rank-and-file members have more direct opportunities to participate in decision-making. This is clearly reflected in the elections for the junta directiva positions, which take place every three years: in the Pepé consejo comunitario, all adult members of the consejo comunitario have the right to participate in the general assembly and elect the junta leaders. In ACABA, five representatives per community participate in the asamblea and elect the junta directiva. This is because it is simply not logistically possible to bring the thousands of ACABA members into the same space to deliberate and vote. ACONOCIP has a blended electoral structure: the entire population of the individual consejo comunitarios vote on their respective junta directivas, who in turn elect the ACONOCIP representatives.

These differences are reflected in the everyday decision-making processes within the consejo comunitarios. As the Pepé junta explained to me, as compared with ACABA, “It’s easier to make decisions [as an independent consejo comunitario], whatever happens, we invite everyone to the assembly. In ACABA decisions are made by delegates, here everyone participates, here there is more participation”.³⁴⁶ ACONOCIP’s consejo comunitarios also argue that decision-making is easier because they can build collective consensus: “ACABA is enormous, so administration is more difficult...here it’s less complicated, we can reach consensus more easily (*nos entendemos mas rapido*).³⁴⁷

The social and physical distance between the rank-and-file membership and the decision-makers in ACABA creates serious challenges for the organization. First, an independent consejo comunitario like Pepé has a far easier time communicating its decisions to membership, because they all live in the same community. A Pepé leader told me that, “whenever necessary, if I have information for the community, I

³⁴⁶ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³⁴⁷ Pilizá leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

invite everyone, we have a community gathering place, so we use that.³⁴⁸ ACABA relies on a strategy of 'replication', in which CCL presidents in attendance in workshops or decision-making spaces communicate back to their respective communities, creating uneven spread of information depending on the attentiveness and communication skills of the CCL leader.

Likewise, the reduced social distance between leadership and membership in an independent consejo comunitario can generate a sense of legitimacy and shared ownership over the organization. A leader from the independent Pepé told me that their junta gains legitimacy because, "whatever project the community is doing, the junta will be right there alongside, as a constant presence". Meanwhile, a big CCM like ACABA "breaks the contact with people, they are not there every day with the people, they don't know what's happening in the communities" and because people in the communities don't participate in the elections, "The leaders will be less recognized by the community because they didn't directly elect them".³⁴⁹ This manifested in ACABA as a lack of identification with the organization among the membership: ACABA is seen as the "people with the vests"³⁵⁰ or the "people with the cars and the guards"³⁵¹, reflecting substantial distance and distrust between leadership and membership.³⁵²

This uneven spread of information and distance between leadership and membership creates the seeds of distrust within the organization, as evinced by a CCM leader pleading with the CCL presidents to share out information, "so that the communities know that these meetings are more than just handing out money".³⁵³ A persistent joke within the organization was that many community members believed ACABA

³⁴⁸ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 2, personal communication, 7/7/2021

³⁴⁹ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 1, personal communication, July 2019

³⁵⁰ ACABA leadership wear identifying vests when moving in the rural areas, as is common for social leaders and their allies throughout Chocó.

³⁵¹ The leadership of ACABA is provided with cars and armed guards by the Unidad Nacional de Protección, as part of their collective protection plan.

³⁵² Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 7/3/2019

³⁵³ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/1/2021

only served to “*acabar*” (to use up) the resources. Mistrust within the organization can have direct implications on the safety of the leaders: persistent rumors were circulating about the character of the threatened junta leaders, despite many attempts from organizational leadership to disprove them.³⁵⁴

Finally, the lack of decision-making responsibility allowed for the individual communities within a highly integrated structure frequently generates significant disinterest. As a result, a number of ACABA CCLs are semi-defunct, with very little activity or local legitimacy. An ACABA CCM leader expressed that, “for the amount of workshops we’ve done, the CCLs should be much stronger than they are” but that there aren’t many ways to incentivize participation.³⁵⁵ Because the CCL representatives are the main way that the broader membership participates in decision-making, weak CCL leadership can compound the decision-making challenges explored above. I heard of cases of communities missing out on important spaces because the president simply didn’t go, or wasn’t an active participant in meetings.³⁵⁶

Second, I predicted that independent consejos comunitarios would maintain significantly more community decision-making power, allowing local leaders more flexibility to adapt to rapidly evolving local contexts. The difference in community-level independence and decision-making control between an independent consejo comunitario and a community in ACABA are marked: “here, each [community] rules (*manda*) in their territory, in ACABA, the CCLs depend on the organization”.³⁵⁷

Pepé deliberately opted not to participate in the ACABA title in order to retain more control over decisions that would impact their development. Regarding their experience as an independent consejo comunitario, the Pepe junta explains:

It has gone well, there has been more progress, we are a consejo comunitario [legally equal to] any other CCM, we have the same rights as ACABA...[being independent]

³⁵⁴ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

³⁵⁵ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/2/2021

³⁵⁶ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/2/2021

³⁵⁷ ACONOCIP leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/6/2021

allows us to generate (gestionar) more resources, we can seek out our own projects, to seek responses to the needs of our territory...With our independence, we believe that it is better for our development.³⁵⁸

Likewise, while the consejo comunitarios of ACONOCIP are members of the association, the decision of whether to participate in an ACONOCIP development project belongs to the individual consejo comunitarios: “the point of ACONOCIP is to find projects for the consejo comunitarios, but whoever doesn't want to participate in a project, they are independent, ACONOCIP does not participate in people's decisions”.³⁵⁹

This level of independence in pursuit of agricultural development projects offers two possible advantages. The first is that local leaders are likely able to tailor projects more to the specific needs of the community: “When the junta is in the territory, it knows the needs of the people”.³⁶⁰ The second is that resources from any project arrive more directly to the community, without the challenge of having to allocate among many different communities: “of the little that arrives here, it is very visible, the people can feel it...in ACABA every project has to be spread among people”.³⁶¹ This is evidenced by the fact that, according to the Pepé junta, almost everyone in the community is benefitting in some form from the Redd+ project – whereas the challenges in dividing Redd+ resources among the many communities of the more integrated ACABA generates significant tension.³⁶²

This distinction is felt strongly in the ACABA CCLs: each of the four communities I visited explained to me that the key difference between them and an independent consejo comunitario is that, “when you're independent, you manage your own projects”.³⁶³

³⁵⁸ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³⁵⁹ CC Terrón Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

³⁶⁰ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³⁶¹ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³⁶² Pie de Pepé advisor, Personal Communication, 11/10/2021

³⁶³ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 1

What is the difference? Pepé, they move in the same spaces as ACABA, but any project arrives directly to them, any little resources can be used by the community...ACABA has to spend so much money just on meetings, Pepé seems better organized because resources come more directly.³⁶⁴

In addition to these resource division challenges, the independent consejo comunitarios can react more immediately to issues or conflicts on the ground: “whatever conflict, the legal representative is here, you don’t have to look for them in Quibdó, they’re here”.³⁶⁵ Consejo comunitario leaders in ACONOCIP shared this view: “whenever a community [in ACABA] has any kind of difficulty, they have to go to the CCM, but the response comes very slowly, if at all”.³⁶⁶

This points to a final key challenge for regionally integrated organizations: the CCLs are dependent on a centralized body that often is not responsive enough to their needs. As discussed above, many CCLs in ACABA have very little independent capacity. However, the regional organization, the CCM, can’t necessarily make up for this gap, as it lacks the organizational capacity to maintain a strong presence in all of its communities. This is especially true in some of the communities I visited that are more distant from the organizational headquarters in Puerto Meluk and Quibdó, and thus present greater logistical challenges to ‘arrive’ with projects. This organizational gap was made clear in one of the poorest communities I visited in ACABA:

In our relationship with the CCM, we have benefitted from workshops, but in terms of projects, we haven’t gotten anything, we’ve had a lot of training but nothing material...in the 20 years of ACABA, there’s been communities that have not received anything, people aren’t getting what they deserve...the consejo comunitario Pepé can be better organized, ACABA is so gigantic that the leadership can’t arrive everywhere.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁴ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

³⁶⁵ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³⁶⁶ Pilizá leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

³⁶⁷ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

Evaluation

ACABA

I observe that regional integration offers significant benefits both in terms of ACABA's increased ability to advocate and bring in outside actors, as well as the direct support and collective defense it offers to communities. Furthermore, its advantages in building strong leadership and task specialization allow it to take a leadership role in the region, generating 'spillover' effects that positively benefit the whole region. However, organizational gaps and internal fractures still leave the organization vulnerable to armed group incursion.

A repeated theme throughout my research from all parties was that ACABA's key advantage was that they *gestionan mas* - as in, they are much more successful in pulling in the state as well as IO and NGO actors for dialogue and projects. ACABA has the most advanced restitution process with the Unidad de Víctimas, multiple educational and scholarship projects and a much stronger track record of bringing in ACNUR, OCHA and the embassies for humanitarian and human rights work. Members of the ACABA communities I visited in this study expressed that to be in ACABA:

It's an advantage, because ACABA is very advanced in its organization, it is not the same with a small consejo comunitario, in the big one gets more resources, it has more economic weight".³⁶⁸

ACABA is the only organization that's bringing in projects and supporting the communities, the [municipal] mayors do nothing, the little that we have benefitted here is from ACABA.³⁶⁹

And despite the frequent disconnects and disagreements in ACABA between the CCM regional leadership and CCL communities, members see the organization as something to call on, a source of protection in the most difficult times. A CCL president explained to me that "We've received a lot of support, the CCM has strengthened us, with workshops, providing us information, helping us with our

³⁶⁸ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

³⁶⁹ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 4

reglamentos”.³⁷⁰ One of the founders explained to me, “Our work is complicated but when darkness comes, that’s when the community calls us”.³⁷¹ A member of the junta directiva explained to me, “When something bad happens, in moments of difficulty, the CCL leaders look for our support”.³⁷² Another member of the junta directiva explained to me, less charitably, that, “Many communities don’t care that much about the collective process until they need help, like a drowning person getting Jesus”.³⁷³

A coordinator of the REDD+ project explained to me that ACABA is known as the CCM of Baudó. There’s an inherent prestige and leadership role that comes with that.³⁷⁴ This role dates back to the initial formation of the consejos comunitarios in the Baudó cuenca, as the leaders of ACABA offered crucial support to the other consejo comunitarios in getting their titles. Since then, ACABA has continued to play an ‘older brother’ role as a source of guidance for the other consejo comunitarios and a representative of the region.³⁷⁵ ACONOCIP looked to ACABA as a model when constructing the association; the CCM continues to be a source of training: “We’ve learned a lot from the leaders of ACABA”.³⁷⁶

As a Baudó politician explained to me, the ACABA president has, “generated more integration and confidence in the region, at least so that the three municipios [of Baudó] are speaking the same language”. For example, when a UTCH (University of Chocó) location was being planned for Baudó in 2019, there was competition between the municipios for the location. The ACABA president fought to

³⁷⁰ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 4

³⁷¹ ACABA Asesor 2, personal communication, April 2019

³⁷² ACABA junta directiva leader 4, personal communication, July 2019

³⁷³ ACABA membership, personal communication, June 2, 2019

³⁷⁴ REDD+ coordinator, personal communication, July 5, 2019

³⁷⁵ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020, ACONOCIP leader 1, personal communication, 5/3/2021. Perhaps unsurprisingly, not all of the other consejo comunitarios love this, and some are openly antagonistic towards ACABA and its leadership.

³⁷⁶ Pilizá Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

overcome those divisions to make sure that the project would still function, bringing badly-needed professors and expertise to Baudó.³⁷⁷

Nevertheless, the serious organizational weaknesses have undercut the ability of ACABA to offer real protection to their communities. In speaking with members of ACABA, I heard numerous examples of extensive coca plantings, communities which turned to armed groups for conflict resolution and frank discussions of organizational limitations in taking on the armed groups: “To limit the armed groups, there’s not much we can do. The people with guns dictate (*manda*). We’re not the state, we can’t just get rid of them”.³⁷⁸ As expressed by an ACABA leader: “We have to remember that we are in a conflict zone, there are things that we can intervene in and others that we cannot”.³⁷⁹

Despite the relative insulation provided by increased regional integration, two leading members of the junta directiva are currently displaced because of threats from armed groups. At a meeting I attended between ACABA and state representatives, multiple people confirmed to me that AGC commanders were present.³⁸⁰ Of the four communities I visited, two mentioned that they are experiencing significant displacement, both from the conflict and from the lack of economic opportunities. Like the rest of Baudó, the armed groups don’t allow any movement in ACABA territory on the rivers after 5:30 PM.³⁸¹ A 2017 Defensoria report shows that all of the CCLs I visited were under AGC control, which was using them as a human shield. While specific reports of armed group activity from these four CCLs been quiet since then, there has been heavy fighting in the last two years between the ELN and AGC in Rio Misará, a nearby river which is also part of ACABA (*Informe de Riesgo N. 008 17 (Baudó)*, 2017).

³⁷⁷ Department-level Politician from Baudó, personal communication, March 2020

³⁷⁸ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 7/3/2021

³⁷⁹ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/2/2021

³⁸⁰ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 2021

³⁸¹ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021

ACONOCIP

ACONOCIP is at the moment essentially defunct due to disinterest. It is being maintained by two leaders who hope to bring it back to prominence by securing projects - the only way it can demonstrate its relevance to its member consejo comunitarios. As such, ACONOCIP illustrates one of the key weaknesses of the association relative to the more integrated CCM structure: because it has no territory of its own, the organization relies on the support of the consejo comunitarios. At any point, if the consejo comunitarios decide to stop allocating time and effort to the collective project, it is very vulnerable to collapse. As an ACONOCIP leader expresses: "We've had some successes, but we would be much more advanced if we were like CONCOSTA or ACABA, because they have their own title, their own territory".³⁸²

ACONOCIP put years of effort into negotiations for the carbon credits projects, only to see the project collapse because of violence in the region. If the project went through, "we'd be a lot stronger than we are now". A new carbon credits program has emerged further south, including only one of the ACONOCIP communities (Pilizá). A new platform emerged to represent the Bajo Baudó consejo comunitarios in the Redd+ program; the junta of Pilizá sees this new platform as potentially more relevant for the future than membership in ACONOCIP.³⁸³

Without support from a regional organization, things are messy inside of the Bajo Baudó consejo comunitarios: I heard serious accusations of overt corruption, particularly in Pilizá with the arrival of Redd+ resources. Elections in some of the consejo comunitarios of ACONOCIP seem like a disaster: I heard stories of voting buying, as well as a walk-out that delegitimized one election, fistfights in the assembly during another elections, fake government officials confirming illegal replacement elections.³⁸⁴ Leaders blamed these internal divisions on the mayors: "The alcaldes don't respect us, rather they try to

³⁸² ACONOCIP leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

³⁸³ CC Pilizá Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

³⁸⁴ Fieldnotes, Bajo Baudó, 11/8/2021

control us”.³⁸⁵ In conversation with the consejo comunitarios of Bajo Baudó, I saw how these smaller consejo comunitarios were easier to capture: there’s less people, so it’s cheaper to buy an election. Furthermore, there is significantly less knowledge of the rights and regulations of a collective territory in these communities, so it’s easier to generate confusion and play legal games.³⁸⁶

At the moment I visited, things were fairly quiet with the armed groups in ACONOCIP territory. However, the communities inside ACONOCIP face serious threats from the armed groups: “Even though things have calmed a bit, you feel their presence, they’re in the communities, maintaining their control”.³⁸⁷ Since the peace deal, armed group incursions have been frequent in the ACONOCIP communities under investigation. In 2016, an ELN mine killed a person in Virudó; both Virudó and Purrichá were under the control of the ELN. In 2017, the AGC began an expansion into the area, spurring confinements and displacements (*Informe de Riesgo N. 008 17 (Baudó)*, 2017). Acuerdo Humanitario reports from 2019 reflect constant AGC and ELN presence, confinements, recruitment and social control by the armed groups in all the communities under study, with specific threats against consejo comunitario leaders in Terrón, Virudó and Purrichá (*Tercer Informe Del Acuerdo Humanitario*, 2019). May 2020 saw intensifying conflict between the AGC and ELN in Terrón, Purrichá and Virudó (*Colombia Monitor Humanitario*, n.d.). The community of Cueva is currently completely displaced; all the communities north of Purrichá are subject to consistent AGC presence. The situation has a tough impact on people’s day-to-day lives:

So faced with this situation, we are going through great needs, and forced to remain without doing our daily activities, the traditional practices that we have always done, because people are already afraid and have to comply with the demands that these groups make, we are in confinement because one cannot go out after 6 in the afternoon, cannot move freely in the rivers, because there is an order that no one can leave...they always have control over us.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁵ Pilizá leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

³⁸⁶ Fieldnotes, Pizarro, 11/8/2021

³⁸⁷ ACONOCIP leader 1, personal communication, 11/6/2021

³⁸⁸ ACONOCIP leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

That's not to suggest that there's no room for community agency: the armed groups do respect the autonomy of the community "as long as it's convenient for them": the two groups have frequently found spaces of neutral coexistence, predicated on staying out of each other's way. One community told me that the armed groups have much less presence in their community than in their neighbor's, "because here we don't give them any welcome".³⁸⁹

Pie de Pepé

Pie de Pepé strikes me as a remarkable community, in many ways the epitome of what an independent consejo comunitario can achieve. There's a noticeable communal spirit in the consejo comunitario: "the consejo comunitario is very close to the people, when there's a funeral or anything the consejo comunitario is there".³⁹⁰ Communication between leadership and membership seems fluid, and the leaders have been focused on taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the carbon credits program to steadily build their own capacity, reflected in new dialogue with the Unidad de Víctimas, success in their consulta previa and work with the Ministerio de Vivienda. That work is felt in the community: practically everyone is working on some productive project generated by the Redd+ program.

Pepé's story demonstrates the wider potential variance in an independent consejo comunitario: these communities are very dependent on having at least a few good leaders, and at least some projects available. If these conditions exist, an independent consejo comunitario can do a lot for the community, and the community gets a lot more than they would if they were part of a CCM. But in the absence of either condition, the communities are very vulnerable.³⁹¹ This is reflected in Pepé's history: before the Redd+ project, "We were very abandoned and neglected, attacked and alone for a long time, without support"; now the consejo comunitario has more visibility in the community, they can teach the community

³⁸⁹ Fieldnotes, Bajo Baudó, 11/2021

³⁹⁰ Pie de Pepé advisor, Personal Communication, 11/10/2021

³⁹¹ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

what is the ley 70 and people are invested in the consejo comunitario.³⁹² As a leader from ACABA puts it, in Pepé, “Before the Redd+ project, nothing was happening [in Pepé]”.³⁹³

And despite the improvements brought by the Redd+ project, as an independent consejo comunitario, Pepé remains very vulnerable to armed group pressure. While Pepé used to be a collection of 4 dispersed villages, as of ten or so years ago, all the other communities displaced to Pepé and have remained there: “There’s no state support for return, some people come and go to their lands, but there is no confidence to return, people try to maintain their territory, but there are bigger issues (i.e. the armed groups)”.³⁹⁴ In general, the consejo comunitario junta doesn’t see much it can do to limit the armed groups:

The strategies [to resist the armed groups] are that one prays to Jesus Christ, and learns to live together (*convivir*), in the midst of conflict, to remain more quiet, the people who speak are the first targets...when there is this conflict, one has to limit oneself, if you understand me. One has to be very careful.³⁹⁵

The Acuerdo Humanitario report of 2019 singles out Pie de Pepé as the community in Medio Baudó most affected by the armed groups, and describes a pattern of threats and exploitation of the young people in the community, and extortion from the AGC, who demand a percentage of the consejo comunitario’s resources as protection money (*Tercer Informe Del Acuerdo Humanitario*, 2019).

Alternative Explanations

My case selection was able to address a number of threats to causal inference: I selected geographically proximate consejos comunitarios with similar organizational histories. Nevertheless, there are two sources of alternative explanations for the outcomes I observe, or threats to causal inference that

³⁹² Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³⁹³ Fieldnotes, ACABA office, 11/12/2021

³⁹⁴ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

³⁹⁵ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 2, personal communication, 7/7/2021

I was unable to fully address through case selection: imperfect comparisons and non-random assignment to treatment. I discuss each in turn and outline my strategies to address these alternatives.

First, the three comparison cases are situated in two different municipalities: the regionally integrated ACABA communities as well as Pie de Pepé are in Medio Baudó while the intermediate association ACONOCIP is in Bajo Baudó. One might imagine that key economic, geographic and political differences across the municipalities might drive some of the variation in PDET outcomes. For example, stronger internal economic development could potentially lead to less violence; the inverse relationship between economic development and violence has been extensively documented (Braithwaite et al., 2016). As discussed in greater depth in the research design chapter, the communities across the study are all in virtually the same economic position of extreme poverty.³⁹⁶

Beyond the numbers, there are reasons to expect that both of the communities of ACONOCIP, which are close to the port of Pizarro, and Pie de Pepé, which is located on the Istmina road, are less economically isolated than the communities of ACABA. This should increase our confidence in our findings suggesting a connection between increasing regional integration and a reduction in violence. In particular, it is notable that both the more independent communities in ACONOCIP and in Pie de Pepé reported a greater sense of isolation and exposure to the armed groups given that they are geographically better connected to larger population centers.

Furthermore, differences in the political leadership in the two municipalities that the communities are part of might play a role in shaping the results. As has been discussed above, in general, all of the consejos comunitarios are critical of their relationships with the alcaldes. However, the mayor of Medio Baudó who served from 2016-2019 was widely viewed as having a positive impact, and brought in

³⁹⁶ IPM (Indice de Pobreza Multidimensional, Multidimensional Poverty Index) rates from the last census in 2018: Bajo Baudó (80.2%), Medio Baudó (80.4%). IPM is a weighted multidimensional poverty indicator developed by the Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI). It assesses poverty levels based on a combination of indicators within the categories: educational conditions, childhood conditions, work, access to health, access to public services and housing conditions. Households with at least a third of the deprivations (accounting for weights) are categorized as poor. Further discussion of methodology available: (Alkire et al., 2013).

several important projects, including the above-mentioned Arroz Baudó.³⁹⁷ It is therefore possible that his presence and the projects he created reduced the level of violence the communities faced. Two factors reduce concerns that a supportive mayor poses a threat to causal inference. First, after his term ended, he was replaced by a mayor who the same leaders saw as overtly hostile to the consejos comunitarios, yet the two years under the new mayor haven't led to dramatic shifts in the local security situation.³⁹⁸ Second, both the highly integrated communities of ACABA and the independent Pie de Pepé are located in the same municipality, allowing us to compare between these communities while controlling for municipality-specific factors such as the mayor.

Furthermore, even though the three cases are neighboring communities, the trajectories of the conflict have not necessarily been the same in all of the communities. All of the communities are downriver of Puerto Meluk, which is historically the dividing line between the ELN guerrillas (upriver) and the paramilitaries (downriver). As discussed in greater detail in the research design chapter, official government data is indeterminate as to whether violence was greater in Bajo or Medio Baudó.³⁹⁹

Nevertheless, there are two possible alternative explanations that possibly explain greater violence in less regionally integrated communities. First, there was a significantly greater historical presence of the FARC in Bajo Baudó than in Medio Baudó. Thus their demobilization potentially drove a stronger dynamic of competition for abandoned territories than in Medio Baudó. Second, the community Pie de Pepé is located along a strategically vital road, the only road connecting Baudó to the rest of Chocó. While this made the community more easily accessed by the state, and in fact, it is the only community in the study with a police station, control over the road has historically been a major driver for

³⁹⁷ ACABA junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, June 2019

³⁹⁸ ACABA junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, June 2019

³⁹⁹ The Unidad de Víctimas database registers total violent incidents over the course of the war: 18,430 victims of displacement and 176 homicides in Bajo Baudó (pop ~30,000); 13,187 victims of displacement and 121 homicides in Medio Baudó (pop ~15,000) (Registro Único de Víctimas, n.d.).

conflict. In short, it is worth considering the possibility that disproportionately intense conflict in Pie de Pepé and ACONOCIP at least partially explain the variance in violence outcomes that I observe.

In order to disentangle the impacts of regional integration from competing explanations related to the history of conflict in Baudó, I examine the specific causal mechanisms I hypothesized linking regional integration to increased community protection from violence. For example, I have demonstrated that ACABA has the ability to bring in demonstrably more economic and social projects into their communities because of their greater political weight and greater professional expertise in project implementation. Such projects strengthen the cohesion of communities, increase their collective knowledge of their rights and reduce their dependence on armed groups. I explored how both the communities within ACABA and the more independent communities outside the organization argued to me that ACABA had stronger internal control mechanisms, particularly around illegal logging. A greater ability both to limit the degree to which campesinos turn to these economies and to provide alternatives limits the inroads of armed groups into the communities. Finally, I have pointed to the fact that despite the fact that both the ACONOCIP communities and Pie de Pepé are geographically less isolated than the ACABA communities I visited, they reported greater isolation and vulnerability to armed group pressure. I explored a specific example of how the collective protection mechanisms of ACABA functioned, in this example in response to a threat to the organization's leadership. The leaders of the ACABA communities determined that the groups can threaten a few leaders, but not all of ACABA, and that by openly demonstrating their collective support for their organization, they would reduce the vulnerability of specific leaders.⁴⁰⁰

A final endogeneity threat lies in the non-random process by which each of the cases were assigned a 'treatment', that is, the process by which the communities entered into one of the organizational types along the spectrum from integration to independence. Thus it is fair to wonder if the

⁴⁰⁰ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/1/2021. I believe that this protection stems from the fact that (from my observations) in the lead-up to targeting high-profile social leaders, armed groups attempt to undermine the reputation of targeted leaders in order to gain the tacit acceptance of the communities. Public demonstrations of collective support openly reject these rumors, signaling to armed groups that they risk backlash in their support from the communities if they target a specific leader.

outcomes I observe may be attributable to the processes that generated these variations in organizational structure, rather than the variance in structure itself. This is perhaps especially likely in the case of ACONOCIP. Unlike the case of ACABA, which was a strong campesino movement even before the collective titling process, the communities of Bajo Baudó had very little formal collective organizing active before the 1993 ley 70 that formed the legal basis for the consejos comunitarios. In fact, one of the ACONOCIP leaders argued to me that part of the reason they didn't form a more integrated consejo comunitario mayor, and instead opted for a more independent structure, was because of *desconocimiento*; that is, he implied that they were either unaware this was a possibility or that they lacked the organizing capacity to form such a structure.⁴⁰¹

Here, the case of Pie de Pepé is highly instructive. The community was a part of the ACABA organizing process before the Ley 70, and then intentionally opted out of the integrated land title in order to preserve local independence.⁴⁰² While evidently this process of assignment to treatment is the exact opposite of random — leaders intentionally chose their independence — that process of assignment is deeply suggestive of the importance of the trade-offs between the two organizational forms. In fact, it pointedly suggests that leaders at the moment of organizational formation were intimately aware of the likely trade-offs between organizational forms, and that these trade-offs drove their decision-making. This interpretation of the evidence gains even stronger credence when considering the specific experience of Pie de Pepé as an independent community. The leadership clearly communicated to me that they have found that independence has facilitated their development, given their ability to autonomously seek out projects rather than rely on a regional intermediary.⁴⁰³ I have also argued that based on my observations, there is a clear sense of community and *cercania* between the leadership and membership that our

⁴⁰¹ ACONOCIP Leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

⁴⁰² I was never able to get the full story of exactly how this happened. My best understanding: there were likely interpersonal conflicts between the leadership of the community and the broader organization that led to a break.

⁴⁰³ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

theory suggests we should expect from a more independent organizational structure. However, as I have discussed above, by the own reckoning of Pie de Pepé's leadership, these advantages come with the trade-offs of limited political power and vulnerability to armed group pressure as an independent community.

Baudó Empirical Chapter Conclusions

The Afro-Colombian people of Baudó first arrived in the region as *cimarrones*, escaped slaves establishing communities in territories ignored by the colonial state. Even after the abolition of slavery, the Colombian state never had the volition or the capacity to establish more than a fragmented presence in the region. As a result, Baudó has historically been one of the poorest regions in the entire country. That distance also served to insulate the region from the conflict until the 1990s, when the Baudó river, with its direct access to the Pacific ocean, became integrated into regional drug trade routes, driving multiple decades of violent armed conflict. The 2016 peace deal with the FARC offered an opportunity for the Colombian state to reverse a long history of neglect. Although there was never a significant FARC presence in most of the Baudó region, multiple chapters of the peace deal had direct relevance for a region destroyed by conflict: victims rights could strengthen political participation and begin to repair the economic, social and cultural damages of the conflict. Coca substitution could support campesinos in moving away from dependence on illegal economies run by the armed groups. The PDET development projects offered an opportunity for Afro movements to shape a vision for development directly informed by their *cosmovisiones*, a vision for *etno-desarrollo*.

Yet instead, the people of Baudó explained to me that the 2016 peace deal has forgotten them. Because of the minimal FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) presence in the region, leaders feel that they were deemed as not a priority. "It's been mostly ELN and [paramilitary] self-defense groups [in Baudó], for that reason there has not been an impact...the FARC wasn't here".⁴⁰⁴ This is not to imply that the peace deal has had no impact

⁴⁰⁴ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020

in Baudó. The demobilization of the FARC combined with the collapse of negotiations with the ELN in 2019 has sharpened the competition in Baudó between the two major armed groups that the peace deal didn't include, the ELN and the AGC (Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, *Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia*): "without the FARC, the other groups are getting stronger".⁴⁰⁵

From the perspective of the community leaders, government failures are directly responsible for this intensification of violence following the 2016 peace deal. ACABA leaders explained that the collapse of negotiations with the ELN at the beginning of 2019 in effect forced the ELN to go back to intense fighting with the AGC.⁴⁰⁶ Leaders from Bajo Baudó agreed, explaining that, "Without the ELN there will be no peace. The failure of negotiations with the ELN made everything worse, it destabilized everything".⁴⁰⁷ The promise and subsequent failure of coca substitution reinforced armed group control over the region: the campesinos committed themselves to manual eradication, but when no funds came through for replacement crops, economic desperation forced people even more to rely on armed group economies.⁴⁰⁸

In the absence of state support, communities have had to fall back on the autonomous protection mechanisms they honed over the course of decades of conflict, rooted in the inter-relationships between culture, history and territory. A founder of the ACABA organization explained to me that a social movement can usefully be compared to a vector: it must have a magnitude, direction and sense. For afro communities, he argues, collective culture is the sense, managed and protected by the elders and their wisdom, the direction orienting the movement; the territory is the magnitude which gives the movement its strength.⁴⁰⁹ This interplay between cultural heritage, the stewardship of the elders in leadership positions of the organizations and the economic practices of communities in the territory builds the collective

⁴⁰⁵ Pie de Pepé junta directiva leader, Personal Communication, 07/2019

⁴⁰⁶ ACABA former junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, July 2019

⁴⁰⁷ Bajo Baudó leaders, personal communication, June 2019

⁴⁰⁸ ACABA junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, July 2019

⁴⁰⁹ ACABA former junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, July 2019

cosmovisions at the root of the resistance of all the Baudoseño Afro-Colombian communities in resistance to maintain their lands, heritage and lives. While the roots of resistance are shared by all of the communities in this study, they are differentiated in their approaches to collective organizing at the regional level.

I have argued that the differing choices these three groups of communities made regarding their regional-level organizational structures significantly shape their approaches to and capacity for self-protection in the post-acuerdo era. The empirical evidence I collected strongly suggests that the more integrated groups of communities experience less overall violence. I have explored mechanisms that I argue explain this variance: more integrated organizations have greater political weight and attract more external attention, benefit from more safety in numbers, and have the professionalization and division of labor to manage the challenging tasks of self-protection: providing for communities' economic needs, resolving conflicts and enforcing internal rules, and negotiating with the state in favor of community interests. However, I also sought to illustrate that despite these advantages in organizational capacity, cohesion and external relations, regional integration creates serious trade-offs for communities in their self-protection capacities. Specifically, highly integrated movements suffer democratic and participatory deficits and are frequently overly rigid. As such, greater community-level independence can often generate more committed membership and more flexible organizational responses to problems.

What implications do these findings have for peacebuilding practice? This study is built at the meeting point of two relatively young but rapidly expanding bodies of literature at the intersection of conflict and non-violent resistance. The first focuses on civilian resistance to conflict, and generally focuses on community-level strategies to resist armed actor control (Arjona, 2016; Barter, 2014; Idler et al., 2015; Kaplan, 2017; Mouly & Garrido, 2017). The second set of literature focuses on civil resistance in peace processes, and tends to focus on national-scale mobilization to advance and enforce peace deals (Dudouet, 2017; Dudouet & Lundström, 2016; Wanis-St. John & Rosen, 2017). My work focusing on regional-scale responses to post-peace deal violence offers multiple linkages between and enrichments for both sets of literature. First, by translating insights on how communities resist war to how

they manage peace, my work shows both the enduring relevance of wartime resistance strategies and the specific new challenges that communities face in a rapidly shifting environment.

Furthermore, my work offers insights on the scale and structure of post-peace deal social movements. Civilian resistance to war tends to focus on individual communities in resistance and notes that these efforts are limited by their inability to address broader power asymmetries. In contrast, the nonviolence in peace processes literature focuses on national-scale mobilizations, but has limited explanations for translating these gains to the local level. I adopt insights from the social movement literature to offer increased attention to the meso-scale as a point of linkage or “scale shift” that both localize peace and add collective weight to community concerns. In doing so, I offer a rich examination of the relative trade-offs of different structures. Drawing from the literature on organizational structure in social movements, my research recognizes variation in organizational forms as thoughtful decisions made for instrumental and ideological reasons to respond to a specific set of circumstances facing activists. As I have shown, however, these decisions create path dependent trade-offs for collective protection.

CHAPTER 8

ADVANCING ETHNIC VISIONS FOR PEACE IN THE CHOCÓ PDETS: REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN PEACE IMPLEMENTATION

While the changes generated by a peace deal can be destabilizing and violent, contemporary peace deals also almost always represent ‘windows of opportunity’ to generate shifts in existing political settlements in favor of poor and marginalized people victimized by the conflict. The mainstreaming of participation and inclusion norms in peace accords have created the expectation that contemporary peace deals include new policies, rule changes and government programs that aim to address the structural causes of the conflict, oriented towards building an ‘inclusive state’ (Dudouet & Lundström, 2016). However, new policies are by themselves no guarantee that communities will see tangible benefits on the ground; corruption, violence, spoiler group interests, low state capacity and a lack of political will create serious obstacles towards implementation.

The Colombian peace deal has been no different: the accord created the participatory development program PDETs (*Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial*, Territorially-Focused Development Program). The goal of the PDETs was no less than radical transformation of the rural areas most affected by conflict. However, five years after the signing of the peace deal, government foot-dragging and capacity gaps, as well as issues of corruption and elite capture, have seriously undermined implementation.

My dissertation asks: “What explains variation in community autonomy and influence⁴¹⁰ in local peace implementation”. I adopt as the key explanatory variable regional integration, defined as the

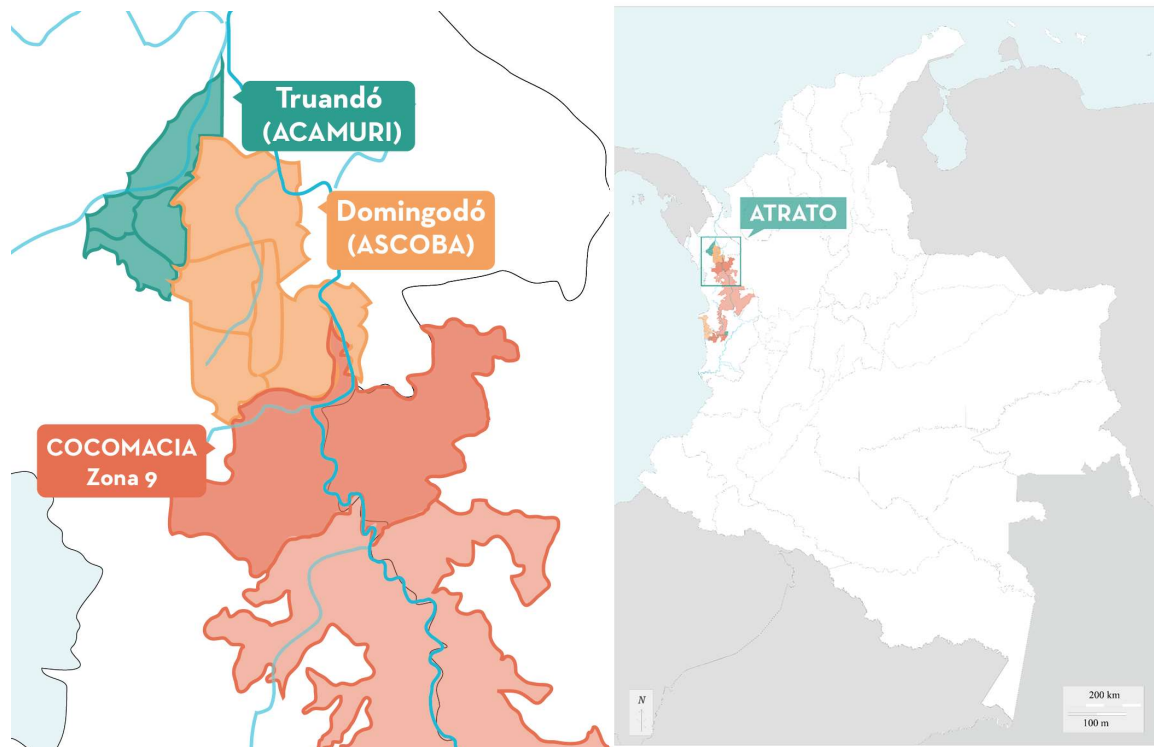
⁴¹⁰ By influence, I mean the capacity of communities to shape the outcomes of broader political processes: the implementation of a government policy; the decision-making of an armed group. By autonomy, I mean the capacity of communities to maintain free and independent control over decisions of direct relevance to the community – over natural resources, cultural and social life, justice administration – which may also be understood as a form of limited self-rule within the context of a broader state (De la torre, 2000; Kaplan, 2017; Ortiz-Guerrero et al., 2017; Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019).

degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. Regional integration varies from *independent communities*, which maintain retain all legal authority over their territory as well as representational duties at the community level, to *associations*, which retain legal authority at the community level, but participate in an association to represent their interests externally, to *Consejos Comunitarios Mayores (CCM)*, highly integrated bodies which concentrate both legal authority and representational powers at the regional level.

In my theory chapter, I predicted that variation in regional integration generates a key set of advantages and challenges: while increasing integration generates more organizational capacity, cohesiveness and external legitimacy, it would also be likely to create gaps in participation, flexibility and local autonomy. In the context of PDET implementation, in which communities are seeking to shape the agenda of the PDET program, partner with the government to implement projects, and push for government accountability and transparency,, the advantages of regional integration are likely to manifest as increased political weight, capacity for project design and management, and institutionalization. However, it also generates trade-offs in community-level participation and autonomy, creating organizational gaps and principal-agent problems.

This chapter assesses the impact of regional integration in shaping state-led peacebuilding interventions through a controlled comparison of three groups of Afro-Colombian communities neighboring sub-sections of the Atrato river, in the department of Chocó. All of the communities are organized as *consejos comunitarios*, which hold collective land titles ranging in size from 1 to 100+ communities and are charged with administering the territories and communities within each title. Each group of communities in this study represents a different degree along the continuum between independence and integration. Furthest to the south, in the municipalities of Bojayá and Murindó are the 16 communities of the 'Zona 9', the northernmost section of the Consejo Comunitario Mayor COCOMACIA, a highly regionally integrated organization. Immediately to their north, in the municipality Carmen del Darién are the 8 communities of the river Domingodó, a tributary of the Atrato. The eight communities are divided into four different consejos comunitarios, all of which belong to a less-integrated regional association, ASCOBA. Just to the north of Domingodó, at the far end of the integration-

independence continuum, are the 6 communities of the tributary river Truandó. These communities don't belong to any regional organization; rather, they have formed a small, loose association exclusively of the Afro communities of the Truandó river called ACAMURI.⁴¹¹



I begin by introducing the structure and progress of the PDET. I offer an overview of its advance through the planning and implementation phases and the key obstacles it faces, both nationally and in Chocó specifically. I then shift to an assessment of the PDET implementation in the region of focus for this study. I detail what each group of communities has received thus far from the PDETs, and explore how variance in regional integration can explain those differences. I find that the more regionally integrated organizations have received more projects, projects that hew more closely to community-defined priorities, with more advanced implementation. However, I also find that more regionally integrated communities have significant issues of information gaps, organizational frictions and (suspected) corruption. I finish by exploring the work of FISCH (Inter-ethnic Solidarity Forum of Chocó), a

⁴¹¹ Note: this case study only focuses on the Atrato region and not Baudó because the PDETs do not cover the Baudó region.

department-level ethnic representation body closely linked to COCOMACIA. I argue that FISCH's work in advancing the PDETs illustrates the potential "spillover" benefits of regional integration in generating public goods shared by member and non-member communities.

Introducing the PDETs

Though the PDETs have been touted as a radically new strategy to build peace in rural Colombia, they are better understood as the latest in a long history of interventions by the Colombian state into its violent peripheries. Beginning at least with President Bentancur's (1982-86) National Rehabilitation Plan, each successive administration oversaw a major state-building project in the Colombian periphery with the explicit goal of resolving the armed conflict: decentralization under Barco (1986-90), a new Constitution under Gaviria (90-94), agricultural subsidies and coca substitution under Samper (94-98), alternative development funds from the U.S. Plan Colombia under both Pastrana (98-2002) and Uribe (02-10), and the Democratic Security program under Uribe. During Uribe's second term, the Ministry of Defense under Santos created a direct precursor to the PDETs, the Comprehensive Territorial Consolidation Plan of La Macarena, which sought to complement a militarized counter-insurgent strategy with holistic state-building (Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019).

The issue of how to resolve the structural drivers of conflict in Colombia's rural peripheries re-emerged in the FARC peace process. However, the two sides were far apart on possible solutions. A participatory approach offered an expedient solution by passing the responsibility to rural Colombians to decide what kind of development they wanted.⁴¹² The PDETs thus emerged from a complex history of statebuilding and counter-insurgency in the Colombian peripheries, conflicts at the negotiating table and emerging paradigms of civil participation in the peace process. The goals of the PDET reflect this ambivalent history. State officials framed the PDETs as a way to transform the relationship between the state and rural Colombian society, spark structural change in "closing the gaps" (*cerrando las brechas*)

⁴¹² UniAndes Professor, Personal Communication, 02/2020

between rural and urban Colombia, and rapidly spur the ‘arrival’ of the state to areas formerly outside of its control. (Camilo Vargas, 2017; Escobar Arango, 2017).

The result has been the most ambitious participatory development plan in Colombian history. The PDETs were formalized into policy by the Decreto 893 of May 2017, which created the geographical scope of the project: 170 municipalities grouped into 16 “sub-regions” of Colombia,⁴¹³ an area that includes more than 11,000 villages comprising 24% of the country’s rural population. The municipalities were officially chosen based on the prevalence of poverty and illegal crops, weak state presence and a history of armed conflict (Camilo Vargas, 2017).

To coordinate PDET implementation, a new state agency was created, the ART (Territorial Renovation Agency, *Agencia de Renovación del Territorio*). The Decreto 893 also defined funding sources for the PDETs: the national budget (*Presupuesto General de la Nación*, PGN), channeling money through major government agencies, funds for the municipalities (*Sistema General de Participaciones*, SGP), who would include PDET projects in their municipal development plans, and state royalties from extractives (*Sistema General de Regalías*, SGR). Within the royalties system, the government established a specific fund for peace projects, OCAD Paz, which requires mayors to apply for funding for PDET projects. Other sources of funding include the *Obras por Impuestos* system, in which private companies receive tax breaks to implement PDET projects, as well as internationally-supported funds such as *Fondo Colombia en Paz* and the *Fondo Multidonante*. As will be explored in this chapter, the PDETs have been chronically underfunded in the national budget and thus have become reliant on discretionary funding in the municipal budgets and the OCAD paz royalties, creating massive opportunities for patronage politics and corruption.

⁴¹³ The 16 regions are: Alto Patía, Norte del Cauca, Arauca, Bajo Cauca and Nordeste Antioqueño, Catatumbo, Pacífico Medio, Pacífico y Frontera Nariñense, Putumayo, Sierra Nevada – Perijá, Sur de Bolívar, Sur de Córdoba, Tolima, Urabá Antioqueño, Chocó, Cuenca del Caguán and Piedemonte Caqueteño, Macarena-Guaviare, Montes de María.

PDET Planning Phase

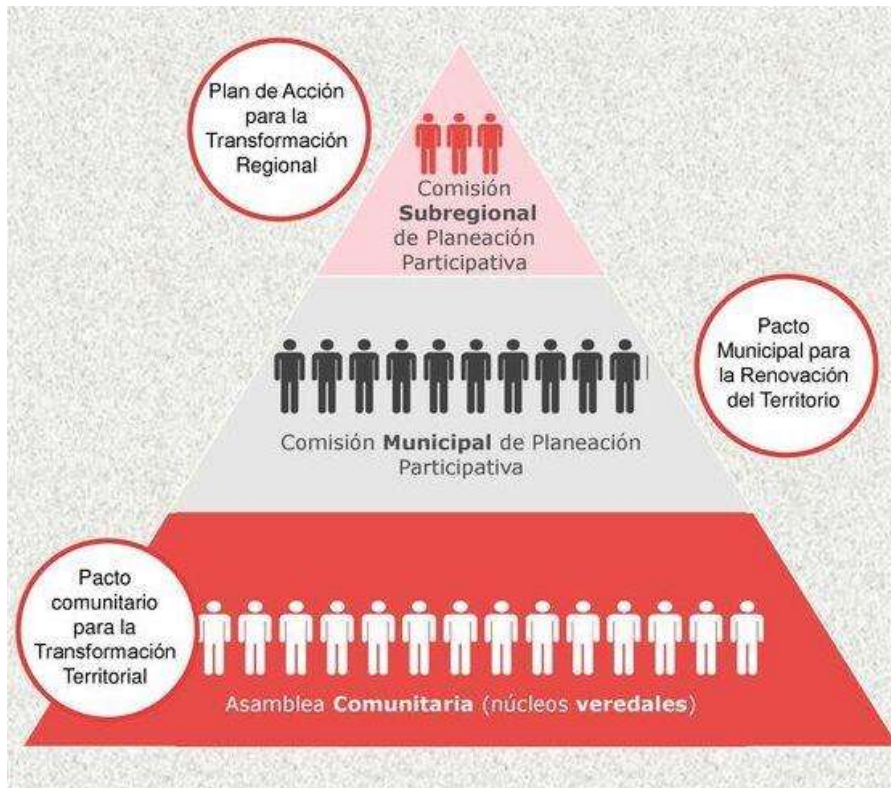


Figure 11: PDET Structure. Image from Confecoop, 2017

The PDET planning process was designed with a three-tiered structure: community-level, municipal-level and sub-regional level. The community-level assemblies were open to participation for everyone in the community to diagnose the problems the community faced and offer solutions. The ART categorized community proposals according to the eight “pillars” of the PDETs representing different kinds of projects (i.e. economic, health, education, land use, etc.).⁴¹⁴ The community assemblies elected representatives to participate in the municipal assemblies; these representatives are known as the *grupos motores*. The municipal assembly brought together this grupo motor, plus representatives of the mayor’s office, private sector and social organizations, using the community diagnoses as the basis to debate

⁴¹⁴ The pillars are: (1) Social organization of rural property and land use; (2) Infrastructure and land adaptation; (3) Rural health; (4) Rural education; (5) Housing, drinking water and sanitation; (6) Economic reactivation and agricultural production; (7) Right to Food; (8) Reconciliation, coexistence and peace

municipal development priorities and construct the *Pacto Municipal*, a document outlining the development vision over 15 years for the municipality. Finally, this exercise was repeated at the sub-regional level: an assembly brought together a community representative from each municipality in the region, along with politicians, private sector and civil society leaders to outline a regional development plan, the Action Plan for Regional Transformation (*Planes de Acción para la Transformación Regional*, PATR), guiding state development planning over a 15 year period (Guarín et al., 2018; Oyaga Moncada, 2018).

With the signing of the last PATR in Pacífico Medio in February 2019, the PDETs officially transitioned into the implementation stage. By almost any measure, the planning process in developing the PATRs was a striking success; by the ART's count, some 220,000 people from over 11,000 communities participated, making the PDETs the largest participatory planning exercise in Colombian history (Garzón et al., 2019). Hope for the PDETs was magnified in the context of the massive delays of virtually every other section of the peace deal. As such, the PDETs generated enormous expectations in the communities as perhaps the only program in the peace deal capable of delivering tangible benefits to rural communities.⁴¹⁵

However, shifts in the project design and unanticipated problems undercut truly effective participation during the planning phase of the PDET. Crucially, between the original PDET project designs from 2016 and the implementation of the planning phase in 2018, community-level control over budget allocations was completely cut. In the original planning documents, the community assemblies were given two key decision-making powers. First, they were intended to have binding decision-making power in disbursing the *Bolsa de Confianza* funds for rapid, confidence-building projects, which later became known as the *Obras PDET*. Second, the community assemblies were originally allocated binding budgeting power over 30% of the total PDET budget for their subregion (Bautista & Ibáñez, 2016). These community-level budgeting powers were left out of the final PDET designs.

⁴¹⁵ Procuraduría Étnica, Personal Communication, 04/2019

The PDETs got off to a later than anticipated start given the lack of prioritization and resources put into the ART, the implementing agency. Once begun, the program experienced further delays, both because of security issues in the territories and because of the scale of the project; the ART, a small, underfunded and totally new government agency was inventing a participatory methodology from whole cloth (Guarín et al., 2018). The 16 PATRs were originally planned to be complete by June 2018; the last one was signed in February 2019. In light of the delays, ART functionaries rushed to finish in advance of the Duque administration, which was openly hostile to the peace process (Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019). The rush undercut the quality of participation; community leaders reported difficulties in understanding the methodology, insufficient time to communicate with their bases and a lack of opportunities to debate complex issues of conflicting visions and priorities in depth (Madrid V, 2018; *Tercer Informe*, 2019).

The lack of political support for the ART from the government and the rush to complete the PDETs may also explain another key shift from the original designs for the PDET process. These planning documents document the original vision of the PDETs: more than a disconnected list of projects, the intent was to generate deep transformation in the structural causes of the conflict and rebuild the relationship between the communities and their government. In order to do so, the planning documents clearly articulate the need for pedagogy to develop the capacities of the communities throughout the process of the PDETs. They discuss ways to inform the communities about the PDET process, how to develop a shared culture of peace and processes of conflict resolution, and methods of offering technical support during project planning to offer guidelines on feasibility and budgeting (Bautista & Ibáñez, 2016b). However, both before and during the PDET planning process, the ART offered insufficient support to the communities. The role of informing the communities of the PDET goals and methodology, and of building capacities within the communities to effectively participate in a development planning process was mostly played by international organizations and by civil society.⁴¹⁶ During the PDETs, ART officials didn't

⁴¹⁶ UIC Barcelona Professor, Personal Communication, 1/29/2022

establish clear budget limits for communities or offer sufficient technical support in understanding the viability of various projects.⁴¹⁷

As a result, the PATR planning documents created by the PDETs suffer from a “laundry list” issue: each region has thousands of initiatives; the initiatives themselves are often vaguely worded and disconnected, adding up to a disjointed development plan that lacks strategic focus (Guarín et al., 2018; *Observatorio De La Participación Ciudadana*, 2020; *Segundo Informe Al Congreso*, 2020). Many initiatives have questions of feasibility (ex. Infrastructure projects in remote communities) and legality (ex. shifting land tenure laws in national parks) (Díaz Parra, 2018).

A final key shift from the original plans for the PDET regarded the involvement of key actors in the territories beyond the communities, including commercial interests, local politicians and other stakeholders. Early PDET documents show that the project designers intended the PDETs to be a space of real dialogue and conflict transformation between the communities, national and local government and the other key players in the territories (*Elementos Para...Los PDETs*, 2015). As such, the PDETs would serve as a platform for “improbable dialogues”: “dialogues between people and organizations that have different—even opposing—visions that would not otherwise interact” (Bautista & Ibáñez, 2016a, p. 6). However, local elites from the state and private sector collectively virtually ignored the planning process and only rarely participated.⁴¹⁸

Similarly, the original planners sought to guarantee the full participation of the FARC as a political organization in the PDETs. However, the ART did not bring in any ex-FARC combattants as consultants; ex-FARC members were allowed to participate in the PDETs, but only in an individual capacity as civilians (Rodríguez Iglesias & Rosen, 2022). The absence of these key actors from the PDET

⁴¹⁷ Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz official, Personal Communication, 02/2020

⁴¹⁸ Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar Professor, Personal Communication, 09/2018; Procuraduría Étnica, Personal Communication, 02/2020

discussions left unaddressed tense issues of leftover bitternesses and rivalries from the war, ongoing social conflict and clashing development agendas.⁴¹⁹

The PDET planning stages of the Chocó PDET reflected this complex mix of successes and challenges. From the beginning, the ethnic authorities of Chocó challenged the standardized participatory process designed by the ART. They argued that because virtually all of rural Chocó is managed collectively in ethnic territorial regimes (resguardos and consejos comunitarios), the methodology of the PDETs had to adjust to fit that reality. The key ethnic representation platforms, FISCH, the Mesa Indígena del Chocó and the Organización Indígena de Antioquia met with the ART in May 2018, redeveloping the PDET methodology over the course of three days. The name of the Chocó PDET was changed to PDET-E (the E for “Étnico”). Among the most important changes, the location and structure of the initial meetings were designated by the consejos comunitarios and resguardos, rather than state-designated veredas, and the ART agreed to centralize pre-existing ethno-development plans created by ethnic authorities in developing initiatives.⁴²⁰

The Chocó PDET-E was lauded by the Kroc Institute as a “positive deviation”, an example of a productive challenge to over-centralization and technification of peace implementation (*Tercer Informe*, 2019). Yet many of the same participation issues that occurred nationally also manifested in the Chocó PDET-E. Budget problems limited access to more remote communities; the ELN interfered in multiple PDET assemblies, particularly in San Juan; victims and women’s groups felt under-represented; mayors and other politicians were completely absent (Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz, 2020; Soto, 2018). Furthermore, Rodríguez Iglesias (2019) argues much of the richness of the ethnic approach was lost in the final product; for example extensive discussions of an ethnic approach to health might be recorded in the PATR planning document as “create a health system with an ethnic focus”.

⁴¹⁹ Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar Professor, Personal Communication, 09/2018; Procuraduría Étnica, Personal Communication, 02/2020

⁴²⁰ ART PDET gerente, Personal Communication, 07/2019

Nevertheless, in general, the participation phase of the PDET was viewed positively by the communities. Turning to the COCOMACIA, ASCOBA and ACAMURI communities of focus in this study, the PDET planning process generated optimism and expectations:

We had a lot of faith in the process, it was shaped from the vision of the communities, of how they wanted to solve their problems. Normally, all the solutions come from Medellín or Bogotá, and don't bring what we need.⁴²¹

It was an intercultural moment, built from the cosmovisions [of the ethnic communities]. A lot of serious work [generated] commitments that the PDETs would reflect the dreams of the communities, that we will not be displaced any more, because we were going to have what we need in the communities.⁴²²

PDET Implementation

With the completion of the last PATR document in early 2019, the PDETs officially shifted to the implementation phase. In the implementation phase, the obstacles to the advancement of the communities' bottom-up development goals through the PDETs have become much more overt, driven principally by gaps in state capacity, lack of political will, and state capture of the implementation agenda in the PDET process.

The Duque administration made massive cuts to key PDET institutional budgets, making it virtually impossible for supportive government actors to effectively advance PDET projects. The ART, responsible for coordinating PDET implementation, had its budget cut 63% in 2019 (Sánchez-Garzoli, 2019) and 10% in 2020 (Ante Meneses, 2019). Allocations for PDET implementation in the 2020 budget only represented 13% of the necessary resources to keep the PDETs on track for completion within the 15 year timeframe (Goebertus, 2019). Coordination within the state has been an issue. There's an ongoing lack of clarity of how the PDETs articulate with other parts of the peace deal (such as the PNIS coca substitution program) or with other development planning instruments (such as the municipal development plans) (Garzón et al., 2019). The ART agency has the responsibility of coordinating other

⁴²¹ COCOMACIA Grupo Motor rep, Personal Communication, 10/4/2021

⁴²² ACAMURI Grupo Motor rep, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

state ministries on PDET implementation, but they have no formal enforcement powers to mandate state institutions to implement programs they may not necessarily see as within their mission or interests.⁴²³

Budget shortfalls are worsened by the laundry list issue: rushed dialogue and insufficient guidelines during the planning phase added up to thousands of vaguely worded, disjointed initiatives in each region. In practice, this means that we can realistically expect that only a portion of the thousands of PDET initiatives developed in the planning stage will be implemented in the 15 year timeframe of the PDETs. More to the point: because there are too many projects and not enough money, the funding structure of the PDETs empowers specific state actors to shape the PDET agenda through prioritization and selective omission. I offer a brief overview of three implementation processes by which state institutions have re-taken control of the PDETs: the Hojas de Rutas, OCAD Paz, and Municipal Development Plans.

The *Hojas de Ruta Única* (Individual Roadmaps, HRU) are a planning instrument created by the Duque administration to coordinate among state agencies and prioritize highly strategic projects (Puentes Ramos, 2019; *Séptimo Informe Del Acuerdo Final*, 2020). The Consejería Presidencial para la Estabilización y la Consolidación (CPEC), in partnership with the Deloitte consulting firm, has developed a highly technocratic and confusing methodology⁴²⁴ that ranks the initiatives in the PATRs based on their “strategic importance” for implementation (*Séptimo Informe Del Acuerdo Final*, 2020; Tovar Samacá et al., 2020).

As such, CPEC has developed a difficult-to-penetrate process for defining “strategic” PDET initiatives, allowing them to determine their own PDET priorities with little public oversight.⁴²⁵ Compared to the original design of the PDETs, which sought to put politicians and civilians on equal footing for decision

⁴²³ UniAndes Professor, Personal Communication, 02/2020

⁴²⁴ Confusing to the point that even government officials in the Procuraduría told me they were lost trying to understand the HRU methodology; Procuraduría representative, Personal Communication, 02/2020

⁴²⁵ Procuraduría representative, Personal Communication, 02/2020

making, the HRU created an outsized role for the mayors, allowing them to directly select 25 priority projects for their municipality: “The *Hojas de Ruta*...took out the communities and replaced them with the mayors”.⁴²⁶ Originally, there was no designated space for civil society participation in the formation of the *Hojas de Ruta*, but civil society pressure in partnership with allies in the Procuraduría and the ART opened some space for civilian input.⁴²⁷ However, civil society participants in this process report a lack of information and decision-making power, and the exclusion of key social organizations, (*Séptimo Informe Del Acuerdo Final*, 2020).

OCAD Paz is a fund for peace implementation paid for extractives royalties. In the context of budget shortfalls in the national budget, OCAD Paz has taken on a major role in PDET funding: whereas it was only supposed to fund between 10-15% of the PDETs, by 2020 it made up 40% of PDET funding.⁴²⁸ Municipalities win OCAD paz funding by proposing projects to the fund; projects win approval if they meet the technical requirements of OCAD Paz.⁴²⁹ Thus, OCAD Paz funding depends heavily both on the technical capacity and political will of the mayors. Not only does the project require the active support of the mayor to structure the project and bring it to Bogotá for approval, the mayor's office must have sufficient policy-design skill to formulate projects that meet the technical specifications of the fund.⁴³⁰

However, technical capacity has not necessarily been enough to win OCAD funding. A Procuraduría investigation published by Blu Radio in June 2022 revealed a vast patronage network which took to 12% of the money in the fund in exchange for project approvals. Mayors interviewed in the report

⁴²⁶ Investigador en construcción de paz, Personal Communication, 9/29/2021

⁴²⁷ ART official, Personal Communication, 02/2020; Procuraduría representative, Personal Communication, 02/2020.

⁴²⁸ Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz official, Personal Communication, 11/2020. Original cost estimates from (Urrego Rodriguez, 2019).

⁴²⁹ UniAndes Professor, Personal Communication, 2/2020

⁴³⁰ Procuraduría de Chocó official, Personal Communication, 10/1/2021; DNP official, Personal Communication, 9/24/2021

revealed that for a project to be considered in an OCAD Paz session, it required a political “godfather” who would receive between 6–15% of the project budget (Santos & Nohra, 2022)

Another state-led PDET implementation strategy that has emerged in the context of shortfalls in the national budget has been to shift responsibility for PDET implementation to the municipal governments, through their municipal development plans (PMD). These development plans are put together at the beginning of a mayor’s term to orient the funding priorities of mayors over the course of their tenure and carry the force of law. Both the ART and CPEC offered significant technical support (and a not insignificant amount of political pressure) so that the incoming mayors would include PDET initiatives in their PMDs.⁴³¹

Again, issues of both political will and capacity have cropped up in shifting the responsibility of implementation to the mayors. Given that municipalities developed possibly hundreds of PDET initiatives, the mayors were offered wide latitude in selecting the PDET initiatives they felt were most important for their PMDs.⁴³² This huge shift in power towards the mayors represents a complete departure from the original vision for the PDETs. As Eaton (2021) points out, the 2016 peace deal allocates very little role for the mayors in peace implementation, in large part because negotiators on both sides were suspicious of the tendency towards clientelism and capture by rural elites within those spaces. However, the Duque administration consciously shifted decision-making power away from the communities towards the mayors.

Beyond issues of capture and clientelism, the municipal budgets of Colombia’s poorest municipalities are not equipped to cover the costs of transformative development projects (Tovar Samacá et al., 2020). Even aside from budget issues, the mayors of Colombia’s poorest municipalities often don’t

⁴³¹ Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz official, Personal Communication, 2/2020; Fundación Ideas para la Paz staff, Personal Communication, 9/22/2021

⁴³² Procuraduría Étnica, Personal Communication, 2/2020

have the technical know-how or capacity to structure and then implement large-scale development projects (Cajiao, 2020).

Thus, nationally, the PDETs are witnessing a reassertion of the *vieja institucionalidad* of centralized state control that the PDETs supposedly were designed to bypass (Ante Meneses, 2019). According to a UniAndes professor, these processes represent how the government views participation - “people don't really know what they want” - as a result, they require expert intervention to organize the proposals as serious projects.⁴³³ A civil society leader takes an even bleaker view:

The process has become technified, leaving out the communities. It's all directed by Duque, the ART, CPEC, the decisions are out of the hands of the communities. It's all based on mafias of political patronage, the mayors take their projects to Bogotá, and then it depends on if they have support from a senator or somebody powerful.⁴³⁴

Across the 16 PET sub-regions, communities have felt cut out of this process. Information about decision-making processes and the state of implementation is very difficult to find; when community leaders are invited to meetings, the invitations come late and leaders aren't treated as equals in the space. This problem has been aggravated by the pandemic, as all the work has shifted online - many communities have no stable internet access (Tovar Samacá et al., 2020).

Aside from the crushingly slow pace of implementation, evidence of state influence over the PET implementation process can be found in the huge imbalance in favor of infrastructure projects such as roads, schools, electrification, sanitation projects, etc. (Castillejo Ditta, 2019b; Rincones Julio, 2019; *Séptimo Informe Del Acuerdo Final*, 2020). The slowest moving projects in the PETs are projects in support of land use, peace and reconciliation, and strengthening social organizations (Castillejo Ditta, 2019b; *Segundo Informe Al Congreso*, 2020). As of August 2021, while about 30% of the infrastructure

⁴³³ UniAndes Professor, Personal Communication, 02/2020

⁴³⁴ Civil Society representative in Bogotá, Personal Communication, 9/22/2021

and economic reactivation projects nationally had a defined implementation route⁴³⁵, just 17% of the peace and reconciliation projects did, the lowest of any pillar (Secretaría Técnica CINEP/PPP-CERAC, 2022). This imbalance is not necessarily driven exclusively by interests, but also by the ways of seeing from within the state:

The government is doing what they know how to do, issues of peace and reconciliation, resolving land conflicts, the state doesn't know how to do. They know how to build stuff, there's lots of experts to structure a project for electricity infrastructure.⁴³⁶

Despite these issues, there is a huge opportunity for well-organized civil society to play a determinative role in shaping PDET implementation. Civil society actors can create space for voice in the prioritization process to ensure that community interests are recognized, they can put pressure on national and local government actors to speed implementation, they can seek international technical and financial support, they can offer their own expertise in structuring and implementing projects, and can monitor implementation to ensure transparent and steady progress in the projects.⁴³⁷

The participatory planning process of the Chocó PDET was completed in September 2018 with the signing of Chocó's PATR (Action Plan for Regional Transformation), which included some 2027 different initiatives over 14 municipalities. A Procuraduría report from November 2020 reported 117 PDET projects either finished or being implemented in Chocó, 5.4% of the total initiatives from the PATR, at a cost of roughly \$29.7 million USD (121 billion COP) (Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz, 2020). Procuraduría documents from October 2021 report 51 Obras PDET either finished or being implemented, at a cost of roughly \$2.6 million USD (10.5 billion COP). The online OCAD Paz database reports that as of December 2021, the OCAD Paz regalías fund, a fund for peace implementation paid for extractives royalties, had approved 47 PDET projects in for implementation in

⁴³⁵ This doesn't imply that implementation has necessarily begun, just that a state agency has created an implementation plan.

⁴³⁶ Investigador en construcción de paz, Personal Communication, 9/29/2021

⁴³⁷ Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz official, Personal Communication, 2/2020; Procuraduría Étnica, Personal Communication, 2/2020

Chocó, at a cost of \$96 million USD (394 billion COP) (OCAD Paz, n.d.). The Chocó Hoja de Ruta was completed in August 2021.

Like the other 15 PDET subregions, the principal issue is budget shortcomings and the slow pace of implementation. As of early 2020, according to CPEC numbers, only 3.3% of the total budgeted for the Chocó PDET through 2028 had been spent; even before the pandemic, the government was not on pace to reach even 50% of the estimated budget for the Chocó PDETs over that timeframe (“En Chocó dudan de efectividad de PDET,” 2020). As an ART official in Chocó told me: “the challenge is getting the money”.⁴³⁸ The slow pace of implementation has been further hampered by poor coordination between national and local government in Chocó (Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz, 2020).

Furthermore, the deteriorating security situation creates serious obstacles to implementation. A Procuraduría official in Chocó explains:

There are delays in the implementation because of the security situation...because the PDET was supposed to be implemented in places where there was already something like peace, to consolidate the peace there. It's difficult to bring projects to places that are once again in conflict, disputed zones between the AGC and the ELN...It's a project designed for times of peace, but we have to implement it in a time of war. When there's conflict, there's fighting, mines, threats, homicides, all that prevents the state from bringing projects, the government officials have no security guarantees.⁴³⁹

Notwithstanding these other issues, perhaps the greatest concern of the ethnic authorities about the process of PDET implementation is the capture of the development agenda by local and national political elites. As an official from the Chocó procuraduría explained to me, “We already know that the government doesn't have the budget to implement all 2027 projects (from the Chocó PATR)...so it's asking the mayors to pick”.⁴⁴⁰ This selection and prioritization process is operating through all of the three

⁴³⁸ ART PDET gerente de Chocó, Personal Communication, July 2019

⁴³⁹ Procuraduría de Chocó official, Personal Communication, 12/9/2020

⁴⁴⁰ Procuraduría de Chocó, Personal Communication, 3/9/2020

mechanisms discussed: the Hojas de Ruta (HRU), OCAD Paz and the Municipal Development Plans (PMD).

The Chocó HRU planning began in June 2020 and was completed in August 2021. The process advanced with huge knowledge gaps from community leaders, most of whom have little understanding of in what ways the HRU will matter for the PDETs; an observer communicated that few even know that the HRU has been completed. As part of the process, CPEC met with the mayors and asked them to select projects they viewed as most urgent in their municipalities.⁴⁴¹ I was able to sit in on a *Mesa Interinstitucional*, an implementation problem-solving space for government officials linked to the HRU with no presence of community leaders. In this space, ART officials gave mayors wide latitude to determine whether or not to advance with specific initiatives, based on their own assessments of feasibility.⁴⁴² Likewise, the advancement of projects in Chocó through the OCAD paz royalties fund is totally dependent on the political will and capacity of the mayors. Yet many of the mayors don't even know how to navigate the OCAD paz approval process.⁴⁴³

By mid-2020, all the 14 municipalities in the Chocó PDET had adopted PDET initiatives into their Municipal Development Plans (PMD); the municipalities included a total of 742 initiatives, some 32% of all initiatives in the Chocó PATR (Montoya, 2020). The Procuraduría report on the Chocó PDET notes that community leaders perceive that the initiatives prioritized in the PMDs ignore the specific ethnic proposals advanced by the consejos comunitarios and resguardos (Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al

⁴⁴¹ Investigador en construcción de paz, Personal Communication, 9/29/2021

⁴⁴² ART officials were moving through initiative lists, asking mayors, "do you think you can do this project by the end of next year? If the mayor said yes, they're offered support in structuring the project so that it can be implemented; if they say no, it's uncertain what happens to the project. ART Mesa Interinstitucional, Fieldnotes, 10/29/2021

⁴⁴³ Procuraduría de Chocó, Personal Communication, 3/9/2020

Acuerdo de Paz, 2020). A FISCH member told me that almost every project prioritized by the government has focused on infrastructure, with peace- and small-scale productive projects completely cut out.⁴⁴⁴

There are significant concerns about the role that local political interests are playing in the PDET implementation. A Procuraduría official told me about multiple possible cases of corruption under investigation.⁴⁴⁵ Even a high-ranking ART official told me that project allocation is driven by electoral politics and transparency is extremely low.⁴⁴⁶ In Riosucio, a parish official told me that the, “little that the mayors have advanced in the PDETs is for political interests”; that is, the mayors direct projects towards communities that gave prior electoral support.⁴⁴⁷ In Bojayá, a COCOMACIA CCL leader told me that the PDETs are “pure *politiquería*, communities that didn’t support the mayors will be the last to receive”.⁴⁴⁸

Opinions on the process of PDET implementation in the communities in this study are almost uniformly negative.

The PDET is a disaster (*fracaso*) for us, one does not feel anything, you hear figures from the state of so much money spent but tangibly you don’t feel it.⁴⁴⁹

We have not seen anything...we are worse than before. We are in more pain, because we are more frustrated. I say that participating in the PDET was a waste of time.⁴⁵⁰

Not even .5% of the PDET from our zone have been advanced. The advances have been zero (*nula*).⁴⁵¹

ART comes in with its outside contractors, spends tons of money and gets tiny little things, these tiny little community meeting houses (*casas comunitarias*).⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁴ FISCH leader, Personal Communication, 4/27/2021

⁴⁴⁵ Procuraduría de Chocó, Personal Communication, 12/9/2020

⁴⁴⁶ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁴⁴⁷ Riosucio Pastoral Social, Personal Communication, 11/14/2021

⁴⁴⁸ COCOMACIA Zona 9 leader, Personal Communication, 10/7/2021

⁴⁴⁹ ACAMURI leadership meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

⁴⁵⁰ ACAMURI grupo motor representative, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁴⁵¹ ASCOBA leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

Case Analysis

In the previous sections, I have outlined the progress of PDET planning and implementation in Chocó and more broadly throughout Colombia. I have sought to demonstrate that despite the hope generated by the PDET planning process, design failures, government foot-dragging, violence and the at-least partial capture of the PDET implementation agenda by national and local state elites have greatly restricted the space for community voice.

Nevertheless, in Chocó, community leaders continue working to advance an ethnically-focused vision for development, rooted in the cosmovisions of the Indigenous and Afro pueblos. This section of the chapter seeks to analyze the impact of regional integration on the effectiveness of these bottom-up efforts to shape the advances of the PDET. To do so, I build a controlled comparison of three neighboring groups of communities: 16 communities in Bojayá and Murindó that make up the Zona 9 of the highly integrated organization COCOMACIA, the 8 communities in the Domingodó river that take part in the looser association ASCOBA, and the 6 communities in the Truandó river, which have their own local association ACAMURI, operating independently from any regional organization.

I begin by offering an overview of the progress of PDET implementation in each of the three groups of communities, from the beginning of implementation in mid-2018 through the end of 2021. I then examine the impact of difference in the degree of regional integration in the three groups of community as they relate to variation in PDET outcomes. The central finding is that increasing regional integration generated significantly more projects, projects in further stages of advancement, and more projects linked to the ethnic agenda that was the focus of community demands in the PDET participatory planning process. I hypothesize that these differences can be explained by the increasing political power and professional expertise of more regionally-integrated organizations. However, I also show that increasing integration generated significant negative consequences at the local level: a lack of participation and

⁴⁵² Zona 9 CCL 4, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

principal-agent problems that have led to knowledge gaps, logistical problems and intra-organizational fissures.

Findings: PDET Implementation in the Atrato

To evaluate the progress of PDET implementation in the section of the Atrato river under focus in this comparison, I compiled a list of all PDET initiatives that 1) directly involve the communities under study and 2) have made at least some minimum forward progress towards implementation. I explain each criteria briefly. First, I verified that the initiative involved the communities in the study through one or a combination of three mechanisms: either the initiative specifically mentions one of the communities in the study,⁴⁵³ or the initiative specifies that it applies to all the consejos comunitarios in the specified municipality,⁴⁵⁴ or one or more direct sources confirm to me that the initiative applies to a relevant community.⁴⁵⁵ This means that projects that broadly benefit the entire municipality, such as a new health center in the municipal capital, don't apply. I use ART terminology to define "minimum forward progress". The ART has created a typology of 8 stages of implementation, beginning with structuring the project⁴⁵⁶, seeking approval, financing and contractors for implementation and finally executing the project.⁴⁵⁷ I narrow my focus to projects that have at least passed from the first to the second stage, which means that some local or national government entity is at least in the process of structuring the project.

⁴⁵³ For example, one of the initiatives is titled, "Construction of the Aqueduct System in Boca de Opogadó", a community in COCOMACIA Zona 9.

⁴⁵⁴ For example, one of the initiatives is titled, "Formulate local Ethnodevelopment Plans in the 10 Consejos Comunitarios of Carmen del Darién"; all of the ASCOBA consejos comunitarios of the Domingodó river are in Carmen del Darién.

⁴⁵⁵ For example, multiple people from the Truandó consejos comunitarios belonging to the organization ACAMURI told me about the PDET initiative to dredge the Truandó river (I later found the project in the OCAD Paz database as well).

⁴⁵⁶ Structuring a project refers to the process of transforming an initiative into a formulated project with budget, implementation route, etc.

⁴⁵⁷ The ART stages are as follows: 1. Initiative identified for structuring. 2. Structuring underway. 3. Structuring complete, in the process of presentation to funding sources. 4. Project pending approval. 5. Project financed or approved. 6. Project in the contracting process. 7. Project in execution. 8. Completed.

The list was compiled through site visits to the communities under study, web searches of PDET reporting in Colombia, publicly available government documents, and documents shared with me by government sources. The complete list is available in Appendix 1.

In order to evaluate community progress, observers encouraged me to look beyond simple money totals in my evaluation to focus on the quantity of projects and specifically the quantity of ethnic-focused projects. They argued that while a single infrastructure project might be very expensive, a greater number of projects demonstrates greater community capacity in working with the state.⁴⁵⁸ Furthermore, infrastructure projects fit most easily with the state's development agenda and competencies; meanwhile, an "ethnic" agenda was a specific point of emphasis in the Chocó PDET. As such, non-infrastructure, and especially ethnic-focused projects should be hard to advance and reflect more closely the vision of the communities who participated in the PDET process.⁴⁵⁹ I define ethnic proposals as any project that specifically seeks to strengthen ethnic organizations and/or builds on traditional cultural knowledge. In sum, I assess the projects received per community, the number of projects actually being implemented, and the number of non-infrastructure projects, demonstrated below in table 6 (averages per community in parentheses).

Table 7: PDET Projects Per Community, 2016–2021

	Total Projects	Under Implementation	Non-Infrastructure
COCOMACIA	41 (2.6)	8 (.5)	14 (.88)
ASCOBA	12 (1.5)	2 (.25)	5 (.63)
ACAMURI	7 (1.2)	1 (.17)	4 (.67)

60 different initiatives were identified that met these criteria. Of those 60, 41 (68%) went to COCOMACIA Zona 9 communities, 12 (20%) went to the Domingodó communities in the association

⁴⁵⁸ Investigador en construcción de paz, Personal Communication, 9/29/2021

⁴⁵⁹ Kroc Staff, Personal Communication, 11/12/2021

ASCOBA, and 7 (12%) went to the Truandó communities in the association ACAMURI. Recall that there are 16 communities in COCOMACIA Zona 9, 8 in Domingodó and 6 in Truandó. Weighting per community, COCOMACIA received 2.6 projects per community, Domingodó received 1.5 projects per community, and Truandó received 1.2 projects per community.

The projects in the more regionally integrated communities were also significantly further advanced. Of the 41 projects in the COCOMACIA communities in Zona 9, two projects have found financing, five are currently being implemented, and three are fully completed. For the Domingodó communities in ASCOBA, two projects fully approved and financed and two others are currently being implemented. For the Truandó communities in ACAMURI, just one project is currently being implemented and one other has approval and financing. Thus, COCOMACIA is the only one of the orgs to have fully completed projects; of their 41 projects, 19.5% are either being implemented or completed; in Domingodó, 16.7% of the projects are under implementation, in Truandó, 14.3% are under implementation. This data is summarized in table 8, below.

Table 8: PDET Implementation Progress 2016–2021

	2. Structuring	3. Seeking financing	4. Pending approval	5. Financed or approved	6. Seeking contractor	7. In implementation	8. Completed
ACAMURI	4	1	0	1	0	1	0
ASCOBA	4	0	3	3	0	2	0
COCOMACIA	20	9	2	0	2	5	3

Beyond the project totals and stage of implementation, I also examine the kinds of projects moving forward, focusing on non-infrastructure projects, and especially projects that have an ethnic focus. The Zona 9 communities in COCOMACIA have fourteen non-infrastructure projects advancing; two related to delimiting land usage and resolving land conflicts, two related to strengthening traditional ethnic medical practices, seven different economic projects, including productive projects with rice, achiote, borojó and timber, and three peace and reconciliation projects focused on strengthening the consejos comunitarios locales (CCLs) of COCOMACIA. The infrastructure projects include roads, electrical

interconnections, school improvements, dredging waterways, solar energy and sewage systems, among others.

The Domingodó communities in ASCOBA have five non-infrastructure projects, including an ecological project and a large-scale agroforestry and fish farming project currently waiting for OCAD Paz financing. Three projects directly relate to strengthening the consejos comunitarios, including a project to develop ethnodevelopment plans with the consejos comunitarios, and two projects with international funding towards a soccer tournament and dance and music groups organized by the consejos comunitarios. Infrastructure projects include river dredging, river ports, internet access, solar energy and sewage treatment.

The Truandó communities in ACAMURI have four non-infrastructure projects. Three are related to campesino economies: workshops to transform logging by-products, a project to develop green economies, and a project for the municipality to have agricultural machinery available for campesino farmers. A project with international funding offers training to women leaders in the Truandó consejos comunitarios. Infrastructure projects include solar energy, aqueducts and river dredging.

I conclude this section by offering an overview of the scale of projects that the communities have actually received, or at least, projects that are actively being implemented. The communities of COCOMACIA are the only ones to have received fully completed projects. The very first PDET project implemented in the Chocó subregion is the Agrotienda Fluvial Interétnica, a boat buying and selling agricultural products to communities along the Atrato river (including in the Zona 9) to improve access to basic goods and strengthen the inter-community economy. While I was unable to locate budget numbers for the project, it minimally involved the purchase of a large boat. The PDETs also delivered a youth leadership development program in the community of Isla de los Rojas and a *casa comunitaria* (community meeting house) to the town of Villa Nueva, at a cost of ~\$35,000 USD.

Two other small-scale *Obras PDET* infrastructure projects are also in progress in COCOMACIA communities: school infrastructure improvements in Boca de Opogadó (~\$80,000), and a *casa comunitaria* in Puerto Antioquia (~\$110,000). A project to bring solar energy to 10 indigenous

communities and 19 afro communities, including several in COCOMACIA Zona 9, is currently in construction, with a total estimated cost of ~\$10,870,000). An economic project to commercialize the Borojó fruit in COCOMACIA communities is also currently in execution, with an investment from the state of ~\$330,000, benefitting 100 families.

In the ASCOBA communities in the Domingodó river, two projects are currently in progress. The first is a solar energy project across six Afro communities in Domingodó, bringing solar energy to 110 houses at an estimated cost of ~\$575,000; the project is nearly complete. A project to improve the navigability of the Domingodó river by cleaning and dredging the river is also underway at a cost of ~\$450,000.

In the ACAMURI communities in the Truandó river, just a single project is underway, also directed towards improving the navigability of the Truandó river by cleaning and dredging the river. It is, however, a sizable project, with a budget of ~\$3,000,000.⁴⁶⁰

Analysis: The Impact of Regional Integration on PDET Outcomes

Integration Advantages

In the previous section, I examined the empirical evidence of PDET implementation, illustrating that more regionally integrated communities received more projects, projects in further stages of advancement, and more non-infrastructure and ethnic-focused projects. In this section, I examine the degree to which these PDET outcomes can be explained by variation in regional integration among the three cases. In my theory chapter, I hypothesized that regional integration would offer advantages in organizational capacity, coordination and external legitimacy. I begin with a focus on organizational capacity, defined as an organization's resources and the expertise and administrative capability to implement relevant programs (Zald et al. 2005).

⁴⁶⁰ All budget figures come from government documents; specific sources are available in Annex XX.

Regional integration allows organizations to call on a significantly larger number of people, increasing their political weight in negotiations with the state and allowing them to more easily 'scale shift', accessing higher-level decision-makers.

The highly regionally integrated organization COCOMACIA has been a strong advocate for PDET implementation on behalf of the communities it represents. Early in the planning phase, in response to concerns that ethnic perspective was being cut out of the PDETs, COCOMACIA representatives showed up uninvited to ART planning meetings, forcing government officials to recognize the ethno-development plans that ethnic leaders and the communities of Chocó had already developed:

Initially we were not even invited but we went to the meetings [of the ART] anyways, even taking on the transportation costs from one municipality to another...the knowledge that we have is not available to the municipal or national governments. We have an ethno/development plan and a strategic planning for 2017-2027, which respond to the needs of the communities and which we have gathered during 35 years of experience and struggle that the organization has, so we are the ones who know the problems and how they can be solved through the implementation of PDETs. *Rosendo Blandon, COCOMACIA representante legal, cited in* ("El accidentado despegue de la Reforma Rural," 2018)

I argued in my theory chapter that a particularly important aspect of regional integration was the ability for community movements to "scale shift": to expand their vertical reach in demanding accountability. I argued that by grouping together many individual communities, movements gain the leverage, economies of scale and division of labor necessary to gain access to decision-makers at higher scales.

Over the course of PDET implementation, COCOMACIA repeatedly demonstrated the strongest ability to access departmental, national and international actors in pushing for PDET implementation. The main coordination space between the state and the ethnic representatives during the process of PDET implementation is the MEC (*Mecanismo Especial De Consulta*, Special Consultation Mechanism). The MEC is a 32-member body, evenly split between Afro and Indigenous representatives, formed to guarantee ethnic rights during PDET implementation. The body has significant oversight responsibilities and has the opportunity to offer direct input into project priorities. The MEC representatives are elected based on zones; given COCOMACIA's dominant influence in the Medio Atrato region, three members of

the COCOMACIA junta directiva were elected to the MECs, the most of any organization in Chocó. Because leaders of ASCOBA and ACAMURI aren't defined as ethnic authorities, they were ineligible to serve in the MECs (*Informe De Seguimiento Pdete Chocó*, 2021).⁴⁶¹ While funding issues and lack of attention from the state have undercut the accountability role the MECs were supposed to have, it still played a vital role in prioritizing initiatives in the Hoja de Ruta, many of which are directly linked with COCOMACIA communities.⁴⁶²

In addition to their participation in coordinating spaces with local government, COCOMACIA representatives have also actively criticized government actors on the lack of progress. In a meeting in Quibdó with officials of the Chocó departmental government, a COCOMACIA representative stated,

On the PDETs, we must tell the truth of what is happening. In Vigía del Fuerte, where are the PDET projects? In Murindó, I do not see any progress, in Bojayá, it is more of the same. As COCOMACIA, we are denouncing the lack of advances of the PDETs.⁴⁶³

COCOMACIA denunciations generated tangible responses from the national government. In early January 2020, a paramilitary takeover of the COCOMACIA community Pogue generated massive outcry from the organization demanding responses from the national government. One reply came from Rafael Guarín, the presidential advisor for national security, who wrote on his personal twitter account that in Bojayá the state must, “accelerate the PDET and strengthen the arrival of the State” (“En Chocó dudan de efectividad de PDET,” 2020). PDET projects including community meeting spaces and school improvements in Zona 9 communities of Isla de los Palacios, Puerto Antioquia, and Boca de Opogodó (all currently under construction) were a direct result of this bottom-up pressure. Diego Molano, an official of the office of the President, commented:

⁴⁶¹ Participants in the MEC were required to be an elected authority of one of the collective land titles (either consejos comunitarios or resguardos). Because ASCOBA and ACAMURI are associations of consejos comunitarios, and don't themselves hold the collective land titles, they aren't considered ethnic authorities. One consejo comunitario leader from ASCOBA was elected to the MEC, but not as a representative of the organization.

⁴⁶² ART official, Personal Communication, 10/29/2021

⁴⁶³ COCOMACIA Representative, Fieldnotes from Quibdó PDET meeting, 11/13/2021

These ART projects respond to what you asked President Duque in January, you asked that the Obras PDET had to be accelerated, that there had to be a commitment to Peace with Legality, the government of President Duque has that commitment (“ART entrega más de 5 mil millones,” 2020)

I didn’t find the same degree of evidence of tangible results from ASCOBA’s political advocacy as that of COCOMACIA. However, for one member of the Quibdó Pastoral Social, the leadership of ASCOBA has been “more active, more knowledgeable and more dynamic [than that of COCOMACIA]”.⁴⁶⁴ ASCOBA has had opportunities to dialogue directly with Emilio Archila, head of CPEC charged with PDET implementation. They discussed the failed promises made in the PDET planning phase and how to accelerate implementation.⁴⁶⁵ ASCOBA has also been a key player in two big PDET implementation projects, the *Programa Confianza y Paz*, an international led program to jumpstart PDET implementation beginning in 2018, and the *Proyecto Integrador*, an ART-led effort to link multiple PDET projects in Carmen del Darién, beginning in 2020. However, both projects took place outside the area of focus for this project, on the other side of the Atrato river.

Although the relatively independent communities of ACAMURI in the Truandó river have had much more limited political weight than either COCOMACIA or ASCOBA, they have been successful in pushing forward their primary goal in the PDET, which is clearing the blockages of the river Truandó. A Truandó CC leader explains that starting in the 1980s, logging companies cut canals and shifted the course of the river. When they left, the canals collapsed and the river became sedimented and clogged with driftwood to the point that it is frequently impassable. Their project to clean out the river and begin reforesting Truandó was approved by OCAD Paz, the extractives royalties fund, in June 2021. With a nearly \$3 million dollar budget it’s the largest PDET project underway in Riosucio (OCAD Paz, n.d.). Importantly, the labor for the project is planned to be contracted to the communities themselves. The CC leader went on to explain how they pushed the project forward: “we’ve been knocking on all the doors,

⁴⁶⁴ Quibdó Pastoral Social, Personal Communication, 11/14/2021

⁴⁶⁵ ASCOBA comision de jovenes, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

talking with the alcalde, it hasn't been easy, but the ART helped mediate with meetings between the different parties".⁴⁶⁶

In addition to making demands on the state, the consejos comunitarios have also advanced the PDETs by collaborating with the state in project implementation. By taking on a direct role in formulating and implementing projects, consejos comunitarios have found opportunities to expedite priority projects, exercise closer oversight and offer job opportunities to community members.

Observers of the PDETs that I talked with saw these collaboration opportunities as spaces where the more professionalized and specialized regionally integrated organizations should be at an advantage.⁴⁶⁷ Considerable expertise is required to win contracts to design and implement projects in competition with professionalized government contractors.⁴⁶⁸ For that reason, an ART official in Chocó related that the ART is contracting mostly with the more regionally integrated Consejos Comunitarios Mayores (CCMs) such as COCOMACIA, which have much more capacity, experience and reach in the execution of projects; more independent communities "have less opportunities [to execute projects]".⁴⁶⁹

A COCOMACIA leader explained to me, the focus of the organization in the PDETs has been to advance the production, transformation and marketing of agricultural projects within the territory, "controlled by us":

To try to influence (*incidir en*) in the implementation process, we have called on all the actors [of the government], that we have the capacity to manage and build our own projects. That we want to implement our projects, so that the money stays here in the communities, and not for outsiders.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁶ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁴⁶⁷ Investigador en construcción de paz, Personal Communication, 9/29/2021

⁴⁶⁸ COCOMACIA junta directiva, Personal Communication, 10/4/2021

⁴⁶⁹ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁴⁷⁰ COCOMACIA leader, Personal Communication, 9/30/2021

In pursuit of that goal, the very first PDET project implemented in the Chocó subregion was a commercialization project designed by COCOMACIA. The project is the Agrotienda Fluvial Interétnica, a boat buying and selling agricultural products along the Atrato river (including in the Zona 9) to improve access to basic goods and strengthen the inter-community economy. The program design was led by COCOMACIA; leaders from ASPRODEMA, the producers association of COCOMACIA, conducted studies in the communities to understand the relative availability of products and generated the business plan (Agudelo Urrego, 2019).

Another large-scale rural economic project designed and implemented by COCOMACIA in the Zona 9 territory focuses on the production and commercialization of Borojó (a fruit native to Chocó), benefitting 100 families across six communities. The project is built out of an agreement negotiated between COCOMACIA, the ART and four different commercial buyers (*Informe de Gestión Abril 2021*, 2021).⁴⁷¹ A COCOMACIA leader explains that, “we are seeking to promote the commercialization [of agricultural products], to allow the communities to transform their products and live off what they produce”.⁴⁷² Right now the project is in the planting stage; an ART official assesses it as “60% complete”.⁴⁷³

COCOMACIA leaders from Zona 9 are also responding to international calls for applications in support of PDET initiatives. The community Isla de las Rojas won support for a project titled, “Strengthening the Community Council of Isla de los Rojas and its Youth Processes Through Sport” from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the program *Yo me subo a mi PDET*. The

⁴⁷¹ Including: Empresa Borojó de Colombia S.A.S, Almacenes de Cadena Olímpica, Éxito, Asohofrucol and Cadenas hoteleras de Medellín y Bogotá.

⁴⁷² COCOMACIA leader, Personal Communication, 9/30/2021

⁴⁷³ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

project focused on youth education and culture-building in the community through sport. The project was designed by a key COCOMACIA leader from that community and featured local youth leadership.⁴⁷⁴

Comparing the more integrated communities of COCOMACIA and the more independent communities of ASCOBA, an ASCOBA leader told me that COCOMACIA has significantly more capacity to execute projects. However, ASCOBA has still been very involved in project design and execution, though mostly on the east side of the Atrato river, outside of the area of comparison for this study.⁴⁷⁵ ASCOBA has been involved in implementing a number of smaller infrastructure projects, including school improvements and community meeting-houses.⁴⁷⁶ ASCOBA is also working on the east side of the Atrato to implement the 'proyecto integrador', a large-scale PDET project with education, reconciliation and rural development aspects, implemented directly by the consejos comunitarios.⁴⁷⁷

Focusing on Domingodó, CC leaders from the river told me about a peace education project they had developed that was waiting for approval:

We (the CCs of Domingodó) made a proposal for peace, integration of youth and women, the proposal was approved by the mayor, we sent the information to the ART, so we're waiting for the process to move forward in Bogotá.⁴⁷⁸

Furthermore, two consejos comunitarios in Domingodó received international funding through the program *Bogando el PDETE* to implement PDET projects. The Consejo Comunitario Apartadó Buenavista will run a futbol tournament and the Consejo Comunitario La Madre will develop dance and music groups (*Comité de Evaluación "Bogando El PDETE,"* 2021).

⁴⁷⁴ Zona 9 CCL, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

⁴⁷⁵ Because there was a FARC demobilization camp in on the east side of the Atrato (Espacios Territoriales de Capacitación y Reincorporación, ECTR), much of the international and national resources have focused there rather than in the communities of Domingodó.

⁴⁷⁶ ASCOBA leadership meeting, Fieldnotes, 10/13/2021

⁴⁷⁷ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁴⁷⁸ Domingodó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

The more independent communities of Truandó, in the organization ACAMURI, have had less success in advancing and implementing their own PDET projects. A group of Truandó leaders explained to me that

We thought that the [PDET] projects would go directly to the communities, but no, each project now has to go through the government, everyone has their fingers in it. The companies implementing the projects keep 70% of the resources, or if not them, then the mayor. We thought that the consejos comunitarios would implement the projects, but no, we are far from that.⁴⁷⁹

An ASCOBA leader with extensive experience working in Truandó related that ASCOBA has stronger leadership than ACAMURI, and as a result, has had more success in gaining contracts to implement projects.⁴⁸⁰ When I asked an ART official which ethnic organizations have been implementing their own projects, she specifically cited the more integrated COCOMACIA and ASCOBA but not ACAMURI.⁴⁸¹ Nevertheless, the PDET project to clean the Truandó river will contract the labor to the communities themselves, including boat motorists, loggers, etc.⁴⁸² The consejos comunitarios of Truandó also won international funding for a project they developed to strengthen women's leadership in Truandó (*Comité de Evaluación "Bogando El PDETE,"* 2021).

The three organizations are currently cooperating on a combined proposal to present to the OCAD paz royalties fund. The project seeks funding to update the ethno-development plans of all three organizations.⁴⁸³ COCOMACIA is taking the lead in developing this project; an ASCOBA leader from Domingodó explains why:

COCOMACIA is totally different [from ASCOBA], because it manages big contracts that include many communities, including on the subject of the ethno-development program,

⁴⁷⁹ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

⁴⁸⁰ ASCOBA Disciplinary Committee, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

⁴⁸¹ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/29/2021

⁴⁸² Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁴⁸³ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

from what I have understood, COCOMACIA is managing the project, to extend it throughout the entire Atrato.⁴⁸⁴

Although COCOMACIA has been more successful than the other organizations in developing and implementing PDET projects, the experience has been more frustrating than positive for the organization.

A COCOMACIA leader tells me that

The ART isn't listening to our demands [to implement projects], it's the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer...The ART knows that we are the owners of the territory, and they do talk to us, but not at the moment of implementation...They arrive unannounced with a project already developed saying that this is what we are going to do, even though there is supposed to be a prior consultation.⁴⁸⁵

According to COCOMACIA leaders, the responsibility for the weaker-than-expected involvement of COCOMACIA in project implementation is shared between government actors and the organization itself. Rules for awarding contracts disadvantage COCOMACIA relative to private enterprises because it can't show the same budget capacity and experience, especially with infrastructure projects that represent the majority of the money.⁴⁸⁶ However, others argue that COCOMACIA could be applying for many more projects, but it isn't taking enough initiative: "We could be putting together a team to formulate projects, then we would be able to get a lot more resources directly".⁴⁸⁷ The projects that it has implemented in the Zona 9 all have serious questions. The Agrotienda boat was suspended during the pandemic, for reasons that weren't made very clear to me, possibly related to armed group pressure.⁴⁸⁸ The effectiveness of the youth education project in Isla de las Rojas was undercut by the fact that it had

⁴⁸⁴ Domingodó CC rep 2, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

⁴⁸⁵ COCOMACIA leader, Personal Communication, 9/30/2021

⁴⁸⁶ COCOMACIA MEC leader, Personal Communication, 10/10/2021

⁴⁸⁷ COCOMACIA junta directiva meeting, Fieldnotes, 10/4/2021

⁴⁸⁸ COCOMACIA leader, Personal Communication, 9/30/2021

to be conducted virtually.⁴⁸⁹ There are doubts about the profitability and endurance of the borojó fruit exportation project.⁴⁹⁰

Looking at the multitude of tactics deployed across the range of accountability efforts, Fox (2016) asks, “can the whole be greater than the sum of the parts?” (p. 5). I argue that regional integration strengthens cohesion among communities over a large area, allowing them to act collectively and strategically towards a shared goal. In the course of PDET implementation in the Atrato, I saw these advantages mainly manifesting in terms of building a more unified development vision and information sharing on PDET progress.

As a PDET observer explained to me, it’s not enough for community organizations to be strong – they have to be coordinated (*articulados*); if they are fragmented, they’ll be unable to articulate a coherent vision for development in the PDETs.⁴⁹¹ As discussed earlier, this has been a key issue across PDET regions: communities all asked for different priorities, adding up to a disjointed development plan that lacks strategic focus. Castillejo Ditta (2019a) documents conflict between and within communities over development priorities in Cauca; Velásquez et al. (2020) discuss mistrust caused by the territorial divides of the war undercutting cross-community coordination in Tolima. Meanwhile, organizations with significant reach and internal unity proved capable of generating much more focused PDET plans. A Procuraduría representative explained to me that the role of PCN (Black Communities Process), a powerful second-level organization in Valle de Cauca, isn’t about bringing back benefits for its specific member communities, it’s about integrating all the consejos comunitarios of the region in shaping a unified vision for development.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁹ Zona 9 CCL, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

⁴⁹⁰ FISCH staff, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

⁴⁹¹ Fundación Ideas para la Paz staff, Personal Communication, 9/22/2021

⁴⁹² Procuraduría Étnica, Personal Communication, 02/2020

This regional unification role was mainly played by FISCH (The Inter-ethnic Solidarity Forum of Chocó), a department-level organization with close links to COCOMACIA, to be discussed later in this chapter. Regarding COCOMACIA specifically, an ASCOBA leader argued to me that between the two organizations, COCOMACIA is at an advantage in coordinating PDET projects taking place across many communities relative to ASCOBA, which has to manage relationships across a number of functionally independent consejos comunitarios.⁴⁹³

A key tool to strengthen PDET coordination is the ethno-development plans, participatory development plans developed internally by some of the consejos comunitarios. These plans reflect years of work and discussion within the communities towards articulating a coherent development plan. As discussed earlier in this chapter, COCOMACIA was one of the leaders in the push to center the ethno-development plans in the Chocó PDET (“El accidentado despegue de la Reforma Rural,” 2018). The ethno-development plan went on to form the basis of the PDET in COCOMACIA territories.⁴⁹⁴

I also hypothesized that more regionally integrated organizations would have advantages in accessing and disseminating information, both between scales and between communities. I found some evidence to this effect; for example, an ART official explained to me that their organization was collaborating with COCOMACIA to bring ART officials to organizational meetings across COCOMACIA territory, in order to disseminate information and overcome communication gaps.⁴⁹⁵ A COCOMACIA leader who participates in the PDET grupo motores told me that COCOMACIA’s yearly general assemblies have been an important information sharing space on the progress of the PDETs.⁴⁹⁶

One of the main roles of the association ASCOBA in support of the consejos comunitarios it represents has been to monitor and share information on PDET progress. Compared with the more

⁴⁹³ ASCOBA Disciplinary Committee, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

⁴⁹⁴ Zona 9 CCL 5, Fieldnotes, 10/9/2021

⁴⁹⁵ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁴⁹⁶ COCOMACIA Grupo Motor Representative, Personal Communication, 10/4/2021

independent communities in Truandó, an ASCOBA leader explained to me that ASCOBA can put more resources and people to monitor the PDETs. Whenever there are PDET meetings, ASCOBA has the resources and reach to participate and report back to the communities; ACAMURI does not.⁴⁹⁷ This collective monitoring by the organization “ensures that there isn’t any consejo comunitario that gets left behind”.⁴⁹⁸

I argue that a final key advantage of regional integration is increased external legitimacy. Because regional integration is likely to generate formalization and professionalization, these organizations are more likely to be perceived as legitimate interlocutors by external actors. For the PDETs, I expected regionally integrated communities to be more effective in their interactions with state officials, place more activists in institutional positions, and generate greater international collaborations.

First, regionally integrated organizations are likely to have the experience and professionalization to be perceived as legitimate interlocutors by state officials. PDET observers argued that this political literacy would allow such organizations to maintain a focus on their autonomous political priorities and push back against co-option and elite capture of the agenda.⁴⁹⁹ This is perhaps reflected in the fact that, as discussed above, COCOMACIA has significantly more projects focusing on the parts of the PDET agenda that have been most difficult to advance: land issues, campesino economy, peace and reconciliation, and direct support to the ethnic organizations. COCOMACIA was also the only organization of the three that told me they participated directly as an organization in the formation of the Hoja de Ruta.⁵⁰⁰ Furthermore, this political literacy increases the probability that organizational leaders can be hired into government positions. A COCOMACIA leader currently works with ART as a sectoral expert for Pilar 1, which focuses on issues of land usage. He has served multiple terms in the COCOMACIA

⁴⁹⁷ ASCOBA Disciplinary Committee, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

⁴⁹⁸ ASCOBA comision de jovenes, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

⁴⁹⁹ UniAndes Professor, Personal Communication, 2/2020

⁵⁰⁰ COCOMACIA leader, Personal Communication, 9/30/2021. I asked but could not confirm whether or not the other two organizations participated.

territorial commission, developing expertise from within the organization on boundary issues between collective territories and resolving land disputes.⁵⁰¹

COCOMACIA also has a strong history of support from international actors over the course of PDET implementation. A USAID partnership with COCOMACIA called the “Peaceful and Productive Atrato” project running from 2020-22 is offering training to hundreds of COCOMACIA members on the PDET, seeking to strengthen the participation of women and youth leaders (*PGO - Peaceful and Productive Atrato Activity*, 2021). A group of embassy representatives from Spain and the Nordic countries visited PDET projects in Bojayá, in COCOMACIA territory, to monitor the progress of implementation.⁵⁰² The Agrotienda boat project was developed by COCOMACIA in collaboration with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (Castrillón, 2019). Isla de las Rojas won funding for a PDET project from UNDP.

ASCOBA has also had a notable history of support from international actors during the PDET. Both COCOMACIA and ASCOBA were partner organizations with the U.N. in implementing the PDET program *Confianza y Paz*, which sought to build peace and reconciliation projects around the FARC demobilization zones (*Informe Final Del Proyecto Confianza y Paz*, 2020). Two consejos comunitarios in Domingodó won funding for PDET projects from the U.N. in the funding call *Bogando el PDET-E*. Notably, ASCOBA specifically didn’t win funding through this funding call in order to give opportunities to other organizations with less experience that hadn’t received funding previously from the UN (*Comité de Evaluación “Bogando El PDETE,”* 2021).

While the communities of Truandó also won funding from *Bogando el PDET-E*, I observed that in general, Truandó and its organization ACAMURI had much less visibility than either COCOMACIA or ASCOBA. Whether in conversations with internationals about the participation of consejos comunitarios in

⁵⁰¹ COCOMACIA Grupo Motor Representative, Personal Communication, 10/4/2021

⁵⁰² Bojayá Humanitarian Meeting, Fieldnotes, 10/5/2021

the participation stage,⁵⁰³ or with ART officials about the implementation stage, I always heard about both ASCOBA and COCOMACIA, and virtually never about ACAMURI.⁵⁰⁴

Independence Advantages

In the previous section, I explored the organizational advantages generated by regional integration in order to explain the variation I observed in PDET implementation outcomes in favor of more regionally integrated communities. However, over the course of my fieldwork on PDET implementation, I also found the biggest internal problems in the more regionally integrated communities of COCOMACIA: huge knowledge gaps and suspicions of corruption and mismanagement between leadership and membership in the organization. I argue that these deficits can in large part be explained by the trade-offs generated by regional integration. Specifically, I argue that in addition to the benefits of organizational capacity, internal integration and external legitimacy, regional integration is also likely to generate gaps in participation and local flexibility and commitment. In the context of PDET implementation, these disadvantages generate principal-agent problems, challenges for intra-organizational accountability and logistical problems. I begin by exploring issues of intra-organizational participation before shifting to issues of community-level flexibility and decision-making control.

More independent organizational structures generate more opportunities for rank-and-file members to participate directly in decision-making. In the more independent ACAMURI CCs in Truandó, for example, every adult member of the community participates in the general assembly, the ultimate decision-making body of the consejo comunitario. This level of direct participation from community members is simply logistically impossible in a huge CCM like COCOMACIA, an organization of over a hundred communities and thousands of members, spread over an area larger than several U.S. states. As such, most decision-making is delegated to a small group of leaders located in the departmental capital of Quibdó.

⁵⁰³ Kroc Chocó, Personal Communication, 11/12/2021

⁵⁰⁴ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/29/2021

In my theory chapter, I argued that these increased opportunities for participation in more independent communities could have two possible beneficial impacts in an accountability context: increased commitment in localized mobilization and reduced principal-agent problems in negotiations with the state.

While in general, there wasn't much independent protest mobilization in Chocó around the PDETs, I did find a significant difference in organizational participation in the grupos motores. The grupos motores are made up of local leaders selected by the communities in the planning phase of the PDETs who have chosen to continue to play a oversight role during implementation. The grupos motores are different from the MEC, which is a much more powerful departmental-level body made up exclusively of elected ethnic authorities (in which COCOMACIA has a strong representation). The grupos motores have been weakened by lack of funding and training, and disregard by state actors (*Informe De Seguimiento Pdete Chocó*, 2021). Nevertheless, they continue to play an important role in PDET monitoring and verification: "we see that whichever promise from the state isn't being done, we monitor and denounce whenever the state doesn't do what was agreed to".⁵⁰⁵

In the COCOMACIA Zona 9 areas, in the municipalities of Bojayá and Murindó, just two people self-identify as COCOMACIA representatives in the list of grupo motor participants. Meanwhile, all four consejos comunitarios of Domingodó (part of the organization ASCOBA) have a representative in the grupo motor of the Carmen del Darién municipality; four of the six consejos comunitarios of Truandó (of the organization ACAMURI) have representatives in the Riosucio grupo motor (*Informe De Seguimiento Pdete Chocó*, 2021).

Furthermore, I argue that increasing community independence reduces the principal-agent issues between communities and their leadership: low levels of participation and deliberation as well as increased physical and social distance between members and leaders inhibit internal accountability within more regionally integrated organizations. In the previous chapter, I documented the significant problem of

⁵⁰⁵ COCOMACIA Grupo Motor rep, Personal Communication, 10/4/2021

organizational presence in the Zona 9 communities of COCOMACIA. Distance, cost issues and weak organization have resulted in communities that see organizational leaders only rarely, if ever, and feel extremely disconnected, even forgotten, by the organizational leadership in the departmental capital of Quibdó.

In the PDET context, this physical and social distance between the principals (the communities) and agents (the organizational leadership who represent them) is reflected in the fact that multiple communities had not even heard of the PDETs. All of the community leaders I talked to in Domingodó and Truandó had at least some functional knowledge of the PDETs and their state of advance. One COCOMACIA community that I talked to told me they weren't invited to participate, that they were forgotten by the organization who was supposed to convene (*convocar*) them. The COCOMACIA leader who accompanied me on that visit told the community that there were other people from the organization who represented the community's interest in the PDETs, which didn't do much to quell their concerns.⁵⁰⁶

This distance between leadership and membership as well as participation and information gaps at the community level possibly explain the widespread (unconfirmed, but certainly possible) suspicions from the COCOMACIA Zona 9 communities of mismanagement and corruption by the organization in the projects they were involved in implementing. In the borojó project, I heard that a prominent COCOMACIA leader placed their spouse in charge of the project, and that similar nepotism or patronage-style politics have been common within the organization for PDET projects.⁵⁰⁷ In a solar energy project, I noted tensions in the community because the only person who has solar panels installed is another prominent COCOMACIA leader.⁵⁰⁸

An ART official explained their perspective on disjunctures between COCOMACIA leadership and membership. The official told me that both the information and resources that flow to the organization

⁵⁰⁶ Zona 9 CCL 5, Fieldnotes, 10/9/2021

⁵⁰⁷ Zona 9 CCL 4, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

⁵⁰⁸ Zona 9 CCL 2, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

don't necessarily arrive in the communities because of personal interests and rivalries within the organization:

Sometimes there is conflict...the CCM [of COCOMACIA] receives the resources, which does not reach the communities, generating conflict. We have felt the rivalry. If COCOMACIA is going to execute a project, the idea is that they articulate with all the CCLs [of the communities involved], but sometimes they do not take the communities into account.⁵⁰⁹

The second strong advantage of independence is community-level decision-making control. The communities of COCOMACIA do not independently have any rights over the territory (since the title is in the hands of the organization as a whole). As such, these communities functionally have very limited independent decision-making power. In the context of PDET implementation, the members of ASCOBA and ACAMURI see the benefits of independence manifesting in greater control and more direct benefits from projects, as well as more nimble project management.

First, more independent communities have greater control over the advances of PDET projects specific to their communities. In Riosucio, a parish official explained to me that the disadvantage of regional integration is that if the regional leadership is weak or corrupt, there is very little that individual communities can do to advance implementation.⁵¹⁰ For example, in a solar energy project in COCOMACIA Zona 9, community leaders told me that the project had been approved by the government but that implementation was being halted by the COCOMACIA junta directiva, who haven't given the final approval for the project because they haven't gotten their cut.⁵¹¹ In contrast, the more independent communities directly manage their own projects. An ART official cited a project managed by a community

⁵⁰⁹ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁵¹⁰ Riosucio Pastoral Social, Personal Communication, 11/14/2021

⁵¹¹ Zona 9 CCL 3, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

as Domingodó as representative of how resources arrive more directly in the independent consejos comunitarios, without having to pass through a regional intermediary.⁵¹²

Greater independence also reduces the logistical and political challenges that emerge when the consejos comunitarios are contracted to implement projects in their territory. An ASCOBA leader explains the benefits of a more flexible, decentralized organizational structure: it's logistically much less complicated to allow independent communities to manage their own projects, rather than centrally plan a productive project across many communities. Independent communities furthermore don't have to face the political challenges of placing a project: in COCOMACIA, the projects aren't large enough for every community to take part, so complex decisions of who gets what need to be made in the context of competing interests within the consejo comunitario.⁵¹³

Coda: FISCH's role in the PDET

In the previous sections, I documented both the increased political power and project management expertise as well as the organizational gaps and conflicts stemming from the greater regional integration of COCOMACIA communities relative to the more independent communities in ASCOBA and ACAMURI. I argued that this variation in organizational structure can explain the diverging experiences of these organizations over the course of the PDETs: more regional integration led to a stronger record of implementation, but also greater internal conflict, logistical challenges and suspicions of corruption.

In this final section, I want to add in an additional component, focusing on the organization FISCH (Inter-ethnic Solidarity Forum of Chocó), a department-level ethnic representation body that has played a vital role in advancing the Chocó PDET-E. FISCH as an organization is tightly linked to COCOMACIA: COCOMACIA led the founding of FISCH, all of the presidents of FISCH and the majority of its staff come

⁵¹² ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁵¹³ ASCOBA Disciplinary Committee, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

from COCOMACIA.⁵¹⁴ A Kroc Institute staff member told me, “FISCH and COCOMACIA are almost one and the same”.⁵¹⁵ As such, its role in the PDET is an important part of COCOMACIA’s story in the PDET. Specifically, FISCH’s work illustrates a key point in this thesis, that the task differentiation and political weight of more regionally integrated organizations allow them to generate ‘spillover’ benefits. By spillover benefits, I mean public goods that benefit communities both inside and outside of its specific membership.

In the participatory stage, ART officials credit FISCH as their key partner in reshaping the methodology Chocó PDET to fit the ethnic particularities of Chocó.⁵¹⁶ The organization accompanied the planning process from the beginning, arriving in communities before the ART to educate leaders on the goals and reach of the PDETs. FISCH also played a role as an ART partner in helping verify the legitimacy of ethnic leaders who participated in the municipal planning commissions, and supported intercultural dialogue with indigenous leaders to harmonize their development visions in the PDET (*Observatorio De La Participación Ciudadana*, 2020).

During the implementation stage of the PDET, FISCH has taken on an even broader role, serving both to facilitate implementation and ensure accountability. For dialogue on complex issues of ethnic consultation rights for project implementation, an ART official told me that FISCH serves as the ART’s main point of contact.⁵¹⁷ FISCH staff also offered direct technical support to both the Bojayá and San Jose de Palmar municipal development plans, helping the incoming mayors incorporate the PDET initiatives from that municipality.⁵¹⁸ Bojayá was the first municipality in Chocó to adopt the PDET as part of its PMD (Ruano & Torres, 2020).

⁵¹⁴ UniClaretiana Professor, Personal Communication, 3/17/2020

⁵¹⁵ Kroc Staff, Personal Communication, 11/12/2021

⁵¹⁶ ART PDET gerente, Personal Communication, 07/2019

⁵¹⁷ ART official, Personal Communication, 2/2020

⁵¹⁸ FISCH staff, Personal Communication, 3/2020. Of note: Bojayá is within the territory of COCOMACIA, San José de Palmar is not.

In addition to this facilitative role, FISCH has also worked to build effective counterweights against corruption and elite capture of the PDETs. FISCH pushed its way into ART meetings with the mayors, calling contacts in Bogotá to open the doors. As a FISCH staff member told me, “if the alcaldes can just implement whatever project they want with no oversight, it’s very easy for them to just line their pockets.”⁵¹⁹ Furthermore, FISCH has been accompanying the work of the MEC and the grupos motores, offering trainings on the ethnic peace agenda and collaboratively generating a monitoring and advocacy strategy (*Informe De Seguimiento Pdete Chocó*, 2021).

It has also implemented two monitoring and accountability projects, the *Red Anansi* in partnership with the U.N. Fondo Multidonante and a project with the Colombian NGO CODHES (Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement). The *Red Anansi* is a network of approximately 300 ethnic and human rights leaders in the 14 PDET municipalities of Chocó formed in 2020. Among other work, the project offered training on monitoring and evaluation strategies, including how to form *veedurías*⁵²⁰ and how to make information requests, and generated an online platform to share information about the advance of PDET projects.⁵²¹ With the support of CODHES, FISCH is currently (as of early 2022) in the process of finishing up a broad evaluation of the advances of PDET implementation in Chocó. Over the course of 2021, FISCH leaders visited all 14 of the PDET municipalities, meeting with municipal governments and community leaders. The project has worked to gather evidence on the state of the PDETs and to share information with the communities on what projects were moving forward and the steps community leaders could take to monitor implementation.⁵²²

⁵¹⁹ FISCH staff, Personal Communication, 3/2020

⁵²⁰ Veedurías Ciudadanas are an accountability mechanism that offer civil society groups legal standing to accompany and monitor implementation of state programs. See:

⁵²¹ CONPA leader, Personal Communication, 11/28/2020

⁵²² FISCH staff, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021. See also: (*Informe De Seguimiento Pdete Chocó*, 2021)

Assessing the overall role of COCOMACIA in the PDETs, a CONPA⁵²³ leader related to me that, “COCOMACIA leads the Chocó PDET through FISCH, [because] COCOMACIA is the leader in FISCH...FISCH is the organization that Chocoan civil and ethnic leaders looked towards to make the PDET work, to bring everyone together and build a shared vision”.⁵²⁴

Competing Explanations

My case selection was able to address a number of threats to causal inference: I selected geographically proximate consejos comunitarios with similar organizational histories. Nevertheless, there are three sources of alternative explanations for the outcomes I observe, or threats to causal inference that I was unable to fully address through case selection: imperfect comparisons, spatial dependence between my cases, and non-random assignment to treatment. I discuss each in turn and outline my strategies to address these alternatives.

Despite the advantages gained through selecting cases based on close geographic proximity, there are noteworthy differences between the cases along the controls I identified: economic, geographic and political factors, and the trajectory of the conflict.

First, the three comparison cases are situated in three different municipalities: the COCOMACIA Zona 9 communities are in Bojayá and Murindó, the ASCOBA communities of Domingodó are in Carmen del Darién and the ACAMURI cases of Truandó are in Riosucio. One might imagine that key economic, geographic and political differences in the municipality might drive some of the variation in PDET outcomes.

For example, stronger internal economic development could potentially lead to a greater number of projects by generating both the physical infrastructure and the human capital to improve the feasibility

⁵²³ CONPA (National Afro-Colombian Peace Council) is a national coalition of Afro-Colombian movement organizations that has played a leading role in ensuring an ethnic voice in peace negotiation and implementation.

⁵²⁴ CONPA leader, Personal Communication, 2/2020

of projects and facilitate implementation. On a related note, geographic accessibility is also a factor: some communities are physically more difficult to get to than others, limiting their potential to receive projects through the PDETs. To control for issues of geographic access, none of the communities in the study are accessible by road. As discussed more extensively in the research design chapter, the communities across the study are in virtually the same economic position of extreme poverty.⁵²⁵

Furthermore, as has been extensively discussed above, the mayors play an enormously important role in advancing the PDETs; as such, variance in the outcomes may be determined by more active mayors. While the consejos comunitarios at times attempt to influence the outcomes of mayoral elections, to a fair degree, these elections are outside of their control. For example, the six Truandó communities of ACAMURI total some 900-1000 people out of a municipal population in Riosucio of over 28,000. Even in Bojayá, where all the Afro communities are part of COCOMACIA, just half of the population is Afro (the rest is indigenous or mestizo); over half the population also lives in the municipal capital, which is outside of COCOMACIA control (“Municipio de Bojayá,” n.d.).

While none of the community leaders I spoke with saw their mayors as true allies in advancing the PDETs, there was important variation in mayoral support for the PDETs. Interlocutors observed that the mayors in Riosucio (ACAMURI communities) and Carmen del Darién (ASCOBA communities) were more supportive than those in Bojayá or Murindó (COCOMACIA communities). At an ART meeting I attended, the ART officials commended the Riosucio mayor for his perfect attendance in the PDET meetings; the Carmen del Darién mayor was also present, while the Bojayá and Murindó mayors were absent.⁵²⁶ A member from the Mecanismo Especial de Consulta (MEC) of Murindó told me that things are

⁵²⁵ IPM (Índice de Pobreza Multidimensional, Multidimensional Poverty Index) rates from the last census in 2018: Bojayá (77.1%), Murindó (81.5%), Carmen del Darién (77.8%), Riosucio (70.9%). IPM is a weighted multidimensional poverty indicator developed by the Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI). It assesses poverty levels based on a combination of indicators within the categories: educational conditions, childhood conditions, work, access to health, access to public services and housing conditions. Households with at least a third of the deprivations (accounting for weights) are categorized as poor. Further discussion of methodology available: (Alkire et al., 2013).

⁵²⁶ ART Mesa Interinstitucional, Fieldnotes, 10/29/2021

moving faster in Carmen del Darién and Riosucio because the mayors are “more involved” (*mas metido*).⁵²⁷ Meanwhile, a FISCH leader assessed the mayors of Bojayá and Murindó as apathetic towards the PDETs.⁵²⁸

This variation in the support from the mayors towards the PDETs both strengthens and weakens the findings of this chapter. On the one hand, we might expect the more supportive position of the mayors in Riosucio and Carmen del Darién to generate an imbalance of projects in favor of the ACAMURI and ASCOBA communities. The fact that the empirics nevertheless demonstrate a disproportionate number of projects for COCOMACIA communities strengthens our evidence to suggest that the more regionally integrated organizations do generate more projects for their communities. However, a key hypothesis of this project is that the more regionally integrated CCMs should have the capacity and reach to build more power and influence in local politics. Yet the results have been fairly disappointing for the organization. One example is the municipal development plan (PMD) of Bojayá: COCOMACIA and FISCH both worked with the Bojayá mayor to systematically include PDET projects in his development plan. Yet a FISCH report shows that only 2 PDET initiatives were included in the Bojayá PMD, compared to 3 in Carmen del Darién and 7 in Riosucio (*Informe De Seguimiento Pdete Chocó*, 2021).

Furthermore, even though the three cases are neighboring communities, the trajectories of the conflict have not been exactly parallel. Two issues are worth noting. First, the conflict has been arguably more intense in Carmen del Darién (ASCOBA communities) and Riosucio (ACAMURI communities) than in Bojayá and Murindó (COCOMACIA communities). The data however suggests that the amount of violence is proportionally similar.⁵²⁹ Nevertheless, a leader from the Colombian NGO Comisión

⁵²⁷ COCOMACIA MEC leader, Personal Communication, 10/10/2021

⁵²⁸ FISCH staff, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

⁵²⁹ The Unidad de Víctimas database registers total violent incidents over the course of the war: 43,000 instances of displacement and 465 homicides in Bojayá (pop ~12,000); 5,000 instances of displacement and 113 homicides in Murindó (pop ~5,000); 115,000 instances of displacement and 1552 homicides in Riosucio (pop ~53,500); and 20,000 instances of displacement and 305 homicides in Carmen del Darién (pop ~18,500) (Registro Único de Víctimas, n.d.).

Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz observed to me, “The hard war (*la guerra dura*) is not in Bojayá, it’s in the Bajo Atrato”.⁵³⁰

I didn’t find any direct evidence of delays in PDET implementation in Truandó or Domingodó because of armed actors. However, interlocutors clearly articulated that ongoing violence presents a huge challenge to PDET implementation: “When there’s conflict, there’s fighting, mines, threats, homicides, all that prevents the state from bringing projects, the government officials have no security guarantees”.⁵³¹ Furthermore, the ongoing displacement that has hit Truandó especially hard seriously inhibits PDET implementation. In reference to the ACAMURI communities of Truandó, an ASCOBA leader explained to me that there’s no clear methodology to bring PDET projects to places where the community is displaced.⁵³²

Although the war has frequently been more intense in Carmen del Darién and Riosucio, one of the touchstone events of conflict happened in Bojayá: a massacre in 2002 of nearly 100 people sheltered in a Church when a FARC pipe bomb accidentally hit the building. Because of Bojayá’s history, it has both a unique capacity to attract media attention⁵³³ and receives more consistent institutional interventions⁵³⁴. This likely played a key role, for example, in generating the strong response COCOMACIA received to its demands for PDET projects following paramilitary incursions in the community of Pogue in January 2020. Internal documents from the Unidad de Víctimas likewise show that the agency has conducted 22 PDET-related actions in Bojayá, compared to 7 in Carmen del Darién and 4 in Riosucio. An Unidad de Víctimas official explained to me that, “Bojayá receives more because of the issue of the massacre, a very marked case, which had an impact at the national and international

⁵³⁰ Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz, Personal Communication, 2/14/2020

⁵³¹ Procuraduría de Chocó official, Personal Communication, 12/9/2020

⁵³² ASCOBA Disciplinary Committee, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

⁵³³ Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz, Personal Communication, 2/14/2020

⁵³⁴ Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz 1, Personal Communication, 02/2020

level”.⁵³⁵ Furthermore, the aftermath of the massacre generated a powerful victims movement in Bojayá which has a history of strong relationships with the Unidad de Víctimas, facilitating close coordination between the two.⁵³⁶ While this specific conflict history may partially explain the disproportionate amount of projects that went to communities in Bojayá, it doesn’t explain the similarly large amount of projects that went to COCOMACIA Zona 9 communities in the municipality of Murindó, which does not have a similarly notable conflict event that draws national and international attention.

A second potential threat to causal inference is the spatial dependence among the units within comparison; that is, because of the geographic proximity and permeability between the boundaries of my units, there is potential for ‘spillover’ effects from one unit to another (Harbers & Ingram, 2019). In my methodology chapter, I argued that as well as a threat to inference, the possibility of spillover impacts might also further illustrate the advantages of regional integration. Specifically, the advantages of scale shift and a more efficient division of labor can allow regionally integrated organizations to play a broader leadership role. In this study, I found two examples of such ‘spillover’ impacts. First, COCOMACIA has taken on a leadership role in advancing a proposal to update ethno-development plans for the consejos comunitarios along the Atrato river. Second, FISCH, the departmental organization led by COCOMACIA, has played a crucial role in advancing the PDET throughout Chocó. It adapted the PDET planning methodology to meet the ethnic context of Chocó, partnered with the government to offer technical support on project planning, and developed a number of projects to monitor and verify project implementation.

A third potential endogeneity threat lies in the non-random process by which each of the groups of communities entered into one of the organizational types along the continuum from independence to integration. It is possible that the variation in PDET outcomes may be attributable to differences in the process by which these organizations emerged, rather than variance in the organizational structures

⁵³⁵ Unidad de Víctimas official, Personal Communication, 10/28/2021

⁵³⁶ Unidad de Víctimas official, Personal Communication, 10/28/2021

themselves. To briefly summarize the historical processes described in greater depth in my history chapter, all the communities under investigation joined incipient regional organizing processes at similar times in the mid-1980s. Communities in Murindó and Bojayá joined COCOMACIA, an organization that had greater influence further south, because their municipalities are included in the zone of influence of the Quibdó diocese, which closely accompanied the COCOMACIA process. Meanwhile, priests from the Apartadó diocese, which ministered in Carmen del Darién and Riosucio, encouraged those communities to form independent, community-level consejos comunitarios in the mid-1990s. Soon after titling, war erupted in the Bajo Atrato, and the second-level associations of consejos comunitarios only re-emerged in the early 2000s. By that time, the communities of Truandó had already separated from ASCOBA, the broader organizing process in the Bajo Atrato, over logging disputes.

From a 'structure-focused' explanation, it is plausible that the structural conditions that permitted or blocked denser regional integration continue to explain outcomes. Most evidently, the more entrenched violence in Bajo Atrato that slowed the reformation of regional organizing may continue to inhibit active community mobilization into the present. I discuss the possibility that violence shapes variance in PDET outcomes above.

From an 'agent-focused' perspective, one could argue that potentially factors specific to some communities – such as greater social capital or stronger histories of leadership and training – that drove increased regional integration in the first place may continue to drive variation in outcomes. While the communities of Zona 9 were only loosely integrated into the original organizing process because of the Diocese borders, the leadership of COCOMACIA that led much of the organization's PDET initiatives come from communities with fairly remarkable and unique commitments to collective organizing. Similarly, because the more independent organizations of ASCOBA and ACAMURI were only able to reform years later, after violence subsided, COCOMACIA may have an advantage as an organization with stronger internal expertise and knowledge, given that it has continued to exist since the 1980s. For example, an

ART official, points to the unique experience that COCOMACIA has in project execution.⁵³⁷ However, she went on to explain that even beyond COCOMACIA, she has found that the more regionally integrated CCMs have more reach and capacity to implement projects, and that's why they've more frequently been contracted by the ART.

PDET Empirical Chapter Conclusion

I began this chapter by arguing that a key feature of most contemporary peace deals is that they create opportunities to generate meaningful economic and political change for those victimized by the conflict. These opportunities manifest as new policies, rule changes and government programs that aim to address the structural causes of the conflict. However, such policies face the obstacles of state capacity, political will, corruption, elite interests and violence. Indeed, in the 2016 Colombian peace deal, one of the signature programs is the PDETs (*Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial*, Territorially-Focused Development Program). The goal of the PDETs was no less than radical transformation of the rural areas most affected by conflict, closing the gaps between urban and rural Colombia by bringing a holistic state presence to the Colombian periphery.

However, five years after the signing of the peace deal, the PDETs are far from realizing these transformative political goals. Government foot-dragging and capacity failures, as well as issues of corruption and elite capture, have seriously undermined implementation. The original vision of the PDETs emphasized direct community control over the PDET agenda buttressed by consistent support from the newly formed ART agency. Already during the planning phase, this methodology began to change: community control over budgeting was cut, as was a systematic pedagogy from the ART to support broad, balanced, focused participation. Delays undercut the quality of the deliberations; meanwhile, local political and economic elites were noticeably absent. Nevertheless, the PATRs, the list of development initiatives developed in the PDET, were met with a lot of optimism by the communities that had produced

⁵³⁷ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

them. However, these PATRs proved to be a 'laundry list' of possible projects, with no dedicated funding or connective logic.

During the implementation phase, the PDETs drifted even further from their original designs. In a context of chronic underfunding and foot dragging, a huge role was carved out for mayors and national bureaucrats to determine project priorities through selective implementation. Chronic underfunding from the national budget forced the PDETs to become reliant on discretionary funding in the municipal budgets, *Hojas de Ruta*, and the OCAD paz royalties. This made the process more technocratic and inaccessible to the communities, tilted the balance of power in deciding what mandates were funded towards traditional political interests and ultimately created massive opportunities for patronage politics and corruption.

Despite these serious obstacles, the PDETs continued to be viewed by leaders in the Atrato with hope, as perhaps the only chance for the peace process to generate tangible benefits for their communities. As such, they have consistently sought to use the PDETs to advance an ethnically-focused vision for development, rooted in the cosmovisions of the Indigenous and Afro pueblos. My research seeks to better understand the outcomes of their work, in order to understand how communities shape state-led peacebuilding interventions. I focus on variation in regional integration defined as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. To do so, I built a controlled comparison of three neighboring groups of communities: 16 communities in Bojayá and Murindó that make up the Zona 9 of the highly integrated organization COCOMACIA, the 8 communities in the Domingodó river that take part in the looser association ASCOBA, and the 6 communities in the Truandó river, which have their own local association ACAMURI, operating independently from any regional organization.

The central finding is that increasing regional integration generated significantly more projects, projects in further stages of advancement, and more projects linked to the ethnic agenda that was the focus of community demands in the PDET participatory planning process. I sought to explain these differences by the political power, technical expertise and external legitimacy of regionally integrated organizations. A key additional finding was that the department-level organization FISCH, which is led by

COCOMACIA, has played a key role in advancing the PDETs throughout Chocó, thus generating “spillover” impacts to many communities beyond COCOMACIA’s zone of influence. However, I also show that increasing integration generated significant negative consequences at the local level: a lack of participation and principal-agent problems within COCOMACIA that have led to knowledge gaps, logistical problems and intra-organizational fissures.

This chapter strengthens an emerging bridge between the peacebuilding and accountability literatures. The peacebuilding literature recognizes both that a peace deal creates rare windows of opportunity for structural change, and that political factors are a key obstacle to realizing those opportunities. Yet this body of literature has yet to richly interrogate the mechanisms to overcome corruption, government foot-dragging and elite capture, a topic to which the social accountability literature offers rich insights (Galtung & Tisné, 2009). Likewise, the pervasive fear and violence common to post-peal deal contexts has been understudied by the social accountability literature (Fox, 2016; Schouten, 2011). These disconnects led Beyerle (2014, p. 11) to describe the anticorruption and peacebuilding fields as a “tale of two communities”.

This chapter builds on work in this field from Galtung & Tisné (2009) and Dudouet & Lundstrom (Dudouet & Lundström, 2016) in bridging these two fields, offering two advances: a focus on the subnational scale, and on variation in the organizational structure of social movement organizations. While initial work examining the linkages between peacebuilding and accountability has focused on the national level, my research illustrates the importance of the community and regional scales as sites of ongoing contestation over implementation and vital links in a chain of vertically integrated movements for accountability. Second, my work focuses on the organizational structure of social movement organizations. The peacebuilding and accountability literatures suffer from two common problems. Both literatures have a tendency to over-focus on professionalized NGOs when considering domestic civil society. And when they do consider social movements they too narrowly describe the need for “powerful” movements, without a rich consideration of the internal trade-offs and contradictions that make up movements (Dudouet, 2017; Fox, 2016; Halloran & Flores, 2015; Paffenholtz, 2011). In particular, my

work illustrates that while increasing regional integration likely strengthens accountability outcomes, it also creates gaps in internal participation and information-sharing, among other problems.

The chapter also offers relevant insights for practice. It offers potential utility to a range of practitioners and civil society organizations as a case study of the slow reduction in space for community voice over time, even in a groundbreaking participatory project. Furthermore, it illustrates for movement actors and the allies the challenges of balancing the internal and external demands for accountability that exist in movements: I found that the more regionally integrated organizations were more effective in generating responsiveness from state actors, but had greater questions about their own internal issues of accountability to constituents.

My work also alerts practitioners to the absolute necessity of understanding the organizational terrain of any site of a participatory project, as well as the linkages between organizations at different scales. More specifically, it offers relevant lessons for practice on what the likely strengths and weaknesses of different organizational configurations might be. For example, actors operating in a region of more independent organizations might focus on building or strengthening horizontal linkages across organizations, while actors operating with more regionally integrated organizations might focus on facilitating effective vertical communication between regional leadership and their constituents. These potential lessons will be supplemented by a section in my conclusion which points to how the organizations in this study sought to overcome the relative weaknesses of their particular organizational structure.

CHAPTER 9

COMMUNITY AUTONOMY AND INFLUENCE IN PEACE IMPLEMENTATION: FINDINGS, TAKEAWAYS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCHOLARSHIP AND PRACTICE

This dissertation has sought to answer: what explains variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation? I began with the observation that for conflict-affected communities, the implementation of a peace deal generally creates both new opportunities for progress in development, governance and quality of life and new threats created by violent contestation in an uncertain political environment. On the one hand, the mainstreaming of inclusion norms in peace accords have created the expectation that contemporary peace deals address the structural causes of the conflict, oriented towards building an 'inclusive state'. These pressures have meant that peace deals generally include new policies, rule changes and government programs that offer opportunities for local civil society actors to advance their visions for peace and development (Dudouet & Lundström, 2016). However, despite the significant hope a peace deal represents, it is also rife with potential threats for civilians through a variety of avenues: commitment and information problems in a DDR process, 'spoiler' violence, power vacuums, by failing to address and/or exacerbating existing grievances and causes of conflict, or by creating avenues for unwelcome state expansion.

The case of the Colombian department of Chocó, where this research project takes place, proved to be no exception to this dynamic. The 2016 peace deal created a wave of optimism in the department. That optimism was reinforced by the rollout of the largest participatory development program in Colombian history, the PDETs (*Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial*, Territorially-Focused Development Program). The PDET program sought to radically transform the rural peripheries most affected by the armed conflict, "closing the gaps" (*cerrando las brechas*) between urban and rural Colombia. Social leaders saw the PDET as a vital opportunity to advance their vision for *etno-desarrollo*, that is, development on the communities' own terms, informed and guided by their cultures and traditions.

How can communities shape such state-led peacebuilding interventions to advance their collective interests?

However, that optimism was tempered by an early recognition that with the imminent departure of the FARC, other groups would rapidly move to take over FARC territories if the state proved incapable or unwilling to effectively govern in rural Chocó. That is exactly what has come to pass in Chocó, along with many other areas historically affected by Colombia's armed conflict. The conflict has shifted to a new phase, in which new players have come to the fore. The ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*) guerrillas have assumed the mantle of Colombia's largest leftist guerrilla organization; agreements with FARC commanders sought to position the ELN to maintain control of FARC territories in Chocó. Their attempts for dominance in Chocó have failed in the face of a ferocious response from the AGC (*Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia*), the paramilitary successor group which has emerged as Colombia's most powerful non-state armed actor. Other players, including FARC dissidents, urban gangs and (possibly) Mexican cartels create a still more volatile environment. How can communities protect themselves and maintain their autonomy in the context of rising post-peace deal threats?

In this challenging context of peace implementation threats and opportunities, I observe significant variance in community-level outcomes. In Chocó, some communities are already benefiting from multiple PDET development projects, while others are waiting to see any benefits from the program; still others are barely aware that it exists. Similarly, some communities have been able to maintain fragile but nevertheless real protections around their communities, while others face constant displacement, violence and armed group control. I conceptualize these diverging outcomes through the related concepts of *autonomy* and *influence*. By influence, I mean the capacity of communities to shape the outcomes of broader political processes: the implementation of a government policy; the decision-making of an armed group. By autonomy, I mean the capacity of communities to maintain free and independent control over decisions of direct relevance to the community – over natural resources, cultural and social life, justice administration – which may also be understood as a form of limited self-rule within the context of a broader state (De la torre, 2000; Kaplan, 2017; Ortiz-Guerrero et al., 2017; Rodríguez Iglesias, 2019). In essence, these two concepts are two sides of the same coin: influence is external-facing, seeking to

advance community interests by way of negotiations with outside entities. Autonomy is internally-facing, seeking to minimize external interference with the affairs of the community.⁵³⁸

What explains this variation in community autonomy and influence in local peace implementation? I sought to answer this question by examining variation in the regional organizing structures of communities in Chocó. I explored *regional integration* as the key explanatory variable, which I defined as the degree of formal powers and legal authority that individual communities delegate to regional organizations. Regional integration varies from *independent communities*, which maintain retain all legal authority over their territory as well as representational duties at the community level, to *associations*, which retain legal authority at the community level, but participate in an association to represent their interests externally, to *Consejos Comunitarios Mayores (CCM)*, highly integrated bodies which concentrate both legal authority and representational powers at the regional level.

To answer my research question, I developed two controlled comparisons of three cases. For each of my controlled comparisons, I selected three geographically proximate cases over the same time frame (2016-2020) that are as similar as possible in every way except for variation in my independent variable: the degree of regional integration. For both controlled comparisons, I focused on the *consejos comunitarios* (community councils) in the department of Chocó. Consejos comunitarios are an 'ethno-territorial' organization, a non-state institution created by the Law 70 of 1993 to administer the collective land titles of black communities. The collective titles were awarded in Chocó in the 1990s and early 2000s. These collective titles created properties collectively owned by the communities that are, "inalienable, immune from seizure and not subject to the statute of limitations"; that is, it cannot be bought or sold outside of the community (Moreno & Palacios Blandón, 2016). Within these collective land titles, the consejo comunitario is the "maximum internal authority" charged with a specific set of functions: administer the territory, manage the natural resources; defend the rights of the community and preserve

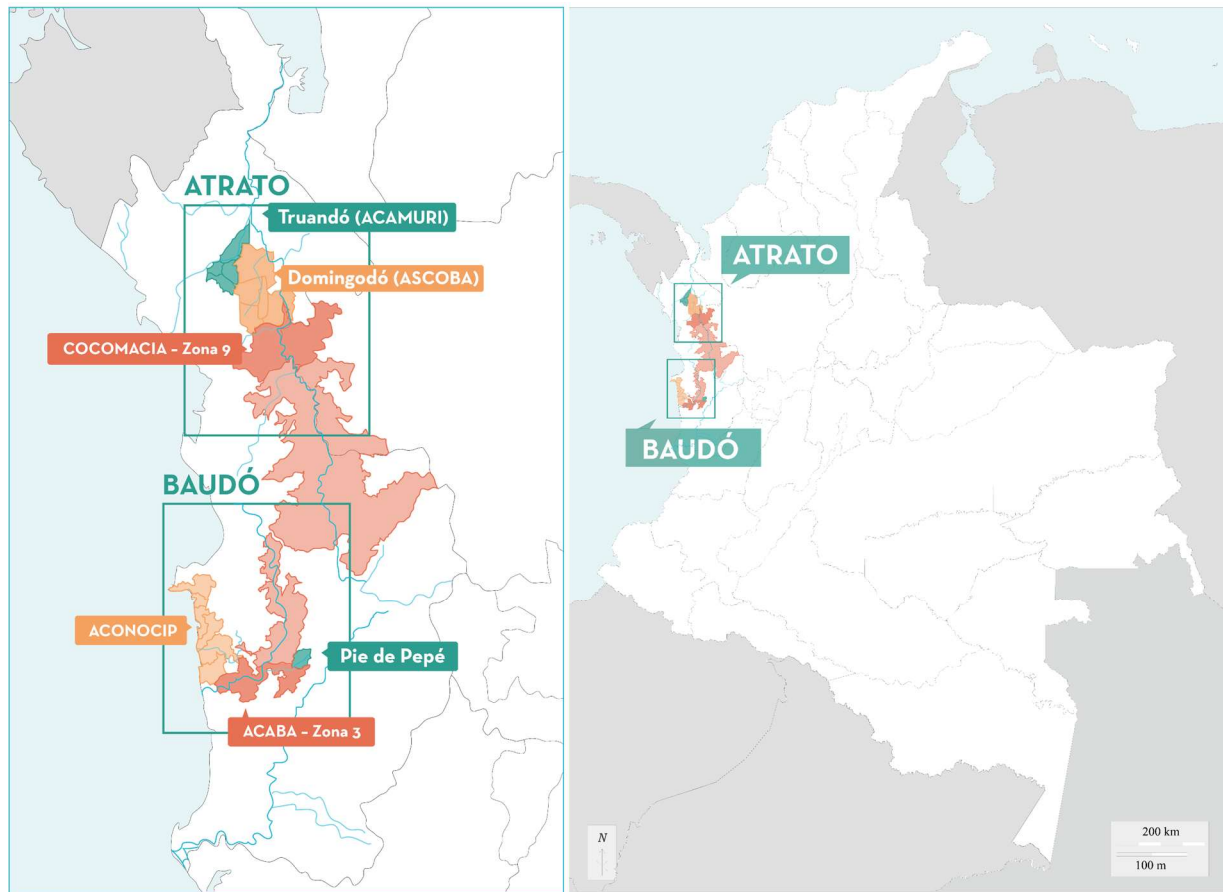
⁵³⁸ H/t Prof. Wanis-St. John

its culture; mediate and resolve disputes within the community (Hinestroza Cuesta & Cuesta Rentería, 2017; Rolland, 2005).

Focusing on a single type of territorial entity within a single region in Colombia was a decision made for methodological leverage, relevance and practicality. Narrowing my universe of cases to a specific subnational regional allows me to hold relevant variables including history, culture and institutional configurations constant (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). The consejos comunitarios offer me a fairly ideal unit in that they are all comparable among themselves: they are legally mandated to have the same structure and share a high degree of cultural and political similarities (as they are all Afro-Colombian communities who received political recognition at the same time). Furthermore, the Colombian Pacific is a highly relevant case for post-conflict grassroots organizing. Given the length of the conflict and the robustness and innovation of grassroots organizing for peace in Colombia, the region has served as a crucial laboratory for grassroots peacebuilding, which is reflected in the breadth of research on the subject (Aponte & Benavides, 2016; Idler et al., 2015; Melo, 2013). Finally, there is an element of practicality. Focusing the universe of cases to one region in Colombia is more cost-effective and allows me to develop a much deeper contextual knowledge about my cases. However, there are clear trade-offs in the generalizability of my findings by only focusing on consejos comunitarios in Chocó. I seek to rectify this issue in future research by applying this theoretical framework to other contexts.

A rigorous approach to case selection for controlled comparisons balances control for potentially confounding variables with 'representative' variation (Seawright & Gerring, 2008; Slater & Ziblatt, 2013). Thus, I began my project seeking sets of communities which are as similar as possible in the most possible respects, but still maximize variation along my independent variable, that is, the degree of regional integration. I have argued that the best way to maximize my ability to control this range of factors is to seek cases within the closest possible geographic area, that is, within the same section of the major river cuencas. I argue that geographically proximate communities are likely to face relatively similar economic conditions, share a similar conflict history, and fall into the zones of influence of the same diocese and political parties. In addition, to at least partially account for potential differences in age among the organizations, I focus on consejos comunitarios who received their titles from the state within

no more than two years of each other. Two areas meet this set of criteria: in the Middle and Upper segments of the Atrato river, and along the Middle and Lower segments of the Baudó river. These two areas form the basis of my two controlled comparisons.



At the border of the middle and lower Atrato regions, defined by the border between the Bojayá and Carmen del Darién municipalities, three neighboring clusters of communities are seated in the tributary rivers flowing into the western bank of the Atrato river. Furthest to the south, in the municipalities of Bojayá and Murindó are the 16 communities of the 'Zona 9', the northernmost section of the Consejo Comunitario Mayor COCOMACIA (Greater Community Council of the Integral Peasant Association of the Atrato River, *Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato*), a highly regionally integrated organization. Immediately to their north, in the municipality Carmen del Darién are the 8 communities of the river Domingodó, a tributary of the Atrato. The eight communities are divided into four different consejos comunitarios, all of which belong to the intermediate degree of integration, a regional association, ASCOBA (Association of Community Councils and Organizations of Bajo Atrato,

Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios y Organizaciones del Bajo Atrato). Just to the north of Domingodó, at the far end of the integration-independence continuum, are the 6 communities of the tributary river Truandó. These communities don't belong to any regional organization; rather, they have formed a small, more independent association exclusively of the Afro communities of the Truandó river called ACAMURI (Campesino Association of the Riosucio Municipality, *Asociación Campesina del Municipio de Riosucio*).

In the lower stretches of the Baudó river are three similar clusters of communities. The communities that border the Baudó river belong to the “Zona 3”, the southernmost section of the highly regionally integrated Consejo Comunitario Mayor ACABA (General Community Council of the Rio Baudó and its Affluents, *Consejo Comunitario General del Río Baudó y sus Afluentes*). Immediately to the west are six smaller rivers that flow directly into the Pacific ocean, these communities have formed a looser association of consejos comunitarios ACONOCIP (Norsiviria Association of Community Councils, *Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios de Norsiviria*). To the east, the northernmost community of the tributary river Río Pepé, a community called Pie de Pepé, formed its own independent consejo comunitario, and does not participate in any regional organization.

In this concluding chapter, I examine the findings of this dissertation, exploring what explains variation in community autonomy and influence in peace implementation. The empirical evidence presented here are the results of three fieldwork visits to Chocó from 2019-2021 totaling nine months, site visits to 18 rural communities and over 150 interviews conducted in Bogotá, Quibdó (the departmental capital of Chocó), Atrato and Baudó. As discussed more extensively in my Research Design chapter, the COVID-19 pandemic only compounded the challenges of an already difficult fieldwork environment. In addition to my pre-existing safety and security strategies (anonymity for all interviews, password-protecting my notes and destroying written notes, daily check-ins with people in the U.S., only traveling with the active support of the organizations I was working with), I built in a set of COVID safety protocols (PPE for interviews and travel, bi-weekly testing, a hard research cut-off if COVID numbers rose above a predetermined threshold).

I argue that overall, my empirical data suggest that the relative advantages of regional integration – organizational capacity, regional cohesion, external legitimacy – increase the ability of communities to

shape local peace outcomes. However, I argue that these advantages are in large part mitigated both by the advantages of more independent organizational structures – democratic and participatory deficits, local independence and flexibility – as well as by the serious organizational gaps that tend to proliferate in regionally integrated structures. Next, I weigh my findings in light of the contradictory evidence and competing explanations I uncovered over the course of my research.

I conclude by examining the relevance of these findings for both research on and the practice of building peace. I argue that understanding how local civilian actors seek to manage these threats and opportunities offers critical insight into building long-term peace and inclusive political settlements. Existing scholarship illustrates the tactics available to civilians to shape local peace outcomes and points to the centrality of collective organizing. This dissertation advances this body of literature with focused attention to scale, structure and aims of civil society organizations. These findings offer utility to practice particularly in sharpening our understandings of the relative advantages of rural civil society formations in peacebuilding and in enriching our approaches to local organizational capacity building in peacebuilding contexts.

Summarizing the Findings

Empirical Findings

Overall, my empirical findings suggest that greater regional integration increases the autonomy and influence of communities during peace implementation.

First, to assess the ‘opportunities’ generated by the peace deal for communities in Chocó, I examined the implementation of the PDET development program in the Atrato region⁵³⁹ from the beginning of the implementation phase in mid-2018 through the end of 2021. I found that more regionally integrated communities received significantly more projects, in further stages of advancement, and more projects linked to the ethnic agenda that was the focus of community demands in the PDET participatory

⁵³⁹ The PDETs did not take place in Baudó

planning process. To evaluate the progress of PDET implementation in the section of the Atrato river under focus in this comparison, I compiled a list of all PDET initiatives that 1) directly involve the communities under study and 2) have made at least some minimum forward progress towards implementation. The list was compiled through site visits to the communities under study, web searches of PDET reporting in Colombia, publicly available government documents, and documents shared with me by government sources. The complete list of PDET projects is available in Appendix 1.

60 different initiatives were identified that met these criteria. Of those 60, 41 (68%) went to COCOMACIA Zona 9 communities, 12 (20%) went to the Domingodó communities in the association ASCOBA, and 7 (12%) went to the Truandó communities in the association ACAMURI. Weighting per community, COCOMACIA received 2.6 projects per community, Domingodó received 1.5 projects per community, and Truandó received 1.2 projects per community. Of the 41 projects in the COCOMACIA communities in Zona 9, two projects have found financing, five are currently being implemented, and three are fully completed. For the Domingodó communities in ASCOBA, two projects fully approved and financed and two others are currently being implemented. For the Truandó communities in ACAMURI, just one project is currently being implemented and one other has approval and financing. Thus, COCOMACIA is the only one of the orgs to have fully completed projects; of their 41 projects, 19.5% are either being implemented or completed; in Domingodó, 16.7% of the projects are under implementation, in Truandó, 14.3% are under implementation.

Beyond the project totals and stage of implementation, I also examine the kinds of projects moving forward, focusing on non-infrastructure projects, and especially projects that have an ethnic focus. The Zona 9 communities in COCOMACIA have fourteen non-infrastructure projects advancing, including five specifically related to strengthening Afro cultural practices and COCOMACIA collective organizing. The Domingodó communities in ASCOBA have five non-infrastructure projects, including three projects directly related to strengthening the consejos comunitarios. The Truandó communities in ACAMURI have four non-infrastructure projects, including one project focused on capacitating leaders in the Truandó consejos comunitarios.

Second, I examined the ‘threats’ generated by the peace deal to the communities in Chocó, focusing on the rapidly intensifying competition between the AGC and the ELN that followed the exit of the FARC from Chocó in 2017. I assessed community autonomy from the armed groups in this context by compiling IO, NGO and government reports on acts of violence (displacements, confinements, threats, assassinations, reports of armed group control) in the comparison communities, balanced by fieldwork. In both comparison cases, I found evidence to suggest that increasing regional integration offered some degree of increasing insulation from armed group violence, though no community I visited was free from a significant degree of armed group control.

The empirical evidence suggests that there is somewhat less violence in the highly integrated COCOMACIA communities than in the more independent ASCOBA or ACAMURI communities. The COCOMACIA Zona 9 has 16 communities; in Domingodó there are 8 communities and in Truandó 6 communities, all with comparable population density. Between 2016 and the end of 2020, OCHA monitor records 15 incidents of violence in the relevant COCOMACIA communities, 10 each in the ASCOBA and ACAMURI territories. Each area has had two homicides over the period; there have been more major displacement events in ASCOBA (4) and ACAMURI (3) than in COCOMACIA (2) over that time (*OCHA Colombia Monitor Humanitario*, n.d.). Over the same time period, the Defensoría has emitted more *Alertas Tempranas*⁵⁴⁰ for Truandó (6) and for Domingodó (5) than for the larger COCOMACIA territory (4) (*Alertas Tempranas*, n.d.). Weighting per community, COCOMACIA witnessed .9 violent events per community; in Domingodó (ASCOBA), 1.3 events per community, in Truandó (ACAMURI) 1.7 events per community.

From a range of sources, I heard that increasing regional integration generates greater protection from the armed groups: Defensoría officials told me that “the independent CCs are more affected by

⁵⁴⁰ The Defensoría publishes *Alertas Tempranas* (Early Warnings) to signal an imminent risk of grave affectations to the human rights of a group of communities. As such, it functions as somewhat of a proxy for the quantity of violence a community is experiencing.

violence, easier to co-opt”.⁵⁴¹ From Church leaders: “It would be difficult to survive here without the organization [COCOMACIA], which gives protection to the communities”.⁵⁴² And from the communities of COCOMACIA themselves: “Because of COCOMACIA, there is a respect for the territory. Outsiders cannot impose themselves however they want, there’s a protection”.⁵⁴³

Despite the work of COCOMACIA to build community protections, AGC paramilitaries permeate the communities of Zona 9; their people are in almost every community; their graffiti is on the houses in every community, some of the CCLs are completely co-opted by the group.⁵⁴⁴ However, the situation in the COCOMACIA zona 9 is still distinct from the ASCOBA and ACAMURI communities in the Truandó and Domingodó rivers, just to the north. Whereas in Riosucio, “almost all the CCs are physically not there”, either permanently displaced to the bigger towns or staying only temporarily in the communities, “Bojayá has COCOMACIA”, which maintains the communities despite internal fractions.⁵⁴⁵ This evaluation is shared by COCOMACIA leaders: “In Bajo Atrato, people were removed from their territories, but not us”.⁵⁴⁶

The security situation in Domingodó, which belongs to the looser regional association of ASCOBA is very serious. I couldn’t personally visit, because ASCOBA leaders felt that the risk was too high. With the support of ASCOBA, people have to a degree been able to remain and survive in the communities in the river; ASCOBA has proven that at times when no other organization can enter Domingodó, it can still maintain a presence and limit displacement.⁵⁴⁷ Nevertheless, there’s a fierce AGC

⁵⁴¹ Defensoría de Chocó, Personal Communication, 3/10/2020

⁵⁴² Bellavista Parroquia, Personal Communication, 10/5/2021

⁵⁴³ Zona 9 CCL 1 meeting, personal communication, 10/8/2021

⁵⁴⁴ Zona 9 CCLs, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

⁵⁴⁵ Kroc Institute, Personal Communication, 2/26/2020

⁵⁴⁶ Zona 9 CCL 1 meeting, personal communication, 10/8/2021

⁵⁴⁷ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

control over the river, putting the communities under huge pressure and dramatically reducing the autonomy of the consejos comunitarios.

Of the three organizations in the Atrato region, the more independent ACAMURI was clearly the weakest, with only limited organizational presence in their member communities in Truandó. In a meeting with the ACAMURI leadership, they asked me to broadcast the precarity of the organization and the lack of support from the state and international actors in the hopes of generating badly needed attention. And while these more independent communities were fiercely proud of their local control over their title, they explained to me that that same independence exposes their leadership to more violence and armed group pressure, because they have the responsibility of making decisions in the territory.⁵⁴⁸ Inside the CCs in Truandó, control over the territory and the communities has been taken over by the armed groups.

As community councils, we do not have control of the territories. To preserve life, it is no secret that we cannot do certain things.⁵⁴⁹ There are groups in the territory that, although the CC does not want to, they impose their rules, they override (*sobrepasan*) our reglamentos. They have taken us away from the role of sanctioning and imposing rules.⁵⁵⁰

In Baudó, the four communities in the lower part of the Baudó river that belong to the highly integrated consejo comunitario mayor ACABA have no officially reported acts of violence since 2017 (though a 2017 Defensoria report showed that all four were under AGC control: (*Informe de Riesgo N. 008 17 (Baudó)*, 2017). Despite the relative insulation of a larger CCM, two ACABA leaders are currently under threat and unable to return to Baudó. Of the four communities I visited, two mentioned that they are experiencing significant displacement, both from the conflict and from the lack of economic opportunities. Like the rest of Baudó, no movement was allowed on the rivers after 5:30 PM (Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021).

⁵⁴⁸ ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁵⁴⁹ He heavily implied that this referred to attempting to intercede in any way in the coca economy.

⁵⁵⁰ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

The situation is even more difficult in the more independent communities. The communities inside the looser regional association ACONOCIP face serious threats from the armed groups: “Even though things have calmed a bit, you feel their presence, they’re in the communities, maintaining their control” (ACONOCIP leader 1, personal communication, 11/6/2021). NGO reports from 2019 reflect constant AGC and ELN presence, confinements, recruitment and social control by the armed groups in all the communities under study, with specific threats against CC leaders in Terrón, Virudó and Purrichá (*Tercer Informe Del Acuerdo Humanitario*, 2019). May 2020 saw intensifying conflict between the AGC and ELN in Terrón, Purrichá and Virudó (*Colombia Monitor Humanitario*, n.d.). The community of Cueva is currently completely displaced; all the communities north of Purrichá are subject to consistent AGC presence.

A 2019 report from Chocóan civil society singles out the independent consejo comunitario Pie de Pepé as the community in Medio Baudó most affected by the armed groups, and describes a pattern of threats and exploitation of the young people in the community, and extortion from the AGC, who demand a percentage of the CC’s resources as protection money (*Tercer Informe Del Acuerdo Humanitario*, 2019).

Beyond the immediate benefits that more regionally integrated organizations delivered to their member communities, I also found that the more regionally integrated organizations created “spillover” effects, by which I mean public goods that benefit communities both inside and outside of their specific membership (Fox, 1996).

One example of these spillover effects is the connection between COCOMACIA and the most important Chocó-wide social movement platform, FISCH (Inter-ethnic Solidarity Forum of Chocó). FISCH as an organization is tightly linked to COCOMACIA: COCOMACIA led the founding of FISCH, all of the presidents of FISCH and the majority of its staff come from COCOMACIA.⁵⁵¹ FISCH has played a vital

⁵⁵¹ UniClaretiana Professor, Personal Communication, 3/17/2020

role both in advancing the Chocó PDET and in defending the autonomy of ethnic communities from the new wave of post-peace deal violence in the department.

Assessing the overall role of COCOMACIA in the PDETs, a CONPA⁵⁵² leader related to me that, “COCOMACIA leads the Chocó PDET through FISCH, [because] COCOMACIA is the leader in FISCH...FISCH is the organization that Chocoan civil and ethnic leaders looked towards to make the PDET work, to bring everyone together and build a shared vision”.⁵⁵³ Focusing on FISCH’s role in managing post-peace deal violence Following the 2016 peace deal with the FARC, FISCH has advanced a broad regional proposal for peace, the *Acuerdo Humanitario ¡Ya! Para el Chocó*. This serves as a platform to push for negotiations with the armed groups that remain in the territories and bring national and international attention to the humanitarian crisis in Chocó. The project has also generated tangible benefits in COCOMACIA communities, spurring a demining effort by the Colombian military in Bojayá.⁵⁵⁴

While ACABA, the highly regionally integrated consejo comunitario in Baudó, does not have quite the same degree of prestige and department-wide leadership as COCOMACIA, it nevertheless plays a vital leadership role within the region of Baudó. A leader from Baudó explained to me that ACABA is known as the CCM of Baudó. There’s an inherent prestige and leadership role that comes with that. As such, ACABA plays an ‘older brother’ role as a source of guidance for the other CCs and a representative of the region.⁵⁵⁵ For the leaders of the more independent ACONOCIP, ACABA continues to be a source of knowledge: “We’ve learned a lot from the leaders of ACABA” (Pilizá Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021). As a Baudó politician explained to me, the ACABA president has,

⁵⁵² CONPA (National Afro-Colombian Peace Council) is a national coalition of Afro-Colombian movement organizations that has played a leading role in ensuring an ethnic voice in peace negotiation and implementation.

⁵⁵³ CONPA leader, Personal Communication, 2/2020

⁵⁵⁴ FISCH AHY Conversatorio, Notes, 7/9/2020

⁵⁵⁵ REDD+ coordinator, personal communication, July 5, 2019. Perhaps unsurprisingly, not all of the other CCs love this, and some are openly antagonistic towards ACABA and its leadership.

“generated more integration and confidence in the region, at least so that the three municipios [of Baudó] are speaking the same language”.⁵⁵⁶

Explanations

Integration Advantages

The empirical evidence I gathered over the course of my fieldwork illustrates significant variation among different communities in their degree of autonomy and influence in peace implementation. I have argued that this variation strongly correlates with the degree of regional integration of those communities, and that understanding the differences in organizational structure provides a credible explanation for this variation in outcomes. Specifically, I argued that increasing regional integration generates increased organizational capacity, internal integration and external legitimacy.

In exerting influence over the course of a state-led peacebuilding intervention, I predicted that these advantages should produce more powerful mobilization and increased capacity to negotiate successfully with the state, both as an implementing partner and as a source of bottom-up pressure to hold the state accountable to its promises. In maintaining community autonomy from the new threats generated by a peace deal, I argued that the advantages of regional integration should produce a degree of safety in numbers, more economic and cultural projects, a stronger base of expertise and knowledge, access to information among the membership, and stronger mechanisms of internal control.

I predicted that increasing regional integration should generate more organizational capacity, defined as an organization’s resources and the expertise and administrative capability to implement relevant programs (Zald et al. 2005).

First, increasing regional integration allows organizations a larger pool of people and resources to draw on, facilitating mobilization. In the PDET case study, I found that this meant that more regionally

⁵⁵⁶ Department-level Politician from Baudó, personal communication, March 2020

integrated organizations had greater political weight in negotiations with the state, and could more easily 'scale shift' to access higher-level decision-makers.

The highly regionally integrated organization COCOMACIA has actively criticized government actors on the lack of progress, generating tangible responses from the state. COCOMACIA denunciations of a paramilitary incursion in COCOMACIA territory in January 2020 led Rafael Guarín, the presidential advisor for national security, who wrote on his personal twitter account that in Bojayá the state must, "accelerate the PDET and strengthen the arrival of the State" ("En Chocó dudan de efectividad de PDET," 2020). PDET projects including community meeting spaces and school improvements in COCOMACIA Zona 9 communities were a direct result of this bottom-up pressure. I didn't find the same degree of evidence of tangible results from the less integrated organization ASCOBA. Though the more independent communities of ACAMURI in the Truandó river have had much more limited political weight than either COCOMACIA or ASCOBA, they have been successful in pushing forward their primary goal in the PDET, which is to set up projects to clear the blockages of the river Truandó.⁵⁵⁷

In maintaining community autonomy in the face of new post-peace threats, increasing regional integration granted communities more political weight and greater safety in numbers. The communities I visited explained to me that the highly integrated CCM of COCOMACIA commands a very different attention than an individual community would.⁵⁵⁸ Members of the other organizations see COCOMACIA similarly. An ASCOBA leader explained to me that, "COCOMACIA moves like an alcaldía, it has that level of strength" and for that reason "COCOMACIA generates more projects".⁵⁵⁹

Nevertheless, intermediate association ASCOBA, for its part, has proven an effective negotiator with the state, generating the remarkable court sentence in defense of the Atrato river, and advancing a broad educational reform (the *Champalanca* project) and successful new youth policy with the Riosucio

⁵⁵⁷ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁵⁵⁸ Zona 9 CCL 3, Personal Communication, 10/8/2021

⁵⁵⁹ ASCOBA leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

alcaldía. The more independent ACAMURI leaders from Truandó also recognize the benefits of ASCOBA's greater regional integration as generating more opportunities for growth:

I think ASCOBA works better than us. Because it's bigger, there's more opportunities for growth, more things may arise. We're just 5 CCs, they have more population, they get more things. It's a different scale.⁵⁶⁰

The second key advantage of increasing regional integration is increased safety in numbers. COCOMACIA developed a human rights commission specifically to strengthen the collective safety of the communities: their main job is to, “be present, observe, show the communities that they're not alone...and also to show the armed groups that the communities are not alone. People are watching what is happening in the communities”.⁵⁶¹ In comparison, leaders from Domingodó see themselves as more vulnerable than COCOMACIA communities: “A small CC can be very isolated (*puede quedar solo*). It's better to be in a bigger group”.⁵⁶²

Similarly, in the second post-conflict threats case study in Baudó, the more regionally integrated organization ACABA was able to present a stronger collective response to armed group pressure than their more independent counterparts in ACONOCIP and Pepé. A distinct advantage of increasing regional integration is increased leverage in negotiations with other parties, and thus more consistent avenues to securing external support. When I asked a politician from Baudó what the difference between ACABA and the other consejos comunitarios in Baudó was, he answered simply, “they get more projects” (Baudó Politician, personal communication, March 2020). The desire for more weight in negotiations with the state and other entities has been a driving force behind the intermediate association ACONOCIP as well: “The institutions (*entidades*) say, ‘we're not going to invest in just one small consejo comunitario’, so the

⁵⁶⁰ Truandó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁵⁶¹ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 3, personal communication, July 2019

⁵⁶² Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

strategy has always been, even though there are 6 independent CCs, just one CC alone can't do much, but unified, we can do bigger projects".⁵⁶³

An ACABA leader explained the advantages of integration for collective protection: "we have more weight, more muscle, more strength, and more protection".⁵⁶⁴ Despite some level of regional integration, I saw little evidence that membership in ACONOCIP granted the communities any increased degree of collective protection, as the members of the association see the organization more as a negotiation platform for projects rather than a source of support in moments of crisis. In comparing the communities of ACONOCIP with ACABA, a leader of Pilizá reflects that, "Yes, we have our independence, but we're isolated, abandoned".⁵⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the independent consejo comunitario Pie de Pepé can rarely even make public denunciations, because their leadership has no buffer space from the armed groups. As an advisor explained to me, "[the Pepé CC] does not go and make denunciations out of fear, because the armed groups live there in the same place as them".⁵⁶⁶

In addition to raw numbers and resources, Zald et al. (2005) define organizational capacity in terms of expertise and administrative capabilities: I argue regional integration generates advantages in professionalization and specialization to better handle complex tasks. I found that for PDET implementation, these advantages were especially likely to manifest where communities had the opportunity to take a direct role in formulating and implementing projects.

Considerable expertise is required to win contracts to design and implement projects in competition with professionalized government contractors.⁵⁶⁷ For that reason, an ART official in Chocó related that the ART is contracting mostly with the more regionally integrated Consejos Comunitarios

⁵⁶³ ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

⁵⁶⁴ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 3

⁵⁶⁵ Pilizá Leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

⁵⁶⁶ Pie de Pepé Consejero, personal communication, July 2019

⁵⁶⁷ COCOMACIA junta directiva, Personal Communication, 10/4/2021

Mayores (CCMs) such as COCOMACIA, which have much more capacity, experience and reach in the execution of projects.⁵⁶⁸ Compared to the more integrated communities of COCOMACIA, an ASCOBA leader told me that ASCOBA has less capacity to execute projects.⁵⁶⁹ The more independent communities of Truandó, in the organization ACAMURI, have had limited success implementing their own PDET projects. A group of Truandó leaders explained to me that, “We thought that the consejos comunitarios would implement the projects, but no, we are far from that”.⁵⁷⁰

In collective self-protection from the armed groups, the advantages of professionalization and specialization provided by regional integration led to stronger project planning and management capacity and deeper knowledge-building among the membership. COCOMACIA has an impressive base of highly professionalized movement leaders, including development experts, accountants and lawyers. Though perhaps not on the same level as COCOMACIA, the less-integrated ASCOBA is nonetheless well-equipped to offer professionalized support to the member CCs. In fact, that was a driving force behind ASCOBA's formation: “As CCs, we don't have lawyers, accountants, professionals...but ASCOBA does, that's why we created it”.⁵⁷¹ While the leaders of the more independent ACAMURI that I met with are very capable and knowledgeable, the organization doesn't benefit from the same kind of professionalized advisors.⁵⁷²

The differences between the organizations are also apparent in terms of task specialization. COCOMACIA has by far the largest array of high-functioning committees⁵⁷³ focusing on specific tasks in support of the communities in the organization. This ability to allocate resources to specific tasks pays

⁵⁶⁸ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁵⁶⁹ Domingodó CC rep 2, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

⁵⁷⁰ ACAMURI leaders meeting, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

⁵⁷¹ Domingodó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁵⁷² ASCOBA leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁵⁷³ By my count, COCOMACIA has 9 committees, compared to 6 in ASCOBA and 3 in ACAMURI

dividends in collective protection strategies. For example, COCOMACIA is poised to offer more support to the communities in response to the complex needs generated by confinement and displacement. A leader from a displaced community in Zona 9 explained: “The junta works to show the problem to the institutions, bring in NGOs, the church, and others to support and accompany the return”.⁵⁷⁴

While ASCOBA has fewer commissions, I found the organization to be effective in advancing projects with direct benefits to their communities. The youth commission, for example, visits schools throughout the territory, doing workshops on drugs, counter-recruitment, and human rights. Their territorial committee supports the mine education programming.⁵⁷⁵ ASCOBA reps argue that in terms of the work performed by the organization, there are marked differences with more independent ACAMURI: “ASCOBA is more organized. ACAMURI doesn't really have committees doing work like ASCOBA does”.⁵⁷⁶

Shifting to the Baudó region, I similarly found that the more regionally integrated communities could draw on a larger pool of professionals and develop greater task specialization. In the highly integrated ACABA, the leadership of the organization includes agricultural engineers, lawyers, accountants, environmental engineers and management experts. As a leader from the independent Pie de Pepé explained to me, “ACABA has more leaders, better training, more ability to build outside relationships, and gets more projects”.⁵⁷⁷ Specialization and professionalization allow ACABA to develop a much wider portfolio of projects than the other communities, including a cacao project with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a fishing project in partnership with the CCs of Bajo Baudó, and a humanitarian assistance contract with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁴ Bojayá leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/7/2021

⁵⁷⁵ ASCOBA Territorial Commission, Personal Communication, 10/20/2021

⁵⁷⁶ ASCOBA Territorial Commission, Personal Communication, 10/20/2021

⁵⁷⁷ Pie de Pepé Consejero, personal communication, July 2019

⁵⁷⁸ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

ACONOCIP does have a few leaders offering professional assistance in the process of negotiating with the state or developing agricultural development projects. Nevertheless, the level of knowledge and capacity among the leadership in ACONOCIP is noticeably lower than in ACABA. From their perspective, ACABA has developed a significantly stronger political and economic vision:

They [ACABA] have had very good advisers, their advisers have been lawyers, they have had accountants, project professionals, well, great people have led ACABA, on the other hand ACONOCIP has not had the privilege of having this level of advising.⁵⁷⁹

Of the independent CCs in the Baudó river region, ACABA leaders note that Pepé has developed the greatest level of sophistication, jump started by the arrival of the carbon credits programs and the numerous trainings that accompanied the project. Nevertheless, there are still knowledge gaps in the Pepé CC: people in leadership positions have less depth of knowledge regarding the ley 70 and the functions and limits of the consejo comunitario's powers relative to ACABA.⁵⁸⁰

Looking at the multitude of tactics deployed across the range of accountability efforts, Fox (2016) asks, "can the whole be greater than the sum of the parts?" (p. 5). I argue that regional integration strengthens cohesion among communities over a large area, allowing them to act collectively and strategically towards a shared goal, share information fluidly across the region, and effectively promote internal control within the communities.

In the course of PDET implementation in the Atrato, I saw these advantages mainly manifesting in terms of building a more unified development vision and information sharing on PDET progress. An ASCOBA leader argued to me that between the two organizations, the more integrated COCOMACIA is at an advantage in coordinating PDET projects taking place across many communities relative to

⁵⁷⁹ ACONOCIP Leader 1, Personal Communication, 5/3/2021

⁵⁸⁰ ACABA junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, July 2019

ASCOBA, which has to manage relationships across a number of functionally independent consejos comunitarios.⁵⁸¹

Given that a highly integrated CCM has legal decision-making power over its territories while an association must defer to the individual consejos comunitarios, leaders shared with me that a CCM like COCOMACIA can take decisions affecting the collective much faster and easier: “COCOMACIA has just one title, while ASCOBA has 14 titles and 14 different Juntas to manage. As a result, “COCOMACIA has more decision-making power. We [as ASCOBA] have to connect and bring everyone together, get everyone to agree. Some of our leaders are very far away”.⁵⁸²

In Baudó, the integrated structure of ACABA also vastly reduced the complexity of the carbon credits program by creating a single voice to coordinate projects for 73 communities. Furthermore, in the absence of a regional organizing body, coordination deficiencies become more apparent. For example, the Unidad de Víctimas is working on a collective restitution project with all of the consejos comunitarios of Bajo Baudó, including the CCs of ACONOCIP as well as a number of others. It’s going very slowly, because it’s challenging to work with so many different authorities simultaneously.⁵⁸³

I also hypothesized that more regionally integrated organizations would have advantages in accessing and disseminating information, both between scales and between communities. I found some evidence to this effect; for example, an ART official explained to me that their organization was collaborating with COCOMACIA to disseminate information and overcome communication gaps. One of the main roles of the association ASCOBA in support of the consejos comunitarios it represents has been to monitor and share information on PDET progress. Compared with the more independent communities in Truandó, an ASCOBA leader explained to me that ASCOBA can put more resources and people to

⁵⁸¹ ASCOBA Disciplinary Committee, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

⁵⁸² Quibdó Diocese 1, Personal Communication, 3/16/2020

⁵⁸³ ACONOCIP leader 1, Personal Communication, 11/6/2021

monitor the PDETs. This collective monitoring by the organization “ensures that there isn’t any consejo comunitario that gets left behind”.⁵⁸⁴

In the context of community self-protection against the armed groups, COCOMACIA has multiple spaces that serve to collect information from the communities and share with the state and other actors: for example, both the gender commission and the ethnosalud commission make visits to communities and submit reports and demands to relevant government institutions. COCOMACIA also maintains its own radio station to broadcast important information, though the signal isn’t strong enough to reach the communities in this study.⁵⁸⁵

In Baudó, the highly integrated ACABA serves as an information link between the communities of Baudó and the state agencies (Defensoría) and international actors (ACNUR) who track the conflict: CCL leaders are the eyes on the ground, sharing information about emerging threats to the CCM leadership, who pass that information on, make denunciations or take other actions as necessary. ACABA also manages a radio station based in Puerto Meluk, “Radio Étnico”, which serves as an important vehicle to disseminate information.⁵⁸⁶

The third component of organizational cohesion is internal control. I predicted that more integration would allow for a more bureaucratic, rules-oriented structure that facilitates top-down oversight, control and conflict resolution. As a COCOMACIA leader explained to me, “we maintain authority over the territories. We have our own sanctions and castigos to maintain order. We are the police and the inspector in our territories”.⁵⁸⁷ As one might imagine, the communities necessarily appreciate this level of control that the central organization takes over what happens in the communities,

⁵⁸⁴ ASCOBA comision de jovenes, Personal Communication, 10/13/2021

⁵⁸⁵ Fieldnotes, Quibdó, Chocó, 3/6/2020

⁵⁸⁶ ACABA former junta directiva leader 2, personal communication, March 2020

⁵⁸⁷ COCOMACIA Asesor 3, Personal Communication, June 2019

but leaders argue that it has succeeded in maintaining community control over the land. A long-time leader with experience in multiple processes expresses:

Whether or not we like it, we're in COCOMACIA. In Truandó, Clavellino does whatever it wants without ACAMURI knowing. In COCOMACIA, the [community] doesn't have that independence, COCOMACIA has a control over the territory, people don't sell their land to outsiders, that they stay in the territory.⁵⁸⁸

The less integrated ASCOBA also maintains both a territorial commission and a disciplinary committee, so it maintains similar bureaucratic structures for internal control as COCOMACIA. As has been discussed, however, the crucial difference is that ASCOBA has no legal authority over the CCs in the association. A longtime ASCOBA leader explained to me: "ASCOBA can't obligate or punish, because it's the consejo comunitario that has the title".⁵⁸⁹

The situation in the more independent communities of Truandó reflects the real limitations of community-level independence. There's "effectively no control over logging (the main economy)".⁵⁹⁰ In the elections of the CC leaders, "people are buying votes, alcaldes are giving money to support candidates, there's fights".⁵⁹¹ And even worse, armed groups have taken control away from the CC authorities: "the authority was taken away from us, by the groups".⁵⁹²

In the region of Baudó, the highly integrated organization ACABA's strengths in territorial control are made clear in discussing with the ACABA communities their lack of local decision-making power: for example, communities explained to me that they don't have the authority to sell any territory or make any deals with companies regarding their territory without the permission of the ACABA organization.⁵⁹³

⁵⁸⁸ Riosucio Pastoral Social, personal communication, 10/22/2021

⁵⁸⁹ ASCOBA leader (from Domingodó), Personal Communication, 10/17/2021

⁵⁹⁰ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁵⁹¹ Truandó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

⁵⁹² Truandó CC leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

⁵⁹³ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5, Communities 2 and 3

Because they don't have legal control over the territory, there is much less that the less integrated ACONOCIP can do to maintain territorial control. Pilizá is the only one of the 6 CCs to have defined reglamentos, and that's because they received funding through the Redd+ program to create them.⁵⁹⁴ While the independent Pepé has strengthened its internal control processes through the carbon credits program, it is less bound to bureaucratic procedures of internal control than the more integrated ACABA. For example, a leader from the junta explained to me that in resolving a conflict, "The elders (*mayores*) will have the ultimate call, not the [organization]".⁵⁹⁵

I argue that a final key advantage of regional integration is increased external legitimacy. Because regional integration is likely to generate formalization and professionalization, these organizations are more likely to be perceived as legitimate interlocutors by external actors.

For the PDETs, I expected regionally integrated communities to be more effective in their interactions with state officials, place more activists in institutional positions, and generate greater international collaborations. COCOMACIA generated the strongest response from the state in denouncing the lack of PDET progress, placed a key leader within the ART bureaucracy and developed a USAID partnership with COCOMACIA offering training to hundreds of COCOMACIA members on the PDET (*PGO - Peaceful and Productive Atrato Activity*, 2021). ASCOBA has also had a notable history of support from international actors during the PDET. Both COCOMACIA and ASCOBA were partner organizations with the U.N. in implementing the PDET program *Confianza y Paz*, which sought to build peace and reconciliation projects around the FARC demobilization zones (*Informe Final Del Proyecto Confianza y Paz*, 2020).

This increased external legitimacy extended far beyond the PDETs: as a member of the Defensoría noted: "Everyone respects the voice of COCOMACIA when it speaks, even legal and illegal

⁵⁹⁴ Fieldnotes, Purrichá CC meeting, 11/7/2021

⁵⁹⁵ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 1, personal communication, July 2019

armed groups”.⁵⁹⁶ This increased recognition allows COCOMACIA to bring in significantly more attention to their humanitarian recorridos: at a humanitarian fact-finding mission in the municipality of Bojayá, I counted the presence of ACNUR, OCHA, the UN Verification mission, MAPP-OEA, Lutheran World Mission, multiple state agencies and representatives of five European embassies.

ASCOBA also has strong international recognition as the pre-eminent Afro organization of the Bajo Atrato, with a history of support from UNDP, OIM, MISEREOR and others. Both the leaders of ASCOBA and the more independent ACAMURI believe that ASCOBA as a larger, more integrated organization receives more international attention. From an ACAMURI leader: “ASCOBA represents many more CCs in Bajo Atrato. Their very name attracts a lot of attention – it's the organization of the bajo atrato. Whereas ACAMURI is just for Truandó. So they get more international attention”.⁵⁹⁷ ACAMURI has had some support from ACNUR and the ICRC, among others. However, the current situation is more quiet. The CCs representatives told me that at this moment, “Truandó doesn't really have connections”.⁵⁹⁸

In Baudó, an ACABA leader explained in comparing ACABA with the independent consejos comunitarios: “The difference is very notable in the participation of the INGOs...The little CCs don't have the same ability to make allies internationally or bring in the involvement of the state”.⁵⁹⁹ This is reflected in ACABA's relationships with a wide range of international actors, including ACNUR, OCHA, Swefor, FAO and PMA. Both ACONOCIP and Pepé representatives shared the view that ACABA received a lot more external attention than they did. In ACONOCIP: “The difference with ACABA is that here is the lack of accompaniment, they have much more, and that results in more resources, that is why they are more

⁵⁹⁶ Defensoría member, Personal Communication, March 10, 2020

⁵⁹⁷ Truandó CC leader 1, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁵⁹⁸ Truando CC representatives, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁵⁹⁹ ACABA former junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, July 2019

advanced”.⁶⁰⁰ Members of the independent community Pepé also told me that ACABA secures more external support from international actors and greater responsiveness from the state than Pepé. A member of the junta directiva explained that, “ACABA, because they are a bigger council, they get more [external attention]...For example international NGOs, they concentrate on ACABA, but not on us”.⁶⁰¹

In sum, regional integration offers a distinct set of advantages to communities: increased organizational capacity allows them to more effectively mobilize, manage task complexity and reduce the dangers of isolation; regional cohesion promotes cooperation, information sharing and internal discipline; external legitimacy facilitates a stronger relationship with the state and international connections. These advantages position regionally integrated communities to more effectively maintain their autonomy from the threats presented by peace implementation, as well as influence the course of state-led peacebuilding programs.

Independence Advantages

However, my findings were more mixed than the above discussion would suggest. Specifically, I found that the advantages of regional integration are tempered both by the real advantages of community-level independence and by the serious organizational gaps likely to proliferate in regionally integrated organizations. My dissertation research suggests that these issues can be explained with reference to two advantages of more independent organizing structures: issues of internal participation and democracy, and community-level control over decision-making.

More independent organizational structures generate more opportunities for rank-and-file members to participate directly in decision-making. In the more independent ACAMURI CCs in Truandó or Pie de Pepé in Baudó, every adult member of the community participates in the general assembly, the ultimate decision-making body of the consejo comunitario. This level of direct participation from

⁶⁰⁰ ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

⁶⁰¹ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 2, personal communication, 7/7/2021

community members is simply logistically impossible in huge CCMs like COCOMACIA or ACABA, organizations of thousands of members, spread over an area larger than several U.S. states. As such, most decision-making is delegated to a small group of leaders located in the departmental capital of Quibdó.

From the perspective of a leader from one of the more independent communities of Truandó, the more opportunities for direct participation, “makes the people more united”; the quality of participation is better, more respectful, because it’s built on personal relationships. People participate more actively, whereas in the more integrated CCMs, people are unmotivated to be involved because they don’t have much voice. He argues that this makes the communities respect the reglamentos more, because rather than an external mandate, the communities have total decision-making power to define these rules.⁶⁰² Similarly, in Baudó I found that a lack of community-level decision-making responsibility in the regionally-integrated organizations frequently generates significant disinterest, and a number of ACABA CCLs are semi-defunct, with very little activity or local legitimacy.⁶⁰³

Furthermore, I argued that increasing community independence reduces the principal-agent issues between communities and their leadership: low levels of participation and deliberation as well as increased physical and social distance between members and leaders inhibit internal accountability within more regionally integrated organizations. The reduced social distance between leadership and membership in an independent CC can generate a sense of legitimacy and shared ownership over the organization. A leader from the independent Pepé told me that their leadership gains legitimacy because, “whatever project the community is doing, the junta will be right there alongside, as a constant presence”. Meanwhile, the leadership of a big integrated organization “are not there every day with the people, they don’t know what’s happening in the communities”.⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰² Truandó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

⁶⁰³ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/2/2021

⁶⁰⁴ Pie de Pepé Junta Directiva 1, personal communication, July 2019

I observed that the distance between the COCOMACIA decision-making bodies in Quibdó and the communities in the north of Bojayá generates significant miscommunications and mistrust within the organization: “People imagine that COCOMACIA is full of money, it’s a lack of information, people don’t really know what our resources or capacity is”.⁶⁰⁵ Beneath the communication gaps, there is a deep mistrust of the COCOMACIA leadership in Quibdó, which is perceived as distant, politicized and corrupt, the same as the alcaldes: “One feels that COCOMACIA used to be a communal thing, of the communities. And now it is all about projects for the benefit of a few.”⁶⁰⁶

The same the seeds of distrust were evident in ACABA, the highly integrated consejo comunitario mayor of Baudó, as evinced by a CCM leader pleading with the community presidents to share out information, “so that the communities know that these meetings are more than just handing out money”.⁶⁰⁷ A persistent joke was that many people believed ACABA only served to “*acabar*” (to use up) the resources. Mistrust within the organization can have direct implications on the safety of the leaders: persistent rumors were circulating about the character of the threatened junta leaders, despite many attempts from organizational leadership to disprove them.⁶⁰⁸

In the PDET context, this physical and social distance between the principals (the communities) and agents (the organizational leadership who represent them) is reflected in the fact that multiple COCOMACIA communities had not even heard of the PDETs. All of the community leaders I talked to in the other organizations in Domingodó and Truandó had at least some functional knowledge of the PDETs and their state of advance.⁶⁰⁹ This distance between leadership and membership as well as participation and information gaps at the community level possibly explain the widespread (unconfirmed, but certainly

⁶⁰⁵ COCOMACIA youth leader, Personal Communication, July 2019

⁶⁰⁶ Zona 9 CCL 1, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

⁶⁰⁷ Fieldnotes, ACABA meeting, 11/1/2021

⁶⁰⁸ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

⁶⁰⁹ Zona 9 CCL 5, Fieldnotes, 10/9/2021

possible) suspicions from the COCOMACIA Zona 9 communities of mismanagement and corruption by the organization leadership in the projects they were involved in implementing.⁶¹⁰ An ART official explained that information and resources that flow to the COCOMACIA leaders don't necessarily arrive in the communities because of personal interests and rivalries within the organization.⁶¹¹

One of the clearest differences between the more integrated and independent communities is the degree of decision-making control in the hands of the community. When asking an leader of the more independent ACAMURI about the comparison with COCOMACIA, he told me, "The advantage of the CCs of Truandó is that each community is independent within its territory".⁶¹² Compared with COCOMACIA, the members of ASCOBA and ACAMURI see the benefits of local control over decisions affecting their territory as manifesting in more direct benefits from projects, quicker and more nimble organizational responsiveness to local problems, and greater organizational flexibility and adaptability.

First, greater independence means that any project that arrives benefits the communities more directly, without having to share with many other communities. Because ACAMURI is only five communities, "we don't have to share whatever arrives here between so many people. What comes here is enough to distribute for all of us".⁶¹³ Meanwhile, the communities of COCOMACIA cannot advance any project without the consent of the regional CCM leadership in Quibdó. A community leader from COCOMACIA reflected that, "Having our own title would be better, our communities would be able to generate projects (*gestionar*) directly".⁶¹⁴

In Baudó, the community Pie de Pepé deliberately opted not to join ACABA in order to retain more community control over decisions that would impact their development. Regarding their experience

⁶¹⁰ Zona 9 CCL 4, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

⁶¹¹ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

⁶¹² ACAMURI youth leader, Personal Communication, 10/18/2021

⁶¹³ Truandó CC leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

⁶¹⁴ Zona 9 CCL 7, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

as an independent CC, the Pepe junta explains that being independent “allows us to generate (gestionar) more resources, we can seek out our own projects, to seek responses to the needs of our territory”.⁶¹⁵ This distinction is felt strongly in the ACABA CCLs: each of the four communities explained to me that the key difference between them and an independent CC is that, “when you’re independent, you manage your own projects”.⁶¹⁶

In the PDETs, as well, more independent communities have greater control over the advances of PDET projects specific to their communities. In Riosucio, a parish official explained to me that the disadvantage of regional integration is that if the regional leadership is weak or corrupt, there is very little that individual communities can do to advance implementation.⁶¹⁷ For example, in a solar energy project in COCOMACIA Zona 9, community leaders told me that the project had been approved by the government but that implementation was being halted by the COCOMACIA junta directiva, who haven’t given the final approval for the project because they haven’t gotten their cut.⁶¹⁸

Furthermore, as highly bureaucratic organizations, regional organizations are prone to rigidity and slow responsiveness. These issues are magnified by the fact that the limited financial resources available to the consejos comunitarios make it impossible to maintain a regular presence in the more distant communities. As such, the communities of Zona 9 of COCOMACIA and Zona 3 of ACABA face a challenging dilemma: they are dependent on an organization that can only infrequently reach them.

COCOMACIA leaders in Quibdó admitted to me that “because of a lack of resources, we can’t go to all the communities”.⁶¹⁹ Thus, while COCOMACIA has developed a rich array of support systems to defend the communities, these support systems are hardly felt in the more distant communities. In the

⁶¹⁵ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

⁶¹⁶ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 1

⁶¹⁷ Riosucio Pastoral Social, Personal Communication, 11/14/2021

⁶¹⁸ Zona 9 CCL 3, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

⁶¹⁹ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 1, personal communication, July 2019

Zona 9, the communities felt that COCOMACIA “has abandoned us”⁶²⁰; “forgotten us”⁶²¹. The same problem was felt in the highly integrated ACABA, in Baudó: “In the 20 years of ACABA, there’s been communities that have not received anything, people aren’t getting what they deserve...the CC Pepé can be better organized, ACABA is so gigantic that the leadership can’t arrive everywhere.”⁶²²

Organizational gaps in COCOMACIA generate consequences for community self protection both through challenges in territorial control and in low participation in the CCLs. Several leaders from both Truandó and Domingodó argued that in the more integrated organizations, the absence of organizational leaders in the territories made communities vulnerable.⁶²³ Meanwhile, the more independent CCs can react more immediately to issues or conflicts on the ground: “whatever conflict, the legal representative is here, you don’t have to look for them in Quibdó, they’re here”.⁶²⁴

In the PDET implementation, greater independence also reduced the logistical and political challenges that emerged when the consejos comunitarios were contracted to implement projects in their territory. It’s a logistically challenging task to centrally plan a productive project across many communities. Independent communities furthermore don’t have to face the political challenges of placing a project: in COCOMACIA, the projects aren’t large enough for every community to take part, so complex decisions need to be made in the context of competing interests within the consejo comunitario.⁶²⁵

⁶²⁰ Zona 9 CCL 7, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

⁶²¹ Zona 9 CCL 8, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

⁶²² Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido 11/5/2021, Community 2

⁶²³ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

⁶²⁴ Fieldnotes, Pie de Pepé Junta meeting, 11/11/2021

⁶²⁵ ASCOBA Disciplinary Committee, Personal Communication, 10/19/2021

Contrasting Evidence

In the previous sections, I have presented a story of trade-offs between integration and independence for rural communities: integration strengthens organizational capacity, regional cohesion and external legitimacy, but frequently leads to gaps in internal participation, democracy and community-level decision-making power. However, the empirical evidence I gathered is messier than the story presented in the previous sections: here, I explore contrasting evidence and areas in which my predictions failed. I address three kinds of issues: the general inability for any of the organizations in this study to shift broader power dynamics, specific areas in which I didn't find evidence to support my predictions on the consequences of variation in regional integration, and strategies communities have adopted to overcome the relative limitations of the three different organizational forms.

The consejo comunitario organizations in this study face crushing poverty, a history of state neglect and racism, and a decades long conflict fueled by Chocó's ongoing importance as a strategic drug corridor and repository of a rich array of natural resources. The work that they do to advocate on behalf of the communities they represent creates fragile but vital benefits. Nevertheless, their power relative to the structural obstacles they face must be contextualized. The consejos comunitarios are non-state organizations with no fixed resource base, working under extremely dangerous conditions. Their power to reshape regional power relations is inherently limited, and much of their work takes place 'along the margins'; without directly challenging the state or the armed groups.

None of the organizations under study are able to create enduring or robust protections against the violence currently inundating Chocó. Even in the regionally integrated communities of COCOMACIA and ACABA, the armed groups exercise a predominant control over the lives of many, perhaps most of the communities. Despite the work of COCOMACIA to build community protections, AGC paramilitaries permeate the communities of Zona 9; their people are surveilling, and in many cases controlling, basically every community.⁶²⁶ Meanwhile, two of the most visible leaders of ACABA, the regionally integrated

⁶²⁶ Zona 9 CCLs, Fieldnotes, 10/8/2021

consejo comunitario in Baudó, are currently displaced under threats from the paramilitaries. An ACABA leader tells me: “Our power is limited, we’re not the state, we can just get rid of the armed groups”.⁶²⁷

Likewise, even COCOMACIA has been unable to advance the PDETs to anything close to their stated goals. While the empirical evidence I presented suggests that COCOMACIA has been relatively successful in advancing PDET projects in their territories, those incremental advances do little to address the serious needs of the communities. In a meeting in Quibdó with officials of the Chocó departmental government, a COCOMACIA representative stated,

On the PDETs, we must tell the truth of what is happening. In Vigía del Fuerte, where are the PDET projects? In Murindó, I do not see any progress, in Bojayá, it is more of the same. As COCOMACIA, we are denouncing the lack of advances of the PDETs.⁶²⁸

Although COCOMACIA has been more successful than the other organizations in developing and implementing PDET projects, the experience has been more frustrating than positive for the organization. A COCOMACIA leader tells me that “the ART isn’t listening to our demands [to implement projects], it’s the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.”⁶²⁹ It is possible that in a more favorable context, the organizations would be able to deliver more benefits to their communities, but the actions of the national government and well-resourced armed groups are largely outside of any of their control.

Regarding the consequences of the greater organizational capacity that I expected regional integration to generate, a number of predictions failed to materialize. Perhaps the most notable is the failure of the more regionally integrated organizations to generate any consistent political power at the municipal levels. The relationships between the mayors (*alcaldes*) and the consejos comunitarios are often overtly hostile. Overlapping authority and scarce resources put the *alcaldes* in direct conflict with the leaders of the consejos comunitarios. Meanwhile, the consejos comunitarios themselves, from what I

⁶²⁷ ACABA junta directiva leader 4, personal communication, July 2019

⁶²⁸ COCOMACIA Representative, Fieldnotes from Quibdó PDET meeting, 11/13/2021

⁶²⁹ COCOMACIA leader, Personal Communication, 9/30/2021

have seen, do not have the internal cohesion to generate meaningful political power in municipal elections.

One might imagine, for example, that the regionally integrated ACABA, whose territory includes most of the communities in the municipalities of Alto and Medio Baudó, or COCOMACIA, whose territory includes most of the communities in the municipalities of Quibdó, Medio Atrato and Bojayá, would be able to be kingmakers in their municipalities. However, political allegiances built out of a long history of machine politics create serious fractures within the communities that render the consejos comunitarios mostly ineffective political players. As an ACABA leader put it: “people support ACABA, but not politically”.⁶³⁰ Similarly, in COCOMACIA, a member of the junta directiva leadership body explained that:

We are strong in the organizing process, but weak in terms of politics. In the elections, we lose our unity, become politically divided. If we were united, we could elect the alcalde in any municipio...*Politiquería* drives this department, it's stronger than the organization.⁶³¹

Furthermore, I expected that because of the greater resources and people that more regionally integrated organizations draw on, and because of their stronger coordinating capacity, that regionally integrated organizations would demonstrate a stronger capacity for high-visibility protest mobilization. However, these kinds of tactics (ex. marches, demonstrations, occupations of public spaces, etc.) don't figure very prominently in the repertoires of any of the organizations studied. Rather, organizations tended to use, for example, *recorridos*, boat caravans in which a collective of representatives from the diocese, social leaders, state institutions and international organizations make a series of visits to communities. Another more frequent tactic is denouncements, or public letters (hopefully) accompanied by high-level meetings between social leaders. Part of the explanation for this tactical repertoire is likely geographical: communities are widely dispersed, transportation is expensive, and there is no easily

⁶³⁰ ACABA leader, Personal Communication, 7/3/2019

⁶³¹ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 4, personal communication, 7/2019

accessible high-value target for protests, such as the Pan-American highway in Cauca or the port in Buenaventura, two sites of high-visibility ethnic protest.

I also argued that regional organizations should be able to mobilize large numbers of people to collectively commit to norms of non-involvement and neutrality, dramatically raising the costs of entry for armed groups. I did find rich evidence for the ‘safety of the collective’ created by regional integration, discussed above. However, I underestimated the degree of variance across communities within the same organization in their adherence to neutrality norms. A missionary in Quibdó who has accompanied the COCOMACIA process for decades, explained to me that within the organization, there have always been certain *destacado* communities with especially strong cultures of resistance and organizing.⁶³²

Furthermore, I predicted that more regionally integrated organizations would be able to make more progress on issues of gender within their organizations. In general, in Chocó there are strong patriarchal conventions about women’s roles in the social organizing process. From my observations, women speak less, and are more likely to undertake menial tasks in meetings (cooking, cleaning, note-taking, etc.), while men occupy the vast majority of the high-visibility leadership positions. Women are also less able to travel with the frequency required of a prominent leader within a consejo comunitario because of domestic obligations. Gender non-conforming people in Chocó are even far more marginalized, and generally organize in spaces outside of the ethnic organizations.

I was unable to find any consistent evidence about the relationship between regional integration and internal gender equality within the organizations. On the one hand, the highest visibility efforts to advance gender equality within the consejos comunitarios are coming from the more regionally integrated organizations, and in particular from COCOMACIA’s gender commission. In addition to training work on leadership development, the commission is committed to internal advocacy to push for more participation for women in leadership roles. A key victory was passing a measure to guarantee a minimum

⁶³² Misionera de Quibdó, Personal Interview, March 2020

representation for women of 1/3 of the seats in the junta directiva of COCOMACIA.⁶³³ However, the organization remains mostly dominated by men. None of the Zona 9 communities I visited had a woman president. Meanwhile, immediately to their north, the legal representative of the less integrated ASCOBA is a woman; in one of the communities in Domingodó, an ASCOBA community in this study, six of the seven members of that community's leadership council are women.⁶³⁴

In Baudó, the regionally integrated ACABA has also been unable to distinguish itself from the rest of the consejos comunitarios in the region on gender issues. Beginning in the last few years, ACABA has started to do some workshops on gender, focused mostly on empowering women. However, an ACABA leader (who is a woman) explained to me that the culture in Baudó remains such that women only rarely participate in collective organizing.⁶³⁵ Of the three organizations in the Baudó comparison, only Pie de Pepé, the independent community, was led by a woman. Of the three consejos comunitarios in Baudó, Pepé also has the only women's association, which conducts workshops and is in the planning stages of developing a shared economic project.⁶³⁶ However, even in Pepé, observers tell me that the support for women's leadership is shaky.⁶³⁷

Finally, I predicted that regional integration should promote effective communication across a region by creating formal movement infrastructure for information sharing and serving as a clearinghouse for communications and a bridge between otherwise disparate groups. This, I predicted, would allow for tactical diffusion, monitoring and mechanisms of early warning. I found no specific evidence of early-warning systems or tactical diffusion, though these mechanisms might operate informally. But perhaps more notable than these absences, I noticed persistent huge information disconnects between regional

⁶³³ COCOMACIA Gender Commission Rep, Personal Communication, July 2019

⁶³⁴ Domingodó CC rep 2, Personal Communication, 10/27/2021

⁶³⁵ ACABA junta directiva leader 1, personal communication, June 2019

⁶³⁶ Pie de Pepé asesor, personal communication, 11/10/2021

⁶³⁷ PaciPaz conversa, personal communication, 3/8/2020

leadership in Quibdó and local leaders in the communities in both of the highly integrated organizations, ACABA and COCOMACIA.

A COCOMACIA leader told me that the relationship between the organizational leaders and the communities is often not fluid because communication is so difficult: “there’s no antenna or signal in most of the communities”.⁶³⁸ The lack of communication leads to persistent misunderstandings, suspicions, and fundamental knowledge gaps. In ACABA, for example, I noticed a huge social distance between the leaders and the communities: ACABA leaders arrive in nice SUVs (because of a state-managed protection scheme for threatened leaders) and people wonder: where is that money coming from?.⁶³⁹ These communication gaps spilled over into the PDETs as well. An ART official told me that both the information and resources that flow to the COCOMACIA leadership don’t necessarily arrive in the communities because of personal interests and rivalries within the organization.⁶⁴⁰

This dissertation is built in large part out of the idea that the decisions that the communities made in the 1990s and early 2000s on how to structure their collective titles created path dependencies that shape their ability to pursue peacebuilding objectives twenty-five years later. However, I found in my research a proliferation of strategies that communities created to adapt to and/or overcome the relative limitations of the organizational structure that they (or the generation that preceded them) chose. I explore the strategies I encountered for each of the three organizational forms: the highly integrated consejos comunitarios mayores, the intermediate approach of the associations of consejos comunitarios, and the independent communities.

First, the Consejos Comunitarios Mayores invented the figure of the *Consejo Comunitario Local* (CCL). The CCLs are administrative bodies overseeing one or a few communities; they replicate the organizational structure of the larger consejo comunitario mayor. Their function is to help manage the

⁶³⁸ COCOMACIA junta directiva member 2, personal communication, 7/2019

⁶³⁹ ACABA asesor, personal communication, 6/2019

⁶⁴⁰ ART official, Personal Communication, 10/26/2021

territory and connect the communities to the broader organization. A CCL leader in ACABA offered me the allegory of a U.S. president: they can't administer all that territory themselves, so they have governors: "the title of ACABA is very big, that's why they created the CCLs...to lead it you have to delegate".⁶⁴¹ The CCLs are given a fairly wide degree of latitude to define their own norms of conduct, zone their territories for resource use, and serve as a first line of defense for any problems that might arise.

An additional organizational figure used by the larger consejos comunitarios mayores to decentralize some decision-making and better link communities and the central leadership is the "zonal committee". For example, COCOMACIA is divided into nine zones; each zone has a fair amount of independence and is responsible for finding its own resources to conduct its business.⁶⁴² Zonal committees are also responsible for intervening in conflicts that go beyond the capacity of individual communities to resolve, and might address some 3-5 cases per year.⁶⁴³ These zonal committees are especially important in the more distant zones of COCOMACIA, that receive only infrequent support from the consejo leadership in Quibdó, given the high costs of travel (in particular gasoline): "the zonal encounters maintain the strength [of COCOMACIA]. Through these structures, the communities still feel the presence of the organization".⁶⁴⁴

Communities that chafe under the limited independence they have within a highly integrated consejos comunitarios mayores have also found inventive ways to build their own independent decision-making spaces. Some communities have explored the legal possibilities for breaking out of their collective title to form a new consejo comunitario, although this avenue was unsuccessful. Furthermore, it was fairly common for communities to belong to a consejo comunitario but also (confusingly) maintain a *Junta de*

⁶⁴¹ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido, Community 2, 11/5/2021

⁶⁴² COCOMACIA Disciplinary Committee representative, Personal Communication, July 2019

⁶⁴³ COCOMACIA youth leader, Personal Communication, July 2019

⁶⁴⁴ COCOMACIA youth leader, Personal Communication, July 2019

Acción Communal (JAC), an civil body that gives the communities legal standing to independently petition the municipal government for local projects; other communities maintained the position of *Inspectores* and/or church committees to perform other (theoretically overlapping) functions with the consejo comunitario.⁶⁴⁵

Communities within highly integrated consejos comunitarios mayores also exercise voice informally. For example, communities might refuse to participate in organizational activities. For example, though it is the stated policy of COCOMACIA to always undertake a prior consultation (*consulta previa*) for any state or commercial project in their territories, communities sometimes resist, under pressure from the alcaldes who argue that these procedures obstruct development. If the community refuses to participate in the prior consultation, the consejo comunitario has little avenue for recourse.⁶⁴⁶

Shifting focus to the associations of consejos comunitarios, I note that these associations are themselves adaptations to the relative shortcomings of the independent communities. A collective platform creates more efficiency in leadership; the organizations of ASCOBA and ACONOCIP were formed specifically in response to coordination problems that the independent consejos comunitarios faced:

It makes it easier to dialogue with the state...to bring together all the 6 leaders of the different CCs often is too difficult, or too expensive. It's much more efficient if just 1 or 2 people can represent all of us.⁶⁴⁷

Because the associations of consejos comunitarios do not control their own territory, they are not subject to the same legal restrictions of a consejo comunitario mayor. They can shrink or grow, or even be replaced by new associations depending on their members' perceptions of the value of participating. For example, the consejo comunitario of Unguía, in the northern tip of Chocó, is currently seeking membership into the ASCOBA organization. The CC sought out ASCOBA as a source of accompaniment

⁶⁴⁵ Fieldnotes, ACABA recorrido, Community 4, 11/6/2021

⁶⁴⁶ Zona 9 CCL 6, Fieldnotes, 10/10/2021

⁶⁴⁷ ACONOCIP Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/7/2021

and training to strengthen their process and respond to the incursions of wealthy cattle ranchers.⁶⁴⁸ Their southern neighbors, the consejo comunitario Salaquí, explained to me that they feel there is an over-centralization of power in ASCOBA, and they are considering leaving the organization.⁶⁴⁹ Meanwhile, ACONOCIP, the association of consejos comunitarios in Bajo Baudó is semi-defunct because of lack of resources and interest from its member communities. A new platform emerged to represent the Bajo Baudó CCs in the Redd+ carbon credits program; a leader of one of the ACONOCIP member consejos told me he sees this platform as potentially more relevant for the future than membership in ACONOCIP.⁶⁵⁰

The more independent communities face two key challenges: they are easily isolated, making them vulnerable to armed group pressure, and their small size gives them limited leverage in negotiations with the state and other external actors. Often, their answer to this problem has been to partner with a larger organization. In response to questions of the vulnerability of more independent consejos comunitario, a leader from Domingodó, in the association ASCOBA in the Atrato, explained to me that the communities aren't alone; they're part of FISCH (the department-level coordinating platform); they do their denouncements of armed groups through FISCH to reduce the pressure they would otherwise face.⁶⁵¹ Pie de Pepé, the independent consejo comunitario in Baudó, partnered with the integrated consejo ACABA to bring in a carbon credits program through REDD+. A coordinator of the REDD+ program explained to me that even though Pepé found the project and made the initial connection, they don't have enough land on their own to make it worth it for the external partners. They had to bring ACABA into the project to leverage the size of the consejo comunitario mayor.⁶⁵²

⁶⁴⁸ ASCOBA leader 2, Personal Communication, 10/12/2021

⁶⁴⁹ Salaquí CC leader, Personal Communication, 10/15/2021

⁶⁵⁰ CC Pilizá Leader 2, Personal Communication, 11/8/2021

⁶⁵¹ Domingodó Social Leader, Personal Communication, 10/22/2021

⁶⁵² REDD coordinator, Personal Communication, 7/5/2019

Conclusion: Takeaways and Contributions

The key takeaway from this dissertation is that differences in the structures of rural organizing deeply shape both communities' approaches to shaping peace implementation and the outcomes they generate. My empirical evidence suggests that on the whole, regionally integrated communities are likely more successful in maintaining their autonomy and influence in peace implementation. In both Atrato and Baudó, I found that more regionally integrated communities were exposed to less violence and subject to less armed group control. I found that in the more regionally integrated communities, there was a real safety in numbers, stronger internal controls and rule-enforcement, and greater organizational capacity and external support to generate more economic and social projects. In the Atrato, I found that increasing regional integration generated greater advancements in the PDET program: significantly more projects, projects in further stages of advancement, and more projects linked to the ethnic agenda that was the focus of community demands in the PDET participatory planning process. I argue that these differences can be explained by the political power, technical expertise and external legitimacy of regionally integrated organizations. Furthermore, I found that in both cases, increasing regional integration is likely to generate 'spillover' benefits: the significant organizational capacity and prestige of an integrated organization allows it to generate benefits for an entire region.

Those findings come with a few caveats. First, I found that there are definite advantages to a more independent organizational structure. The increased opportunities for membership to directly participate in decision-making in more independent structures increases member commitment and reduces the logistical and communication challenges that organizations face. The increased flexibility that independence affords to communities also facilitates more rapid and better-targeted decision-making. On the flip-side, there are serious downsides to integration, namely that the main decision-makers in the organization have no real way to consistently maintain contact with all of the communities they represent, causing serious organizational gaps, defunct community-level organizing and persistent miscommunications and mutual mistrust. These disadvantages are likely magnified by the effects of the ongoing conflict, which reduces mobility and breaks down social trust. A second key caveat is that communities are not trapped in the limitations of one organizational form: rather, they have found a

number of ways to either change or innovate from within their organizational structures to address these limitations.

Contributions to Scholarship

I began this dissertation project with a central contradiction in contemporary peacebuilding. On the one hand, driven by the “local turn” in peacebuilding, peacebuilding research points to the fundamental necessity of centering local civilian voices in the peacebuilding process in order to generate durable local peace (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015). These arguments are buttressed by findings on issues of legitimacy in statebuilding (Call, 2010) and the benefits of ‘inclusive’ peace processes (Dudouet & Lundström, 2016; Kew & Wanis-St. John, 2008). However, this same literature repeatedly demonstrates that peace implementation is a fundamentally political, power-laden process in which both state and non-state elites with a demonstrated capacity for violence compete for limited power and resources. States fail to follow through on promises made in a peace deal because of issues of capacity, political will and other political obstacles (Call, 2011; Ghani & Lockhart, 2008). Peace implementation generates opportunities for renewed contestation for political and economic power that collapse fragile civic space, including DDR failures (Walter, 2002), ‘spoiler’ violence (Stedman, 2002) and/or power vacuums (Ruggeri et al., 2017). I ask: in the context of this violent competition for power, why and how would the most marginalized actors in society ever have a meaningful opportunity to shape peace outcomes?

I argue that this problem is fundamentally an issue of linkages: how can we connect the commitments for peace made in elite-level peace deals to the daily struggles for peace and security at the local level? I have argued in this dissertation that we still know little about how to address this gap given the political obstacles and power asymmetries that efforts to connect national and local peacebuilding face. The central contribution of this dissertation is in generating a conceptual framework with which to address the vertical gap in peacebuilding by focusing in on ‘meso-scale’ civilian collective organizing, which I define as the “regional” scale, the level of aggregation above the ‘local’ or community-level and

below the national.⁶⁵³ By linking the organizational structure of rural communities to the concepts of scale shift and tactical complexity, this dissertation evinces that the key to overcoming the vertical gap is to understand in detail how grassroots communities build countervailing power in the context of peace implementation.

Existing analyses of the vertical gap have generally been built out of Lederach's (1997) 'peacebuilding pyramid', which emphasizes the need to build linkages across the grassroots, meso and elite-level scales. Lederach recognizes the limitations of grassroots actors in effecting broader change; for that reason, he places special emphasis on meso-scale or 'middle-range' actors, who have more freedom of movement and linkages to other scales as compared to grassroots actors. As such, these actors are well-positioned to address peacebuilding's "most significant weakness: the 'vertical gap', "the lack of connection between community and political processes of negotiation" (Lederach, 2012, p. 9). From his work, scholars have built an 'infrastructure for peace" research agenda through which peacebuilders, generally in partnership with the state, intentionally build peace commissions and other coordination platforms at each geographic level (from municipal through regional levels to the national) to create 'vertically integrated' peacebuilding (Donais & Burt, 2014; Kamatsiko, 2015; van Tongeren, 2013).

The infrastructure for peace research represents a key advance over Lederach's initial work, by giving 'territoriality' to his concept of meso-scale actors, defining specifically which actors might be involved at the regional and sub-regional scale of peacebuilding work. However, this literature continues to miss the fact that the fundamental problem of the "vertical gap" is one of power asymmetries between actors at different scales, rather than a technocratic issue of a lack of communication infrastructure across scales. Thus, to understand how to close the vertical gap and build strong linkages for peacebuilding across scales, my research explores how communities build countervailing power in order to "scale shift", or broaden their claims and access elite power-holders at the regional and national scale (Soule, 2013).

⁶⁵³ Given that 'regions' are socially defined and do not always map cleanly onto formal state-defined jurisdictions, I follow subnational methodologists in defining regions through social geographies; in the context of Chocó, 'regions' are socially understood as the major river basins of the department (Giraudy et al., 2019; zuo, 2015).

Whereas previous conceptions of the ‘meso-scale’ have tended to focus on loosely-defined collections of intellectuals and sectoral leaders, state-generated peacebuilding commissions, or warlords and clan elites, my research specifies how civilians are able to insert themselves into the meso-scale through the collective organizations they construct. Building from research in rural development, I introduce into the discussion on peacebuilding the figure of the regional organization, a powerful strategy for rural communities to aggregate power, escape isolation, and “project voice upwards” (Esman and Uphoff, 1984; Fox, 2016). As such, this work offers a clearer illustration of the strategies and impacts of communities' varied organizational configurations.

Within this broader framework I generate to address the question of the ‘vertical gap’, I make a specific contribution in linking an analysis of scale and organizational structure. Specifically, I demonstrate that variation in the internal structures of regional-level organizations may either facilitate (or not) scale shift. The Afro-Colombian communities’ experiences show that the combined advantages of regional integration — power in numbers, expertise, coordination, external legitimacy — enable communities to build stronger political influence, generate greater external attention and skillfully manage the complexities of negotiation with outside actors. As such, these organizations were able to more consistently gain leverage on meso- and national-scale actors. Yet this dissertation also found that regional integration creates serious disadvantages as well; in particular, the bureaucracy of integration limits the internal democracy and community-level independence within organizations, which in turn limits organizational agility to “scale down” to respond to problems at the community level.

My work on the linkages between scale and organizational structure enriches the conversation on civil society organizing in peace processes. Existing work within the peacebuilding field generally focuses on the need for grassroots actors to build “strong” organizations, including scholarship on grassroots resistance to armed actors (Arjona 2016, Kaplan 2017, Rubin 2019), mass mobilization for peace (Dudouet & Lundström, 2016, Wanis-St. John & Rosen, 2017; Wood, 2000) and accountability in peace implementation (Dudouet, 2017). While organizational strength is no doubt a crucial variable, there has been very limited discussion of other relevant variations among civilian organizations, or even the factors which make such organizations weaker or stronger.

Drawing from the literature on organizational structure in social movements, my research points to a key way in which organizations vary, in their relative degree of integration or independence. My work furthermore recognizes variation in organizational forms as thoughtful decisions made for instrumental and ideological reasons to respond to a specific set of circumstances facing activists. I find that these decisions on organizational structure create path-dependent trade-offs in the context of a peace process.

In doing so, my work makes an important contribution to broader questions of the so-called “Iron Law of Oligarchy” in organizational studies, which has very rarely been applied to the peacebuilding context. In line with the work in rural development, I find that the “Iron Law” is better understood as a tendency (Fischer, 1994; Fox and Hernández, 1989). I did find that more integrated community organizations tended towards bureaucratization, and that this in turn generated greater organizational inflexibility and vertical accountability gaps. However, my work also points to an interesting set of strategies that more integrated communities used to overcome the specific challenges of bureaucratization, including zonal committees and the CCLs. These findings illustrate that organizations are not trapped in a rigidly defined set of consequences; but rather are amenable to the creative reconstructions and adaptations of their members.

Beyond my specific findings, I argue that my work opens pathways for numerous exciting directions for future research linking variation within civil society organizations to peace outcomes. Such work could focus on other relevant differences in organizational structure (ex. centralization of decision-making, internal democracy, inclusion of women and minorities) or differences in organizational type (comparing between ethnic organizations, producers collectives, labor unions, political movements, religious organizations, etc.) among other examples.

Finally, I argue that this dissertation makes a contribution to the discussion of grassroots peacebuilding tactics by linking an analysis of organizational structure to tactical complexity. One of the key goals of my dissertation has been to illustrate the huge challenges that communities simultaneously face during a peace deal. I seek to capture this enormous complexity through a typology of “opportunities and threats”, highlighting both the potentially transformative policies that peace deals create and the myriad ways that peace deals can either prolong or regenerate sources of violence.

At the national level, this incredible complexity of peace implementation and the coordination problems this complexity generates is well-recognized (Jones, 2002). However, at the community level, grassroots peacebuilding research tends to treat these various issues in isolation, focusing separately on questions of internal conflict resolution, truth and reconciliation responses to violence and community development. Yet my research shows that communities are forced to contend with all of these challenges at the same time, putting an enormous strain on community organizations to manage multiple deep-seated challenges simultaneously. The complexity of simultaneously addressing multiple challenges brings into focus questions of sequencing and tactical selection. My research suggests that increasing regional integration likely provides communities the best chance to develop coordinated sequencing and simultaneous management of multiple resistance tactics given the advantages they possess in organizational capacity, specialization and coordination across regions. In doing so, my work points to a rich additional set of questions on tactics, thus far unanswered in the literature, on the drivers of tactical selection, the relative effectiveness between tactics, and optimal sequencing, among other possibilities.

In sum, despite this massive shift in international attention towards the 'local', we face enduring questions about how to successfully link grassroots peacebuilding efforts to a national peace process, especially in the face of well-resourced and/or well-armed opposition. This is the motivating question of my dissertation: how can grassroots peacebuilding actors overcome the power asymmetries they are likely to face? The key contribution of my work is in offering a conceptual framework built around meso-scale civilian organizing in order to address this vertical gap. In doing so, I generate an additional set of contributions by sharpening our understandings of scale, organizational structure and grassroots tactics, and by pointing towards key future avenues for research for each topic.

Contributions to Practice

My research seeks to address a critical challenge in peacebuilding practice and policy: how to translate the promise of a national peace process into sustainable, inclusive local peace. Existing scholarship has made progress explaining how nonviolent action contributes to peace by creating space for marginalized voices from civil society. I advance this research agenda by exploring variation in regional integration, offering insights into the scale, structure and aims of civil society peacebuilding work.

This work contributes to peacebuilding practice both in its documentation of the failures of the Colombian peace process and in the insights it generated as to the multiple pathways for success in rural organizing during peace implementation.

First, while I am cognizant of the obvious limitations of dissertation-writing-as-advocacy, this research project offers an account of the profound failures of the Colombian state to follow through on the promises it made in the peace accord. Most notable is its failure to control the areas left behind by the FARC, but also worth mentioning is the debilitatingly slow progress on the PDETs as well as the collapsed coca substitution and victims reparation processes. This project notes that the efforts of the *consejos comunitarios* by themselves cannot shift the structural conditions of violence and poverty in Chocó. I join a long chorus of calls for the government to mount an effective response to the ongoing war in Chocó that goes beyond a militarized response. Full implementation of the government commitments in the peace deal, in particular the Ethnic Chapter and the PDETs are a good starting point. The documentation of these failures may also offer useful lessons as a case study for a range of practitioners and civil society leaders in other contexts. It is sobering to note that these failures came in spite of a mobilized and well-organized civil society and an internationally well-regarded peace accord with groundbreaking concessions to ethnic groups.

Second, underlying my exploration of variance in organizational forms is a wealth of evidence illustrating the consistently vital work that organized communities are doing to advocate for their members. Especially given their extremely limited resources and the unbelievably challenging context they operate in, many of these organizations are remarkably effective. From my perspective, directing resources and support to such organizations is likely one of the most cost-effective and potentially transformative investments that international actors can make in a peace transition context. As Paffenholz (2011) points out, international peacebuilding actors tend to reduce the wide range of important civil society actors to professionalized NGOs operating in the capital. By demonstrating in particular the potential of regional associations to successfully translate national-level peacebuilding efforts into sustainable, inclusive peace at the local level, my research suggests international actors must find ways to optimize the political space for such organizations.

Finally, I argue that a better understanding of variance in the regional integration of rural communities is likely to significantly improve external peacebuilding interventions by offering implementers a way to read the ‘organizational terrain’ of a region and its likely strengths and weaknesses. For example, more regionally integrated organizations might be more effective in generating responsiveness from state actors, but have greater questions about their own internal issues of accountability to constituents. This could in particular refine practices of capacity-building efforts for community organizations. Of particular utility may be the tactics used by communities to overcome the specific limitations of their organizational structures, which could serve as a starting point for communities to investigate their own organizational weaknesses and potential strategies to address them.

Final Thoughts

In 1993, a landmark piece of legislation, the Law 70, was passed in Colombia, forever changing the relationship between rural black communities and the Colombian state. Overnight, the law granted rural black communities a remarkable set of rights and protections; chief among them was the right to form *consejos comunitarios* incorporating collective lands that are “inalienable, immune from seizure and not subject to the statute of limitations” (inalienable, inembargable e imprescriptibles); that is, titled lands cannot be bought or sold outside of the community, guaranteeing that it belongs to the community into perpetuity (Moreno & Palacios Blandón, 2016).

With the arrival of the new law, the communities were faced with a decision of how they wanted to form their titles: either to maximize local independence by soliciting a title just for their own community, or to build more collective power by creating a title that incorporated all the communities from their entire region. Other communities chose an intermediate strategy, electing for independent community titles but joining looser associations of *consejos comunitarios*. In the regions under study, Atrato and Baudó, these decisions were made by community leaders and their allies in the Catholic Church in response to the conditions that they faced in the mid-1990s, especially worries about land conflicts with their indigenous neighbors, the degree of integration and relationships they had with neighboring black communities, and their stance on the extractive industries that were quickly expanding in rural Chocó.

Almost immediately after the communities submitted their petitions for the titles, Chocó was completely transformed by an armed conflict that would rage for decades, repeatedly displacing the communities, killing their leaders and destroying the social fabric that allowed the movement to emerge in the first place. While the consejos comunitarios were severely affected by the conflict, they continued to operate as perhaps the most important resource the communities had to resist the conflict. Likewise, with the announcement of peace in 2016, the consejos comunitarios have continued to serve as the voice of the communities as they navigate the complex, countervailing impacts of the peace deal.

All of these consejos comunitarios are fundamentally based in the same profound, living connection that exists between Afro communities in Chocó and the *territorio*. Nevertheless, I have argued that the different decisions that the communities made when the consejos comunitarios were formed in the 1990s continue to resonate into the present. Decisions between independence and integration have generated real trade-offs for communities that deeply shape both their influence and autonomy in a peace process. I argue that overall, my empirical data suggest that the relative advantages of regional integration – organizational capacity, regional cohesion, external legitimacy – increase the ability of communities to shape local peace outcomes. However, I argue that these advantages are in large part mitigated both by the advantages of more independent organizational structures – democratic and participatory deficits, local independence and flexibility – as well as by the serious organizational gaps that tend to proliferate in regionally integrated structures.

What can be learned from this research? I have argued that this work offers three key contributions to the peacebuilding literature: creating an integrated understanding of the aims of civilian communities in a peace process, sharpening our attention to relevant variation in the organizing structures present in civil society, and developing a more refined attention scale, specifically in the way that grassroots civilians themselves encounter the limitations of local organizing and seek to overcome these limitations through regional organizing projects. I anticipate that this work directly contributes to peacebuilding practice, both by reiterating again the vital importance of grassroots civilian peacebuilding work, but also in sharpening our understanding of the relevant differences and tradeoffs in civilian organizing. Here, international peacebuilders gain an additional tool to understand the specific needs of

the civilian organizations they work with. In doing so, I hope to strengthen the most dynamic tool we have to building durable, transformative peace: well-resourced and well-capacitated social movements.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: PDET PROJECTS OF CHOCÓ, 2016-2021

Consejo Comunitario	Municipality	Project	Pilar	Progress	Funding Source	Budget (COP)	Source	Communities
ACAMURI	Riosucio	Construcción De Acueductos Veredales	5	2. En estructuración			HRU	
ACAMURI	Riosucio	3 talleres comunitarios para la transformación de todos los derivados de la madera	6	2. En estructuración			HRU	
ACAMURI	Riosucio	Desarrollar iniciativas empresariales de mercados verdes y biocomercio	6	2. En estructuración			HRU	
ACAMURI	Riosucio	Dotar de un banco de maquinaria agrícola que permita la adecuación de los suelos	6	2. En estructuración			HRU	
ACAMURI	Riosucio	Instalación de un sistema solar fotovoltaico en comunidades Afro e Indígenas	2	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	SGR-OCAD Paz	37,737,390,250	Anexo 2+	
ACAMURI	Riosucio	Fortalecimiento a las mujeres de los Consejos Comunitarios de la Cuenca del Río Truandó	8	5. Proyecto financiado o aprobado	Bogando el PDET	25,000,000	Bogando el PDET	

ACAMURI	Riosucio	Mejoramiento Y Rehabilitación De Vías Fluviales De Los Ríos Truando, Chintado Y Quiparado	2	7. En Ejecución		12,025,219,373	HRU	
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	Construir 5 puerto fluvial sobre el rio Atrato	2	2. En estructuración			HRU	Domingodó
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	Tratamiento de aguas residuales	5	2. En estructuración			HRU	
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	Crear estación piscícola para para la repoblación de las ciénaga y humedales	6	2. En estructuración			HRU	
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	Formular Planes de Etnodesarrollo local	8	2. En estructuración			HRU	
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	Estudio Y Diseños De Los Muros De Contención De Las Comunidades De Curbaradó Y Domingodo Para Mitigar La Erosión Ocasionada Por El Fuerte Caudal Del Río Atrato	2	4. Proyecto en trámite de aprobación	SGR-OCAD Paz	1,382,664,717	Anexo 2+	
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	Implementación de Tecnologías Digitales Para Aprender en las Sedes Educativas Oficiales	2	4. Proyecto en trámite de aprobación	SGR-OCAD Paz	13,779,006,885	Anexo 2+	

ASCOBA	Carmen del Darién	Implementación de Proyectos Agroforestales y Piscícolas para Mejorar la Productividad y Competitividad en las Comunidades de la Cuenca del Río Domingodó	6	4. Proyecto en trámite de aprobación	OCAD PAZ	7,685,526,354	OCAD Paz database	Rio Domingodó
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	proyecto de estudios y diseños de la vía carretable desde el sector casa bomba-Curvaradó hasta el corregimiento de Domingodó	2	5. Proyecto financiado o aprobado	OCAD Paz	2,043,135,930	web search	
ASCOBA	Carmen del Darién	Realización de campeonato de fútbol	8	5. Proyecto financiado o aprobado	Bogando el PDET	25,000,000	Bogando el PDET	Consejo Comunitario Apartadó Buenavista
ASCOBA	Carmen del Darién	Apoyo a grupos artísticos (danza y chirimía)	8	5. Proyecto financiado o aprobado	Bogando el PDET	25,000,000	Bogando el PDET	Consejo Comunitario La Madre
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	Mejoramiento De La Navegabilidad Fluvial Mediante La Limpieza, Rocería Y De Destronques De Los Rios Curvarado Y Domingodo	2	7. En Ejecución		1,776,689,081	OCAD Paz database	
ASCOBA	Carmen Del Darién	Instalación de sistemas de energía alternativas	2	7. En Ejecución	OCAD Paz	2,279,119,460	OCAD Paz database	Chintadó, Manuel Santos, Tortuga, Boca de Chicao, Apartadó-Buenavista y la Madre,

COCOMACIA	Bojaya	Construcción De Un Restaurante Escolar En Boca De Opogado En Concreto	4	7. En Ejecución	Obra PDET - Fondo Colombia en Paz	318,106,665	Anexo 1 Proyectos Obras PDET	Boca de Opogadó
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Delimitar las áreas de uso colectivo	1	2. En estructuración			HRU	
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Caminos veredales (Placa Huella) entre las comunidades rurales negras de Opogado hasta la comunidad de Mesopotamia	2	2. En estructuración			HRU	Opogado, Mesopotamia
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Interconectar con energía eléctrica a todas las comunidades rurales	2	2. En estructuración			HRU	
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Vía carreteable, (Placa Huella) desde el Corregimiento de Nappi hasta el Corregimiento de Bahía Cupica	2	2. En estructuración			HRU	Napipi
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Construcción De Celdas Transitorias A Cielo Abierto Para El Corregimiento Mesopotamia	5	2. En estructuración	Ocad Paz		Anexo 2+	Mesopotamia
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Construcción Del Sistema De Acueducto Del Corregimiento Boca De Opogado	5	2. En estructuración	Ocad Paz		Anexo 2+	Boca de Opogadó
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Construcción Del Sistema De Acueducto Del Corregimiento Isla De Los Palacios	5	2. En estructuración	Ocad Paz		Anexo 2+	Isla de los Palacios

COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Optimización Del Sistema De Acueducto Del Corregimiento Napipi	5	2. En estructuración	Ocad Paz		Anexo 2+	Napipi
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Dotar con una lancha y motor a los consejos comunitarios locales	8	2. En estructuración			HRU	
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Fortalecer la gobernabilidad y ajustar los reglamentos internos de todas comunidades afros	8	2. En estructuración			HRU	
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Mejoramiento Y Rehabilitacion De Las Vias Fluviales Mediante El Destronque Y Limpieza De Los Rios Bojaya Napipi Buchado Y Opogado	2	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	SGR-OCAD Paz	4,779,263,623	Anexo 2+	rio Napipí and Opogadó
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Aula Escolar	2	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	Unidad de victimas		web search	Pueblo Nuevo
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Restaurante Escolar	2	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	Unidad de victimas		web search	Pueblo Nuevo
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Construcción De Una Casa Comunitaria En La Boca De Opogado	8	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	Obra PDET - Fondo Colombia en Paz	198,837,945	Anexo 1 Proyectos Obras PDET	Boca de Opogadó

COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Construcción de casas comunitarias integrales	2	4. Proyecto en trámite de aprobación	OCAD PAZ	1,543,909,039	OCAD Paz database	Napipí y Boca de Opogadó
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Diseño, Construcción Y Operación De Sistemas Aislados De generación De Energía Solar Fotovoltaica	2	7. En Ejecución	Credito, Oxl, TODOS SOMOS PAZCIFICO, Alcaldia de Bojayá	43,000,000,000	Anexo 2+	
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Fortalecimiento de los sistemas productivos frutícola de Borojó en Bojayá	6	7. En Ejecución	Fondo Colombia en Paz, Fondo Paz supporting	1,250,428,800	web search	La loma de Bojayá, La Boba, Mesopotamia, Napipí, Piedra Candela y Playa Cuia
COCOMACIA	Bojayá	Agrotienda fluvial project	6	8. Ejecutado	Intl - la FAO y la Agencia de Renovación, ART		web search	
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Esclarecer Los Linderos	1	2. En estructuración			HRU	
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Proyecto de limpieza, destronque, Descolmatar y Conservación de las Ciénagas	2	2. En estructuración			HRU	Quesada, Tadia, Arrastradero, Remacho, Guamal, Bella Luz, Los Araganes, El Burro, el Tigre
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Implementar estrategias de atención en salud extramurales	3	2. En estructuración			HRU	

COCOMACIA	Murindó	Recuperar la medicina tradicional y saberes ancestrales	3	2. En estructuración				HRU	
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Capacitar a las parteras y médicos tradicionales en medicina occidental	4	2. En estructuración				HRU	
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Elaboración De Diagnostico, Estudios Y Diseños Para La Construcción Del Acueducto	5	2. En estructuración	Ocad Paz			Anexo 2+	Veredas Ñarangué, Campo Alegre (Tadía), Bebarameño, Opogado, Y Bellaluz
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Implementar un proyecto integral para la siembra producción industrialización y comercialización del cultivo de arroz	6	2. En estructuración				HRU	Santa fe, Canal, Pital, Bartolo, Bebarameño, Campo alegre San Bernardo, Bella luz, Opogadó y Jedega
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Infraestructura recreativa	2	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	Alcaldía (presumed - ART estructurado)	1,190,000,000	web search		Campo Alegre
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Dotación hospitalaria servicios de consulta externa, hospitalización y urgencias y Puesto de Salud Opogado	3	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	OCAD PAZ	358,000,000		Anexo 2+	Opogadó
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Construcción Casa Comunitaria De Madera 12x8 Con Unidad Sanitaria Y Tanque Elevado En San Bernardo	8	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	Obra PDET - Fondo Colombia en Paz	116,584,992		Anexo 1 Proyectos Obras PDET	San Bernardo

COCOMACIA	Murindó	Construcción Casa Comunitaria De Madera 20x20 Con Unidad Sanitaria Y Tanque Elevado En Opogadó	8	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	Obra PDET - Fondo Colombia en Paz	136,835,121	Anexo 1 Proyectos Obras PDET	Opogadó
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Construcción De Una Casa Comunitaria En La Isla De Los Palacios En Concreto	8	3. Estructurado en proceso de presentación a fuente de financiación	Obra PDET - Fondo Colombia en Paz	202,015,513	Anexo 1 Proyectos Obras PDET	Isla de los Palacios
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Adquisición de un (1) vehículo acuático integral (panga y motor) para el traslado del equipo sanitario para la atención en salud extramural en las comunidades de acceso difícil	3	6. Proyecto en proceso de contratación	SGR OCAD Paz	60,000,000	Anexo 2+	
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Implementación de un plan de manejo forestal sostenible y acciones de repoblamiento con especies nativas en territorios pertenecientes a COCOMACIA y Consejo Comunitario por el Desarrollo Integral de Murindó (PDI)	6	6. Proyecto en proceso de contratación	OCAD PAZ	1,777,794,132	Anexo 2+	
COCOMACIA	Murindó	Fortalecimiento Del Consejo Comunitario De Isla De Los Rojos	8	8. Ejecutado	Yo me subo a mi PDET		Yo me subo a mi PDET	Isla De Los Rojos
COCOMACIA	Murindó, Vía Del Fuerte, Bojayá, Medio Atrato	Proyecto Cocomacia REDD+ Choco / Antioquia - Colombia	1	7. En Ejecución	Privados - COCOMACIA, TERRA GLOBAL CAPITAL	7,800,000,000	Anexo 2+	

COCOMACIA	Vigía Del Fuerte	Establecer La Siembra De Especies Forestales	6	2. En estructuración			HRU	San Alejandro, Villanueva, Paloblanco, Santamaría, Padua, San Martin, Arenal, Puerto Antioquia, Jarapeto, Partado
COCOMACIA	Vigía Del Fuerte	Fomentar la siembra de cultivo de arroz	6	2. En estructuración			HRU	Padua, Santa maría, Paloblanco, Playa murri, Loma murri, Puerto Medellín, Puerto palacios, San miguel, Puerto Antioquia, Arenal, Buchado, y Vuelta cortada
COCOMACIA	Vigía Del Fuerte	Fomentar la siembra y agro industrialización del cultivo de Bija-achiote	6	2. En estructuración			HRU	Puerto Medellín, Puerto palacios, Vidri, Vuelta cortada, la Playa Murri, Villanueva, San alejandro
COCOMACIA	Vigía del Fuerte	Construcción De Muelle En Los Corregimientos De Palo Blanco Santa María Villa Nueva Y San Alejandro	2	4. Proyecto en trámite de aprobación	OCAD PAZ	5,471,788,086	OCAD Paz database	Villa Nueva
COCOMACIA	Vigía Del Fuerte	Construcción De Una Casa Comunitaria En La Comunidad De Puerto Antioquia	8	7. En Ejecución	Obra PDET - Fondo Colombia en Paz	448,332,177	Anexo 1 Proyectos Obras PDET	Puerto Antioquia
COCOMACIA	Vigía Del Fuerte	Construcción De La Caseta Comunitaria Del Corregimiento Villa Nueva	8	8. Ejecutado	Obra PDET - Fondo Colombia en Paz	138,650,584	Anexo 1 Proyectos Obras PDET	Villa Nueva

REFERENCES

- ABColombia. (2017). Mecanismos de Autoprotección: Comunidades Rurales y Defensores de Derechos Humanos en Colombia.
- Ackerman, J. (2004). Co-Governance for Accountability: Beyond “Exit” and “Voice.” *World Development*, 32(3), 447–463. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2003.06.015>
- Adcock, R., & Collier, D. (2001). Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research. *American Political Science Review*, 95(3), 529–546. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055401003100>
- Agencia de Renovación del Territorio (ART). (2020, January 11). Director @JuanCZambranoA y representantes de la comunidad presentan al presidente @IvanDuque. *Twitter.Com*. <https://twitter.com/renovacionco/status/1216175163408048130>
- Agudelo, C. E. (2001). *El Pacífico colombiano: de “remanso de paz” a escenario estratégico del conflicto armado*. El Pacífico colombiano: de “remanso de paz” a escenario estratégico del conflicto armado¹, Marseille.
- Agudelo Urrego, Á. M. (2019, November 14). *La “plaza” de mercado que empezó a navegar el Atrato*. *Semana rural*. <https://semanarural.com/web/articulo/la-agrotienda-fluvial-interetnica-realizo-su-primer-viaje/1241>
- Ahram, A. I. (2011). *Proxy warriors: the rise and fall of state-sponsored militias*. Stanford Security Studies.
- Albertus, M., & Kaplan, O. (2013). Land Reform as a Counterinsurgency Policy: Evidence from Colombia. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 57(2), 198–231. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002712446130>
- Alerta Temprana N° 017-19 (Bojayá)*. (2019). Defensoría del Pueblo.
- Alertas Tempranas*. (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2021, from <https://alertastempranas.defensoria.gov.co/>
- Alkire, S., Roche, J. M., & Seth, S. (2013). *Multidimensional Poverty Index 2013*. Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).
- Alther, G. (2006). Colombian peace communities: the role of NGOs in supporting resistance to violence and oppression. *Development in Practice*, 16(3–4), 278–291. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614520600694828>
- Andrews, K. T. (2004). *Freedom is a constant struggle: the Mississippi civil rights movement and its legacy*. University of Chicago Press.
- Andrews, K. T., Ganz, M., Baggetta, M., Han, H., & Lim, C. (2010). Leadership, Membership, and Voice: Civic Associations That Work. *American Journal of Sociology*, 115(4), 1191–1242. <https://doi.org/10.1086/649060>
- Angulo, R., Díaz, Y., & Pardo, R. (2016). The Colombian Multidimensional Poverty Index: Measuring Poverty in a Public Policy Context. *Social Indicators Research*, 127(1), 1–38. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-015-0964-z>
- Ante Meneses, R. (2019, December 16). Participación entre la espada y la pared en el PDET. *La Silla Llena*. <https://lasillavacia.com/silla-llena/red-de-la-paz/participacion-entre-la-espada-y-la-pared-pdet-71884>

Aponte, A. (2019). Gobernanzas híbridas y armas en Colombia, 1952-2011. Fundamentos teóricos y empíricos para la construcción de paz e integración territorial. *Paz, Reformas e Incertidumbre En La Transición Colombiana. Una Aproximación Política a Los Desafíos de Seguridad y Estabilización*. LASA, Boston.

Aponte, A., & Benavides, J. (2016). Las Farc y las organizaciones comunitarias en San Andrés de Tumaco: desafíos territoriales ante una eventual implementación de los Acuerdos de La Habana. *Revista Controversia*, 206. [https://revistacontroversia.com/index.php?journal=controversia&page=article&op=view&path\[\]=404](https://revistacontroversia.com/index.php?journal=controversia&page=article&op=view&path[]=404)

Arjona, A. (2016a). Institutions, Civilian Resistance, and Wartime Social Order: A Process-driven Natural Experiment in the Colombian Civil War. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 58(3), 99–122. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-2456.2016.00320.x>

Arjona, A. (2016b). *Rebelocracy: social order in the Colombian civil war*. Cambridge University Press.

Arjona, A. (2017). Civilian Cooperation and Non-Cooperation with Non-State Armed Groups: The Centrality of Obedience and Resistance. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 28(4–5), 755–778. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2017.1322328>

Arocha, J. (1998a). Etnia y guerra: relación ausente en los estudios sobre las violencias colombianas. In J. Arocha, F. Cubides, & M. Jimeno (Eds.), *Las violencias: inclusión creciente*. Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Arocha, J. (1998b). Inclusion of Afro-Colombians: Unreachable National Goal? *Latin American Perspectives*, 25(3), 70–89. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X9802500304>

Arocha, J. (1998c). Inclusion of Afro-Colombians: Unreachable National Goal? *Latin American Perspectives*, 25(3), 70–89. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X9802500304>

Arocha, J. (1999). *Obligados de Ananse: hilos ancestrales y modernos en el Pacífico colombiano*. Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

ART entrega más de 5 mil millones de pesos en proyectos productivos y estructurados al municipio de Bojayá – Chocó. (2020, December 12). *El Baudoseño*. <https://www.elbaudoseno.com/art-entrega-mas-de-5-mil-millones-de-pesos-en-proyectos-productivos-y-estructurados-al-municipio-de-bojaya-choco/>

Atlas, P. M., & Licklider, R. (1999). Conflict among Former Allies after Civil War Settlement: Sudan, Zimbabwe, Chad, and Lebanon. *Journal of Peace Research*, 36(1), 35–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343399036001003>

Autesserre, S. (2008). *The Trouble With Congo: How Local Disputes Fuel Regional Conflict*. <https://doi.org/10.7916/D8WW7FRZ>

Autesserre, S. (2010). *The trouble with the Congo: local violence and the failure of international peacebuilding*. Cambridge University Press.

Autesserre, S. (2014a). *Peaceland: conflict resolution and the everyday politics of international intervention*. Cambridge University Press.

Autesserre, S. (2014b). Going Micro: Emerging and Future Peacekeeping Research. *International Peacekeeping*, 21(4), 492–500. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2014.950884>

Autesserre, S. (2017). International Peacebuilding and Local Success: Assumptions and Effectiveness. *International Studies Review*, 19(1), 114–132. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viw054>

Baker, B., & Scheye, E. (2007). Multi-layered justice and security delivery in post-conflict and fragile states: Analysis. *Conflict, Security & Development*, 7(4), 503–528. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678800701692944>

Bakonyi, J., & Stuvøy, K. (2005). Violence & social order beyond the state: Somalia & Angola. *Review of African Political Economy*, 32(104–105), 359–382. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056240500329379>

Balance De La Implementación Del Acuerdo De Paz (No. 2). (2020). Consejo Nacional de Paz Afrocolombiana – CONPA.

Balcells, L. (2012). The Consequences of Victimization on Political Identities: Evidence from Spain. *Politics & Society*, 40(3), 311–347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329211424721>

Balsiger, P., & Lambelet, A. (2014). Participant Observation. In D. della Porta (Ed.), *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research* (pp. 144–172). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198719571.003.0007>

Barker-Plummer, B. (2002). Producing Public Voice: Resource Mobilization and Media Access in the National Organization for Women. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 79(1), 188–205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769900207900113>

Barter, S. J. (2014). *Civilian Strategy in Civil War*. Palgrave Macmillan US. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137402998>

Bateson, R. A. (2013). *Order and Violence in Postwar Guatemala* (1433384882) [Ph.D., Yale University]. ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global; Worldwide Political Science Abstracts. <http://proxyau.wrlc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/order-violence-postwar-guatemala/docview/1433384882/se-2?accountid=8285>

Bateson, R. A. (2015). *How Local Institutions Emerge from Civil War* [Unpublished Manuscript].

Bauer, M., Cassar, A., Chytilová, J., & Henrich, J. (2014). War's Enduring Effects on the Development of Egalitarian Motivations and In-Group Biases. *Psychological Science*, 25(1), 47–57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797613493444>

Bautista, D., & Ibáñez, L. (2016). *Proceso de Participación Ciudadana de los Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial—PDET*. OACP - Paz Territorial.

Beach, D., & Pedersen, R. B. (2013). *Process-tracing methods: foundations and guidelines*. University of Michigan Press.

Bell, C. (2017). *Navigating Inclusion in Peace Settlements: Human Rights and the Creation of the Common Good*. The British Academy.

Bell, C., & Pospisil, J. (2017). Navigating Inclusion in Transitions from Conflict: The Formalised Political Un settlement: Navigating Inclusion. *Journal of International Development*, 29(5), 576–593. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3283>

Bellows, J., & Miguel, E. (2009). War and local collective action in Sierra Leone. *Journal of Public Economics*, 93(11–12), 1144–1157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2009.07.012>

Bennett, A., & Checkel, J. T. (Eds.). (2015). *Process tracing: from metaphor to analytic tool*. Cambridge University Press.

Berg, L.-A. (2020). Civil–Military Relations and Civil War Recurrence: Security Forces in Postwar Politics. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 64(7–8), 1307–1334. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002720903356>

- Berman, E., Shapiro, J. N., & Felter, J. H. (2011). Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq. *Journal of Political Economy*, 119(4), 766–819. <https://doi.org/10.1086/661983>
- Beyerle, S. (2011). Civil Resistance and the Corruption-Violence Nexus. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 38(2), 53–77.
- Beyerle, S. M. (2014). *Curtailing corruption: people power for accountability and justice*. Lynne Rienner.
- Bland, G. (2007). Decentralization, local governance, and conflict mitigation in Latin America. In D. W. Brinkerhoff (Ed.), *Governance in post-conflict societies: rebuilding fragile states*. Routledge.
- Blatter, J., & Haverland, M. (2012). *Designing case studies: explanatory approaches in small-n research*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Blattman, C. (2009). From Violence to Voting: War and Political Participation in Uganda. *American Political Science Review*, 103(2), 231–247. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055409090212>
- Blaydes, L., & Maio, J. D. (2010). Spoiling the Peace? Peace Process Exclusivity and Political Violence in North-Central Africa. *Civil Wars*, 12(1–2), 3–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2010.484896>
- Bliesemann de Guevara, B. (2010). Introduction: The Limits of Statebuilding and the Analysis of State-Formation. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 4(2), 111–128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17502970903533652>
- Boege, V. (2011). Potential and Limits of Traditional Approaches to Peacebuilding. In B. Austin, M. Fischer, & H.-J. Giessmann (Eds.), *Advancing Conflict Transformation*. Barbara Bdrich Publishers.
- Boege, V., Brown, M. A., & Clements, K. P. (2009). Hybrid Political Orders, Not Fragile States. *Peace Review*, 21(1), 13–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10402650802689997>
- Boko, S. (2008, May 19). *Social Accountability in Post-Conflict and Fragile States*. Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA)-Africa Annual Stakeholder Conference, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Bosi, L., Giugni, M., & Uba, K. (Eds.). (2016). *The consequences of social movements*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bosk, C. L., & De Vries, R. G. (2004). Bureaucracies of Mass Deception: Institutional Review Boards and the Ethics of Ethnographic Research. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 595(1), 249–263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716204266913>
- Boulding, E. (2000). *Cultures of peace: the hidden side of history* (1st ed). Syracuse University Press.
- Bourgois, P. (2001). The Power of Violence in War and Peace: Post-Cold War Lessons from El Salvador. *Ethnography*, 2(1), 5–34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14661380122230803>
- Brady, H. E., & Collier, D. (Eds.). (2010). *Rethinking social inquiry: diverse tools, shared standards* (2nd ed). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Braithwaite, A., Dasandi, N., & Hudson, D. (2016). Does poverty cause conflict? Isolating the causal origins of the conflict trap. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 33(1), 45–66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894214559673>
- Brancati, D. (2006). Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism? *International Organization*, 60(03). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002081830606019X>

Brulle, R. J., & Jenkins, J. C. (2005). Foundations and the environmental movement. In D. Faber & D. McCarthy (Eds.), *Foundations for social change: critical perspectives on philanthropy and popular movements*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Cajiao, A. (2020). *¿En Qué Va La Implementación Del Acuerdo De Paz En Guaviare? Avances Y Desafíos*. Fundación Ideas para la Paz.

Call, C. (2011). Beyond the 'failed state': Toward conceptual alternatives. *European Journal of International Relations*, 17(2), 303–326. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066109353137>

Call, C. (2012). *Why peace fails: the causes and prevention of civil war recurrence*. Georgetown University Press.

Call, C. (2015). *The Evolution of Peacebuilding: Improved Ideas and Institutions?* [Working Paper]. United Nations University Centre for Policy Research.

Call, C., & Cousens, E. M. (2008). Ending Wars and Building Peace: International Responses to War-Torn Societies. *International Studies Perspectives*, 9(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1528-3585.2007.00313.x>

Calming the Restless Pacific: Violence and Crime on Colombia's Coast (Latin America Report N°76). (2019). International Crisis Group.

Camilo Vargas, I. (2017). *PREPARÉMONOS PARA LA PARTICIPACIÓN: Lo que debemos saber sobre los PDET*. Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social - Cáritas Colombiana.

Campbell, S. P. (2017). Ethics of Research in Conflict Environments. *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 2(1), 89–101. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogw024>

Caniglia, B., & Carmin, J. (2005). Scholarship on Social Movement Organizations: Classic Views and Emerging Trends. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 10(2), 201–212. <https://doi.org/10.17813/maiq.10.2.q848h37832857t5j>

Carriere, R. (2011). 'Another Peacekeeping' is Possible. *Kosmos Journal*.

Cassar, A., Grosjean, P., & Whitt, S. (2013). Legacies of violence: trust and market development. *Journal of Economic Growth*, 18(3), 285–318. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10887-013-9091-3>

Castillejo, C. (2014). *Promoting inclusion in political settlements: a priority for international actors?* Norwegian Peacebuilding Resources Center.

Castillejo Ditta, S. (2019a, August 22). La carrera que están perdiendo los territorios priorizados para la paz. *El Tiempo*. <https://www.eltiempo.com/datos/como-se-estan-construyendo-los-pdet-en-el-caribe-218720>

Castillejo Ditta, S. (2019b, August 22). *La implementación de los PDET amenaza con quedarse en letra muerta*. El Tiempo. <https://www.eltiempo.com/datos/retrasos-en-la-implementacion-de-los-pdet-de-los-acuerdos-de-paz-274764>

Castrillón, G. (2019, November 11). *Una luz de esperanza para los habitantes de Bojayá, Chocó*. Colombia 2020. <https://www.elespectador.com/colombia2020/una-luz-de-esperanza-para-los-habitantes-de-bojaya-choco-articulo-890477/>

Castro, R., & Meza, C. A. (2017). *Calle caliente Memorias de un cimarrón contemporáneo*. instituto colombiano de antropología e Historia.

Cederman, L.-E., Weidmann, N. B., & Gleditsch, K. S. (2011). Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist Civil War: A Global Comparison. *American Political Science Review*, 105(3), 478–495. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055411000207>

Chandler, D. (2008). Post-Conflict Statebuilding: Governance Without Government. In M. Pugh, N. Cooper, & M. Turner (Eds.), *Whose Peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding* (pp. 337–355). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230228740_20

Chandler, D. (2017). Peacebuilding as Statebuilding. In D. Chandler, *Peacebuilding* (pp. 69–91). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-50322-6_4

Chen, S., Loayza, N. V., & Reynal-Querol, M. (2007). *The aftermath of Civil War* (No. 1043; Economics Working Papers). Department of Economics and Business, Universitat Pompeu Fabra. <https://ideas.repec.org/p/upf/upfgen/1043.html>

Chenoweth, E., & Stephan, M. J. (2011). *Why civil resistance works: the strategic logic of nonviolent conflict*. Columbia Univ. Press.

Citizenship DRC. (2011). *Blurring the Boundaries: Citizen Action Across States and Societies*. the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability (the Citizenship DRC). www.drc-citizenship.org

Clemens, E. S., & Minkoff, D. C. (2004). Beyond the Iron Law: Rethinking the Place of Organizations in Social Movement Research. In *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (pp. 155–170). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470999103.ch7>

Collier, P. (Ed.). (2003). *Breaking the conflict trap: civil war and development policy*. World Bank ; Oxford University Press.

Collier, P., & Hoeffler, A. (2004). Greed and Grievance in Civil War. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56(4), 563–595. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3488799>

Colombia Monitor Humanitario. (n.d.). OCHA. Retrieved February 9, 2021, from <https://monitor.salahumanitaria.co/>

Colombia: Survey of Territories Affected by Illegal Crops 2018 (Surveys on Drugs and Crime). (2019). UN Office on Drugs and Crime. https://www.unodc.org/documents/colombia/2019/Octubre/Survey_of_Territories_Affected_by_Illegal_Crops_2018.pdf

Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Ed.). (2010). *Bojayá: la guerra sin límites* (1. ed). CNRR, Grupo de Memoria Histórica : Ediciones Semana : Taurus.

Comité de evaluación y selección de Acuerdos de Subvención de Bajo Valor (SBV) - Concurso "Bogando el PDETE" Proyecto interagencial Educación y reconciliación Chocó. (2021). Fondo Multidonante de Naciones Unidas. [https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/COL/Acta%20Comite%20Evaluacio%CC%81n%20GRANTS%20Concurso%20Bogando%20el%20PDETE%2012082021.docx%20\(1\).pdf](https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/COL/Acta%20Comite%20Evaluacio%CC%81n%20GRANTS%20Concurso%20Bogando%20el%20PDETE%2012082021.docx%20(1).pdf)

CON \$100 MIL MILLONES, OCAD PAZ IMPULSA EL DESARROLLO EN REGIÓN PDET CHOCÓ. (2021, April 15). Consejería presidencial para la Estabilización y la Consolidación. <http://www.portalparalapaz.gov.co/publicaciones/1727/con-100-mil-millones-ocad-paz-impulsa-el-desarrollo-en-region-pdet-choco/>

Con los programas PDET se beneficiarán ocho municipios en Chocó. (2019, November 1). *NOTIRIOSUCIO.COM*. <https://www.notiriosucio.com/2019/11/con-los-programas-pdet-se-beneficiaran-ocho-municipios-en-choco/>

Condra, L. N., & Shapiro, J. N. (2012). Who Takes the Blame? The Strategic Effects of Collateral Damage: WHO TAKES THE BLAME? *American Journal of Political Science*, 56(1), 167–187. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2011.00542.x>

Condra, L. N., & Wright, A. L. (2019). Civilians, Control, and Collaboration during Civil Conflict. *International Studies Quarterly*, 63(4), 897–907. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqz042>

Confecoop. (2017, July 25). *Desarrollo Territorial, Economía Solidaria y Cooperativismo*. <https://slideplayer.es/slide/12024384/>

Cooper, T., Merz, S., & Shah, M. (2011). *A More Violent World? Global Trends in Organised Violence* [Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation]. Berghof Foundation.

Corey, A., & Joireman, S. F. (2004). Retributive justice: The Gacaca courts in Rwanda. *African Affairs*, 103(410), 73–89. <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adh007>

Corrigall-Brown, C. (2012). *Patterns of protest: trajectories of participation in social movements*. Stanford University Press.

COVIJUPA Comision Vida, Justicia y Paz. (2010). *Las Voces Del Pueblo Negro, Indígena y Mestizo No. 6 (Balance Julio 2009 - Junio 2010)* (No. 6). Diócesis de Quibdó.

Crawford, G., & Hartmann, C. (2008). Introduction: Decentralisation as a Pathway out of Poverty and Conflict? In G. Crawford & C. Hartmann (Eds.), *Decentralisation in Africa* (pp. 7–32). Amsterdam University Press; JSTOR. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt46msxc.3>

Creating an Enabling Peacebuilding Environment: How Can External Actors Contribute to Resilience? (2014). ACCORD. <https://www.accord.org.za/publication/creating-an-enabling-peacebuilding-environment/>

Cress, D. M., & Snow, D. A. (1996). Mobilization at the Margins: Resources, Benefactors, and the Viability of Homeless Social Movement Organizations. *American Sociological Review*, 61(6), 1089. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2096310>

Cronin, A. K. (2006). How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups. *International Security*, 31(1), 7–48. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2006.31.1.7>

Cronin-Furman, K., & Lake, M. (2018). Ethics Abroad: Fieldwork in Fragile and Violent Contexts. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 51(03), 607–614. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096518000379>

Cuesta, J. I. (1993). Organización campesina del Bajo Atrato. In A. Ulloa (Ed.), *Contribución africana a la cultura de las Américas* (pp. 137–143). Ican-Biopacífico.

Cuesta, L. (2017). *Entre mito y realidad: el derecho a la propiedad colectiva de las comunidades negras en Colombia. Apuesta teórica de un derecho sui generis* [Doctoral Thesis]. Universidad Externado de Colombia.

Curle, A. (1994). New challenges for citizen peacemaking*. *Medicine and War*, 10(2), 96–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07488009408409148>

Daly, S. Z. (2016). *Organized violence after civil war: the geography of recruitment in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press.

Davies, J. S. (2007). The Limits of Partnership: An Exit-Action Strategy for Local Democratic Inclusion: *Political Studies*, 55(4). <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00677.x>

Day, C. R., & Reno, W. S. (2014). In Harm's Way: African Counter-Insurgency and Patronage Politics. *Civil Wars*, 16(2), 105–126. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2014.927699>

de Bakker, F. G. A., den Hond, F., & Laamanen, M. (2017). Social Movements: Organizations and Organizing. In C. Roggeband & B. Klandermans (Eds.), *Handbook of Social Movements Across Disciplines* (pp. 203–231). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57648-0_8

de Heredia, M. I. (2012). Escaping Statebuilding: Resistance and Civil Society in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 6(1), 75–89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2012.655567>

De la Torre, L. M., & COCOMACIA. (2000). *Historia de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato - ACIA. Nuestra historia, lo que fuimos, lo que somos, y lo que queremos ser*. MAVDT.

de Wit, J., & Berner, E. (2009). Progressive Patronage? Municipalities, NGOs, CBOs and the Limits to Slum Dwellers' Empowerment. *Development and Change*, 40(5), 927–947. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2009.01589.x>

della Porta, D. (2009). Consensus in Movements. In D. della Porta (Ed.), *Democracy in Social Movements* (pp. 73–99). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230240865_4

den Hond, F., de Bakker, F. G. A., & Smith, N. (2015). Social Movements and Organizational Analysis. In D. Della Porta & M. Diani (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199678402.013.41>

DFID. (2010). *Building Peaceful States and Societies*. DFID. <https://gsdrc.org/document-library/building-peaceful-states-and-societies-a-dfid-practice-paper/>

Díaz Parra, K. (2018, March 8). ¿PDET sin suelo? preocupaciones desde los pueblos indígenas y campesinos del Caquetá. *La Silla Llena*. <https://lasillavacia.com/silla-llena/red-verde/historia/pdet-sin-suelo-preocupaciones-desde-los-pueblos-indigenas-y>

Díaz-Cayeros, A., Magaloni, B., & Ruiz-Euler, A. (2013). Traditional Governance, Citizen Engagement, and Local Public Goods: Evidence from Mexico. *World Development*, 53, 80–93. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2013.01.008>

Dininio, P. (2009). Warlords and corruption in post-conflict governments. *New Routes*, 14, 27–29.

Donais, T. (2013). *Toward a Vertically Integrated Peacebuilding: Bridging Top-down and Bottom--up Approaches* [Workshop report]. The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

Donais, T., & Burt, G. (2014). *Vertically Integrated Peacebuilding And Community Violence Reduction In Haiti* (CIGI Papers No. 25). The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

Doornbos, M. (2010). Researching African Statehood Dynamics: Negotiability and its Limits: *Development and Change*, 41(4), 747–769. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2010.01650.x>

Doyle, M. W., & Sambanis, N. (2006). *Making war and building peace: United Nations peace operations*. Princeton University Press.

Dudley, S. S. (2004). *Walking ghosts: murder and guerrilla politics in Colombia*. Routledge.

Dudouet, V. (2009). *From War to Politics Resistance/Liberation Movements in Transition* (No. 17). Berghof Foundation.

Dudouet, V. (2017). *Powering to Peace: Integrated Civil Resistance and Peacebuilding Strategies* (Special Report Series). International Center on Nonviolent Conflict.

Dudouet, V., & Lundström, S. (2016). *Post-war Political Settlements: From Participatory Transition Processes to Inclusive State-building and Governance*. Berghof Foundation.

Duffield, M. (2014). *Global governance and the new wars the merging of development and security*. Zed Books.

Duursma, A., & Fliervoet, F. (2021). Fueling Factionalism? The Impact of Peace Processes on Rebel Group Fragmentation in Civil Wars. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 65(4), 788–812. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002720958062>

Eaton, K. (2021). Territorial Peace Without Territorial Governments: The Centralising Logic of the 2016 Colombian Peace Accord. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 16(2), 194–208. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1542316620977172>

Edwards, B., & McCarthy, J. D. (2003). Resources and Social Movement Mobilization. In *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (pp. 116–152). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470999103.ch6>

El accidentado despegue de la Reforma Rural pactada con las Farc. (2018, April 8). *VerdadAbierta.com*. <https://verdadabierta.com/el-accidentado-despegue-de-la-reforma-rural-pactada-con-las-farc/>

El Atrato: dos décadas de guerra. (2014, November 23). *Verdad Abierta*. <https://verdadabierta.com/el-atrato-dos-decadas-de-guerra/>

El Baudó, Chocó: dos décadas de intensa guerra. (2016, June 7). *Verdad Abierta*. <https://verdadabierta.com/el-baudochoco-dos-decadas-de-intensa-guerra/>

En Chocó dudan de efectividad de programas de desarrollo con enfoque territorial. (2020, January 9). *VerdadAbierta.com*. <https://verdadabierta.com/en-choco-dudan-de-efectividad-de-programas-de-desarrollo-con-enfoque-territorial/>

Englebert, P., & Tull, D. M. (2008). Postconflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas about Failed States. *International Security*, 32(4), 106–139. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2008.32.4.106>

Escobar Arango, M. (2017, September 13). Los Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial pueden transformar la ruralidad y fortalecer la paz en Colombia. *LSE Latin America and Caribbean Blog*. <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/latamcaribbean/2017/09/13/los-programas-de-desarrollo-con-enfoque-territorial-pueden-transformar-la-ruralidad-y-fortalecer-la-paz-en-colombia/>

Esman, M. J., & Uphoff, N. T. (1984). *Local organizations: intermediaries in rural development*. Cornell Univ. Press.

Everett, K. D. (1992). Professionalization and Protest: Changes in the Social Movement Sector, 1961–1983. *Social Forces*, 70(4), 957–975. JSTOR. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2580197>

FARC 57th Front in Panama. (2017, March 27). *InSight Crime*. <https://insightcrime.org/panama-organized-crime-news/farc-57th-front-in-panama/>

Fearon, J. D., Humphreys, M., & Weinstein, J. M. (2009). Can Development Aid Contribute to Social Cohesion after Civil War? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Post-Conflict Liberia. *American Economic Review*, 99(2), 287–291. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.99.2.287>

Fearon, J. D., & Laitin, D. D. (2003). Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War. *American Political Science Review*, 97(01), 75–90. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055403000534>

Finnbogason, D., & Svensson, I. (2019). *Confronting the Caliphate. Working Paper*.

Finnegan, A. C., & Hackley, S. G. (2008). Negotiation and Nonviolent Action: Interacting in the World of Conflict. *Negotiation Journal*, 24(1), 7–24. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.2007.00164.x>

- Fischer, H. W. (2016). Beyond Participation and Accountability: Theorizing Representation in Local Democracy. *World Development*, 86, 111–122. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2016.05.003>
- Fishman, R. M., & Everson, D. W. (2016). Mechanisms of Social Movement Success: Conversation, Displacement and Disruption. *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, 74(4), e045. <https://doi.org/10.3989/ris.2016.74.4.045>
- Fogarty, E. A. (2011). Nothing Succeeds Like Access? NGO Strategies Towards Multilateral Institutions. *Journal of Civil Society*, 7(2), 207–227. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17448689.2011.573670>
- Foster, J. E., & Minwalla, S. (2018). Voices of Yazidi women: Perceptions of journalistic practices in the reporting on ISIS sexual violence. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 67, 53–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2018.01.007>
- Fox, J. (1996). How does civil society thicken? the political construction of social capital in rural Mexico. *World Development*, 24(6), 1089–1103. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X\(96\)00025-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X(96)00025-3)
- Fox, J. (2016). *Scaling accountability through vertically integrated civil society policy monitoring and advocacy* [Working Paper]. Accountability Research Center.
- Fox, J. (2022). Accountability Keywords (Working Paper No. 11). Accountability Research Center.
- Fox, J., & Acheron, J. (2016). *Doing Accountability Differently: A Proposal for the Vertical Integration of Civil Society Monitoring and Advocacy* (No. 4; U4 Issue Paper). C. Michelsen Institute.
- Fox, J., García Jiménez, C., & Haight, L. (2009). Rural democratisation in Mexico's deep south: grassroots right-to-know campaigns in Guerrero. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(2), 271–298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150902928264>
- Fox, J., & Hernandez, L. (1989). Offsetting the iron law of oligarchy: The ebb and flow of leadership accountability in a regional peasant organization. *Grassroots Development*, 13(2), }.
- Freeman, J. (2013). The Tyranny of Structurelessness. *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly*, 41(3–4), 231–246. <https://doi.org/10.1353/wsqr.2013.0072>
- From Rhetoric to Practice: Operationalizing National Ownership in Post-conflict Peacebuilding – Workshop Report.* (2011). United Nations. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/national_ownership_report.pdf
- Fujii, L. A. (2018). *Interviewing in social science research: a relational approach* (1 Edition). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Fung, A., & Wright, E. O. (2003). Countervailing Power in Empowered Participatory Governance. In *Deepening Democracy*. Verso.
- Galtung, F., & Tisné, M. (2009). A New Approach to Postwar Reconstruction. *Journal of Democracy*, 20(4), 93–107. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.0.0132>
- Galvanek, J. B. (2013). *Translating Peacebuilding Rationalities into Practice Local Agency and Everyday Resistance*. Berghof Foundation.
- Gamba, V. (2008). Post-Agreement Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reconstruction: Towards a New Approach. In J. Darby & R. M. Ginty (Eds.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Peace Processes and Post-war Reconstruction* (pp. 178–191). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230584556_14
- Gamson, W. A. (1975). *The strategy of social protest*. Dorsey Press.

Ganz, M. (2010). Leading Change: Leadership, Organization and Social Movements. In N. Nohria & R. Khurana (Eds.), *Handbook of leadership theory and practice: an HBS centennial colloquium on advancing leadership*. Harvard Business Press.

García Sánchez, A. (2017). *Territorialidades En Disputa. Cocomacia, "Posconflicto" Y Resistencias En El Medio Atrato, Colombia* [Doctoral Thesis]. Universidade Federal Do Amazonas.

Garrett, N., Sergiou, S., & Vlassenroot, K. (2009). Negotiated peace for extortion: the case of Walikale territory in eastern DR Congo. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 3(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17531050802682671>

Garzón, J. C., Cajiao, A., Cuesta, I., Prada, T., & Silva, A. (2019). *Del capitolio al territorio. La implementación del Acuerdo de Paz en lo local: los desafíos y las oportunidades*. Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP).

Garzón-Vergara, J. C. (2015). Avoiding the Perfect Storm: Criminal Economies, Spoilers, and the Post-Conflict Phase in Colombia. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 4(1), Art. 36. <https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.fx>

Gaventa, J., & Barrett, G. (2010). *So What Difference Does it Make? Mapping the Outcomes of Citizen Engagement* (IDS Working Paper No. 347).

Gbowee, L., & Mithers, C. L. (2011). *Mighty be our powers: how sisterhood, prayer, and sex changed a nation at war: a memoir*. Beast; Perseus Running [distributor].

Gentile, G. (2009). A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army. *Parameters*, 39(3), 5–17.

George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. MIT Press.

Gerhards, J., & Rucht, D. (1992). Mesomobilization: Organizing and Framing in Two Protest Campaigns in West Germany. *American Journal of Sociology*, 98(3), 555–596. <https://doi.org/10.1086/230049>

Gerring, J. (2007). *Case study research: principles and practices*. Cambridge University Press.

Ghani, A., & Lockhart, C. (2008). *Fixing failed states: a framework for rebuilding a fractured world*. Oxford University Press.

Giraudy, A., Moncada, E., & Snyder, R. (2019). Subnational Research in Comparative Politics: Substantive, Theoretical, and Methodological Contributions. In A. Giraudy, E. Moncada, & R. Snyder (Eds.), *Inside Countries: Subnational Research in Comparative Politics* (pp. 2–54). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108678384.001>

Goebertus, J. (2019). *Sin Recursos, No Hay Paz*.

Governance for Peace: Securing the Social Contract. (2011). United Nations. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/governance-for-peace_2011-12-15_web.pdf.

Grimes, M. (2008). *The Conditions of Successful Civil Society Involvement in Combating Corruption: A Survey of Case Study Evidence* (No. 22; Quality of Government Institute Working Paper Series). Quality of Government Institute.

Guarín, S., Tovar, A. P., & Amaya, M. (2018). *Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial: cambiar el rumbo para evitar el naufragio* (No. 5; Serie Notas Estratégicas). Fundación Ideas para la Paz.

Guerrero Home, J. P. (2013). *Obstáculos que impiden el fin del conflicto en el Chocó* (No. 77; Cien Días). CINEP/PPP.

Guevara, E. C. (2012). *Guerrilla Warfare*. Ocean Press.

Gunning, J. (2007). *Hamas in politics: democracy, religion, violence*. Hurst.

Gupta, M. D., Grandvoinnet, H., & Romani, M. (2004). State–Community Synergies in Community-Driven Development. *Journal of Development Studies*, 40(3), 27–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0022038042000213193>

Gutiérrez, A., & Restrepo, E. (2017). *Misioneros y organizaciones campesinas en el río Atrato, Chocó*.

Hagmann, T., & Péclard, D. (2011). Negotiating Statehood: Dynamics of Power and Domination in Africa. In T. Hagmann & D. Péclard (Eds.), *Negotiating statehood: dynamics of power and domination in Africa*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Halloran, B. (2015). *Strengthening Accountability Ecosystems: A Discussion Paper* [Think Piece]. Transparency and Accountability Initiative.

Halloran, B., & Flores, W. (2015). *Mobilizing Accountability: Citizens, Movements and the State* [Think Piece]. Transparency Accountability Initiative.

Harbers, I., & Ingram, M. C. (2019). Politics in Space: Methodological Considerations for Taking Space Seriously in Subnational Research. In A. Giraudy, E. Moncada, & R. Snyder (Eds.), *Inside Countries* (1st ed., pp. 57–91). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108678384.002>

Haveman, H. A. (1993). Organizational Size and Change: Diversification in the Savings and Loan Industry after Deregulation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38(1), 20. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2393253>

Haywood, K. S. (2014). Comparing the SPLA's Role in Sudan's 1997 and 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreements: To Spoil or Not to Spoil. *African Studies Review*, 57(3), 143–165. <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2014.96>

Hazelton, J. (2017). The “Hearts and Minds” Fallacy: Violence, Coercion, and Success in Counterinsurgency Warfare. *International Security*, 42(1), 80–113.

Hendrix, C. S. (2011). Head for the Hills? Rough Terrain, State Capacity, and Civil War Onset. *Civil Wars*, 13(4), 345–370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698249.2011.629863>

Hinestroza Cuesta, L., & Cuesta Rentería, J. L. (2017). Análisis jurídico de las funciones de los consejos comunitarios en territorios colectivos de comunidades negras*. *Justicia*, 32, 160–181. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17081/just.22.32.2910>

Hirblinger, A. T., & Simons, C. (2015). The good, the bad, and the powerful: Representations of the 'local' in peacebuilding. *Security Dialogue*, 46(5), 422–439. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010615580055>

Holsti, K. J. (1996). *The state, war, and the state of war*. Cambridge University Press.

Hossain, N. (2010). Rude Accountability: Informal Pressures on Frontline Bureaucrats in Bangladesh: Informal Pressures on Frontline Bureaucrats in Bangladesh. *Development and Change*, 41(5), 907–928. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2010.01663.x>

Huang, R. (2016). *The Wartime Origins of Democratization: Civil War, Rebel Governance, and Political Regimes*. Cambridge University Press.

Humphreys, M., & Weinstein, J. M. (2006). Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War. *American Political Science Review*, 100(3), 429–447. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055406062289>

Informe de gestión 2019. (2020). Agencia de Renovación del Territorio (ART). https://www.renovacionteritorio.gov.co/Documentos/informes_de_gestion

Informe de gestión Abril 2021. (2021). Consejería Presidencial para la Estabilización y la Consolidación (CPEC).

Informe de gestión 22 meses Agosto 7, 2018 – junio 30, 2020. (2020). Consejería Presidencial para la Estabilización y la Consolidación (CPEC).

Informe de Riesgo N. 008 17 (Baudó). (2017). Defensoría del Pueblo.

Informe De Seguimiento Pdete Chocó. (2021). FISCH.

Informe final del proyecto Programa de Construcción de Confianza y Paz Territorial en Clave PDET para Chocó, Meta y Guaviare. (2020). Fondo Multidonante de Naciones Unidas.

Informe Trimestral del Secretario General sobre la Misión de Verificación en Colombia S/2020/603. (2020). Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Colombia.

Informe Trimestral del Secretario General sobre la Misión de Verificación en Colombia S/2020/943. (2020). Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Colombia.

Iñiguez de Heredia, M. (2012). Escaping Statebuilding: Resistance and Civil Society in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 6(1), 75–89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2012.655567>

Iñiguez de Heredia, M. (2017). *Everyday resistance, peacebuilding and state-making: insights from “Africa’s World War.”* Manchester University Press.

Issifu, A. K. (2016). Local Peace Committees in Africa: The Unseen Role in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding. *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 9, 141.

Jabri, V. (2010). War, Government, Politics: A Critical Response to the Hegemony of the Liberal Peace. In O. P. Richmond (Ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding* (pp. 41–57). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230282681_3

Jenkins, J. C., Carmichael, J. T., Brulle, R. J., & Boughton, H. (2017). Foundation Funding of the Environmental Movement. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 61(13), 1640–1657. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764217744839>

Jones, B. D. (2002). The Challenges of Strategic Coordination. In S. J. Stedman, D. S. Rothchild, & E. M. Cousens (Eds.), *Ending civil wars: the implementation of peace agreements*. Lynne Rienner.

Joshi, A. (2008). Producing Social Accountability? The Impact of Service Delivery Reforms. *IDS Bulletin*, 38(6), 10–17.

Joshi, A. (2013). Do They Work? Assessing the Impact of Transparency and Accountability Initiatives in Service Delivery. *Development Policy Review*, 31(s1), s29–s48. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12018>

June, R., & Heller, N. (2009). Corruption and anti-corruption in peacebuilding: Toward a unified framework. *New Routes*, 14, 10–13.

Junieles, I. (2017, September 13). Retos y Oportunidades para la transformación del campo: Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial. *La Silla Llena*. https://lasillavacia.com/silla-llena/rural/historia/paz-para-transformacion-del-campo-plan-de-desarrollo-con-enfoque#_ftn1

Junta Directiva of COCOMACIA. (2013). *RESOLUCIÓN N° 002*.

Kalyvas, S. N. (2006). *The logic of violence in civil war*. Cambridge University Press.

Kalyvas, S. N., & Balcells, L. (2010). International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict. *American Political Science Review*, 104(3), 415–429. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055410000286>

Kamatsiko, V. V. (2015). Grassroots Peacebuilding and Vertical Integration: A Case Study of the Peace-Rings Approach. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 10(1), 56–71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15423166.2015.1011552>

Kaplan, O. (2012). *Shootings and Shamans: Local Civilian Authority Structures and Civil War Violence in Colombia* (SSRN Scholarly Paper ID 2102751). Social Science Research Network. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2102751>

Kaplan, O. R. (2017). *Resisting war how communities protect themselves*. Cambridge University Press.

Kaplan, R. D. (2000). *The coming anarchy: shattering the dreams of the post Cold War* (1st ed). Random House.

Kasfir, N. (2005). Guerrillas and civilian participation: the National Resistance Army in Uganda, 1981–86. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 43(2), 271–296. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X05000832>

Keranen, O. (2013). International Statebuilding as contentious politics: the case of post conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Nationalities Papers*, 41(3), 354–370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2012.743516>

Kew, D., & Wanis-St. John, A. (2008). Civil Society and Peace Negotiations: Confronting Exclusion. *International Negotiation*, 13(1), 11–36. <https://doi.org/10.1163/138234008X297896>

Knoke, D. (1981). Commitment and Detachment in Voluntary Associations. *American Sociological Review*, 46(2), 141. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2094975>

Kocher, M. A., Pepinsky, T. B., & Kalyvas, S. N. (2011). Aerial Bombing and Counterinsurgency in the Vietnam War. *American Journal of Political Science*, 55(2), 201–218. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2010.00498.x>

Kolb, F. (2007). *Protest and opportunities: the political outcomes of social movements*. Campus.

Krause, J. (2016). Non-Violence and Civilian Agency in Communal War: Evidence from Jos, Nigeria. *African Affairs*, afrafj;adw068v1. <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adw068>

Krebs, R. R., & Licklider, R. (2016). United They Fall: Why the International Community Should Not Promote Military Integration after Civil War. *International Security*, 40(3), 93–138. https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00228

Kurtenbach, S., & Wulf, H. (2012). *Violence and Security Concerns in Post-Conflict Situations*. (Working Paper No. 3; Research and Advisory Project “Instruments and Procedures of German Development Cooperation in Post-Conflict Situations”). Institute for Development and Peace.

Lankina, T. (2012). Sisyphean endeavor or worthwhile undertaking?: transcending within-nation, within region sub-national democracy analysis. *APSA Comparative Democratization*, 10(1).

Leach, D. K. (2005). The Iron Law of What Again? Conceptualizing Oligarchy Across Organizational Forms*. *Sociological Theory*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1111/j.0735-2751.2005.00256.x>

- Leander, A. (2004). Wars and the un-making of states: Taking Tilly seriously in the contemporary world. In *Contemporary Security Analysis and Copenhagen Peace Research* (pp. 69–80). Taylor & Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203356913_chapter_6
- Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building peace: sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Lederach, J. P. (2005). *The moral imagination: the art and soul of building peace*. Oxford University Press. <http://www.dawsonera.com/depp/reader/protected/external/AbstractView/S9780198038948>
- Lederach, J. P. (2012). The Origins and Evolution of Infrastructures for Peace: A Personal Reflection. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 7(3), 8–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15423166.2013.767604>
- Leinweber, A. E. (2013). From devastation to mobilisation: the Muslim community's involvement in social welfare in post-conflict DRC. *Review of African Political Economy*, 40(135), 98–115. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2012.760445>
- Leonardsson, H., & Rudd, G. (2015). The 'local turn' in peacebuilding: a literature review of effective and emancipatory local peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 825–839. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1029905>
- Ley, S., Mattiace, S., & Trejo, G. (2019). Indigenous Resistance to Criminal Governance: Why Regional Ethnic Autonomy Institutions Protect Communities from Narco Rule in Mexico. *Latin American Research Review*, 54(1), 181–200. <https://doi.org/10.25222/larr.377>
- Lindberg, J., & Orjuela, C. (2014). Corruption in the aftermath of war: an introduction. *Third World Quarterly*, 35(5), 723–736. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2014.921421>
- Lund, C. (2006). Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa. *Development and Change*, 37(4), 685–705. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2006.00497.x>
- Lyall, J. (2014). Process tracing, causal inference, and civil war. In A. Bennett & J. T. Checkel (Eds.), *Process Tracing* (pp. 186–208). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139858472.010>
- Lyall, J., Shiraito, Y., & Imai, K. (2015). Coethnic Bias and Wartime Informing. *The Journal of Politics*, 77(3), 833–848. <https://doi.org/10.1086/681590>
- Mac Ginty, R. (2008). Indigenous Peace-Making Versus the Liberal Peace. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 43(2), 139–163. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836708089080>
- Mac Ginty, R. (2010a). Gilding the Lily? International Support for Indigenous and Traditional Peacebuilding. In O. P. Richmond (Ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding* (pp. 347–366). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230282681_19
- Mac Ginty, R. (2010b). Hybrid Peace: The Interaction Between Top-Down and Bottom-Up Peace. *Security Dialogue*, 41(4), 391–412. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010610374312>
- Mac Ginty, R. (2011). *International peacebuilding and local resistance: hybrid forms of peace*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mac Ginty, R., & Richmond, O. P. (2013). The Local Turn in Peace Building: a critical agenda for peace. *Third World Quarterly*, 34(5), 763–783. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2013.800750>
- Mac Ginty, R., & Sanghera, G. (2012). Hybridity in Peacebuilding and Development: An Introduction. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 7(2), 3–8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15423166.2012.742800>

Madrid V, M. (2018, June 7). Planear el futuro del campo con el tiempo en contra: caso Montes de María. *Semana Rural*. <https://semanarural.com/web/articulo/retraso-en-los-planos-de-desarrollo-con-enfoque-territorial-pdets-en-montes-de-maria/540>

Mahoney, J. (2015). Process Tracing and Historical Explanation. *Security Studies*, 24(2), 200–218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2015.1036610>

Malejacq, R. (2016). Warlords, Intervention, and State Consolidation: A Typology of Political Orders in Weak and Failed States. *Security Studies*, 25(1), 85–110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2016.1134191>

Malthaner, S. (2014). Fieldwork in the Context of Violent Conflict and Authoritarian Regimes. In D. Della Porta (Ed.), *Methodological practices in social movement research* (First edition). Oxford University Press.

Mampilly, Z. C. (2011). *Rebel rulers: insurgent governance and civilian life during war*. Cornell University Press.

Mani, R. (2005). Rebuilding an Inclusive Political Community After War. *Security Dialogue*, 36(4), 511–526. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010605060452>

Manning, C. (2003). Local Level Challenges to Post-conflict Peacebuilding. *International Peacekeeping*, 10(3), 25–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533310308559334>

Mansbridge, J. J. (1983). *Beyond adversary democracy* (University of Chicago Press ed., with a rev. pref). University of Chicago Press.

Mapa De Pobreza Para Los Municipios En Colombia 2018 - 2019. (2021). Prosperidad Social. <https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/presentations/mapa-pobreza-municipios-colombia-2018-2019-dpto-prosperidad-social.pdf>

Mao, Z. (2013). *On guerrilla warfare* (S. B. Griffith, Trans.). <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1152764>

Martin, A. W. (2007). Organizational Structure, Authority and Protest: The Case of Union Organizing in the United States, 1990-2001. *Social Forces*, 85(3), 1413–1435. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2007.0047>

Masullo, J. (2015). *The Power of Staying Put Nonviolent Resistance Against Armed Groups in Colombia* (ICNC Monograph Series). International Center on Nonviolent Conflict.

Mazurana, D. E., Jacobsen, K., & Gale, L. A. (Eds.). (2013). *Research methods in conflict settings: a view from below*. Cambridge University Press.

McAdam, D., & Scott, W. R. (2005). ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS. In G. F. Davis, D. McAdam, W. R. Scott, & M. N. Zald (Eds.), *Social Movements and Organization Theory* (1st ed., pp. 4–40). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511791000.003>

McCarthy, J. D., & Wolfson, M. (1996). Resource Mobilization by Local Social Movement Organizations: Agency, Strategy, and Organization in the Movement Against Drinking and Driving. *American Sociological Review*, 61(6), 1070. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2096309>

McCarthy, J. D., & Zald, M. N. (1977). Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory. *American Journal of Sociology*, 82(6), 1212–1241.

McMaster, H. R. (2008). On War: Lessons to be Learned. *Survival*, 50(1), 19–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396330801899439>

- Meagher, K. (2012). The Strength of Weak States? Non-State Security Forces and Hybrid Governance in Africa: *Non-State Security Forces and Hybrid Governance in Africa. Development and Change*, 43(5), 1073–1101. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2012.01794.x>
- Mehler, A., Lambach, D., & Smith-Höhn, J. (2010). *Legitimate oligopolies of violence in post-conflict societies with particular focus on Liberia and Sierra Leone* (Vol. 23). Deutsche Stiftung Friedensforschung.
- Melo, J. B. (2012). *Land grabbing and conflicts over territories: Agro-industrial projects in Lower Atrato*. <https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.4352.8645>
- Melo, J. B. (2013). Multi-scalar Resistance And Territorial Defense By Afro-descendants In Colombia: The Lower Atrato Case. In E. J. Bejarano (Ed.), *Movilizando etnicidad: políticas de identidad en contienda en las Américas: pasado y presente*. Iberoamericana ; Vervuert.
- Melo, J. B. (2015). Regional Challenges to Land Restitution and Peace in Colombia: The Case of the Lower Atrato. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 10(2), 36–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15423166.2015.1056057>
- Menkhaus, K. (2006). Governance without Government in Somalia Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping. *International Security*, 31(3), 74–106. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4137508>
- Menkhaus, K. (2008). The rise of a mediated state in northern Kenya: the Wajir story and its implications for state-building. *Afrika Focus*, 21(2), 23–38. <https://doi.org/10.1163/2031356X-02102004>
- Metelits, C. (2010). *Inside insurgency: violence, civilians, and revolutionary group behavior*. New York University Press.
- Meza, C. A. (2010). *Tradiciones elaboradas y modernizaciones vividas por pueblos afrochocoanos en la vía al mar*. Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia Icanh.
- Migdal, J. S. (1988). *Strong societies and weak states: state-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton University Press.
- Milan, S. (2014). The Ethics of Social Movement Research. In D. della Porta (Ed.), *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research* (pp. 446–464). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198719571.003.0018>
- Minkoff, D. C. (1993). The Organization of Survival: Women's and Racial-Ethnic Voluntarist and Activist Organizations, 1955-1985. *Social Forces*, 71(4), 887–908. JSTOR. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2580123>
- Minkoff, D. C. (1999). Bending with the Wind: Strategic Change and Adaptation by Women's and Racial Minority Organizations. *American Journal of Sociology*, 104(6), 1666–1703. <https://doi.org/10.1086/210220>
- Minkoff, D. C. (2008). Social Movement Politics and Organization. In *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology* (pp. 282–294). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470693452.ch20>
- Mitchell, C. R. (2012). Introduction: Linking National-Level Peacemaking with Grassroots Peacebuilding. In C. R. Mitchell & L. E. Hancock (Eds.), *Local peacebuilding and national peace: interaction between grassroots and elite processes*. Continuum.
- Monkada, E., & Snyder, R. (2012). Subnational Comparative Research on Democracy: Taking Stock and Looking Forward. *APSA Comparative Democratization*, 10(1).
- Montoya, L. (2020, September 16). *742 iniciativas PDETE fueron incluidas en los 14 Planes de Desarrollo de los Municipios PDETE Chocó*. <https://qradio.com.co/2020/09/16/742-iniciativas-pdete-fueron-incluidas-en-los-14-planos-de-desarrollo-de-los-municipio-pdete-del-choco/>

- Moore, C. L. (2018). *Why Civilians Support Actors that Harm Them in Civil War: Evidence from Syria and Iraq* [Doctoral Dissertation]. University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Moreno, C. M. (2020). "Nos están matando": (We Are Being Killed). *Journal of Architectural Education*, 74(2), 315–318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10464883.2020.1790942>
- Moreno León, C. E. (2017). Chronicle of a Survival Foretold: How Protest Behavior Against Armed Actors Influenced Violence in the Colombian Civil War, 1988–2005. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 59(4), 3–25. <https://doi.org/10.1111/laps.12031>
- Moreno, R., & Palacios Blandón, Y. C. (2016). *La Visión De Desarrollo Y Su Incidencia En La Implementación Del Acuerdo Uno (1) De La Habana* [Programa De Maestria En Conflicto Y Paz]. Universidad De Medellín – En Convenio Con La Fundación Universitaria Claretiana.
- Morris, A. D. (1984). *The origins of the civil rights movement: Black communities organizing for change*. Free Press ; Collier Macmillan.
- Morris, A. D., & Staggenborg, S. (2007). Leadership in Social Movements. In *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (pp. 171–196). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470999103.ch8>
- Mouly, C., & Garrido, M. B. (2017). No a la guerra: resistencia civil en dos comunidades periféricas de Colombia. *Desafíos*, 30(1). <https://doi.org/10.12804/revistas.urosario.edu.co/desafios/a.5282>
- Mouly, C., Idler, A., & Garrido, M. B. (2015). Zones of Peace in Colombia's Borderland. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 20(1).
- Mueller, C. (1995). The Organizational Basis of Conflict in Contemporary Feminism. In M. M. Ferree & P. Y. Martin (Eds.), *Feminist organizations: harvest of the new women's movement*. Temple University Press.
- Müller, T. R. (2012). From rebel governance to state consolidation – Dynamics of loyalty and the securitisation of the state in Eritrea. *Geoforum*, 43(4), 793–803. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2012.01.009>
- Munive, J., & Stepputat, F. (2015). Rethinking Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 4(1), Art. 48. <https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.go>
- Naseemullah, A. (2014). Shades of Sovereignty: Explaining Political Order and Disorder in Pakistan's Northwest. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 49(4), 501–522. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12116-014-9157-z>
- Neaera Abers, R., & Keck, M. E. (2009). Mobilizing the State: The Erratic Partner in Brazil's Participatory Water Policy. *Politics & Society*, 37(2), 289–314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00323239209334003>
- Newman, E., & Richmond, O. (2006). Peace building and spoilers: Opinion. *Conflict, Security & Development*, 6(1), 101–110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678800600590728>
- Nielsen, R. (2015). *War, Networks, and Women in Politics: Female Secret Societies in Liberia and Sierra Leone* [Doctoral Thesis]. Yale University.
- Nilsson, D. (2012). Anchoring the Peace: Civil Society Actors in Peace Accords and Durable Peace. *International Interactions*, 38(2), 243–266. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2012.659139>

Nilsson, D., & Söderberg Kovacs, M. (2011). Revisiting an Elusive Concept: A Review of the Debate on Spoilers in Peace Processes1. *International Studies Review*, 13(4), 606–626. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2486.2011.01080.x>

Nilsson, D., Svensson, I., Teixeira, B. M., Lorenzo, L. M., & Ruus, A. (2020). In the Streets and at the Table: Civil Society Coordination during Peace Negotiations. *International Negotiation*, 25(2), 225–251. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718069-25131241>

Nordstrom, C. (1997). *A different kind of war story*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Obiekwe, K. (2009). In Search of Appropriate Peacemaking/Peacebuilding Paradigm in Dealing with Africa's Intrastate Violent Conflicts: Considering Lederach's Faith-based Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding Approach. *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development*, 13.

Observatorio De La Participación Ciudadana En La Implementación Del Acuerdo Final (No. 1). (2020). Foro Nacional por Colombia.

OCAD Paz. (n.d.). Sistema General de Regalías. <https://www.sgr.gov.co/Inversi%C3%B3n/OCADPAZ.aspx>

OCHA. (2016). *Desplazamiento masivo en Medio Baudó (Chocó) Flash Update No. 1 (24/04/2016)* [Flash Update]. <https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/colombia-desplazamiento-masivo-en-medio-baud-choc-flash-update-no-1-24042016>

Odendaal, A. (2012). The Political Legitimacy of National Peace Committees. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 7(3), 40–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15423166.2013.767601>

Odendaal, A., & Olivier, R. (2008). *Local peace committees: Some reflections and lessons learned*. Academy for Educational Development (AED).

O'Meally, S. (2013). *Mapping Context for Social Accountability. A Resource Paper*. World Bank. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resources/244362-1193949504055/Context_and_SAcc_RESOURCE_PAPER.pdf

Ortiz-Guerrero, Herrera Arango, Guaqueta Solórzano, & Ramos Barón. (2017). *Trayectorias históricas y escenarios prospectivos de las reformas de tenencia colectiva de la tierra en áreas forestales comunitarias en Colombia*. Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). <https://doi.org/10.17528/cifor/006668>

Oslender, U. (2004). Geografías de terror y desplazamiento for-zado en el Pacífico colombiano: conceptualizando el problema y buscando respuestas. In E. Restrepo & A. Rojas (Eds.), *Conflicto e (in)visibilidad Retos en los estudios de la gente negra en Colombia*. Universidad del Cauca.

Oslender, U. (2008). "Geografías del terror": un marco de análisis para el estudio del terror. *Revista Electrónica De Geografía Y Ciencias Sociales*, XII(270), 741–798.

Oslender, U. (2016). *The geographies of social movements: Afro-Colombian mobilization and the aquatic space*. Duke University Press.

Oyaga Moncada, M. (2018). *El Enfoque Reparador en los Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial*. Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento – CODHES.

Paffenholtz, T. (2011). Civil Society beyond the Liberal Peace and its Critique. In S. Campbell, D. Chandler, & M. Sabaratnam (Eds.), *A liberal peace? the problems and practices of peacebuilding*. Zed Books.

Paffenholz, T. (2014a). Civil Society and Peace Negotiations: Beyond the Inclusion-Exclusion Dichotomy: Participation of Civil Society in Peace Negotiations. *Negotiation Journal*, 30(1), 69–91. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nej.12046>

Paffenholz, T. (2014b). International peacebuilding goes local: analysing Lederach's conflict transformation theory and its ambivalent encounter with 20 years of practice. *Peacebuilding*, 2(1), 11–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2013.783257>

Pardo, M. (2002). Entre la autonomía y la institucionalización: Dilemas del movimiento negro colombiano. *Journal of Latin American Anthropology*, 7(2), 60–84. <https://doi.org/10.1525/jlca.2002.7.2.60>

Pardo, M. (2017). *Movimentos Negros Na Região Do Pacífico Colombiano: Organizações, Violência e Território* [Doctoral Thesis]. UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA.

Paris, R. (2004). *At war's end: building peace after civil conflict*. Cambridge University Press.

Paris, R., & Sisk, T. D. (Eds.). (2009). *The dilemmas of statebuilding: confronting the contradictions of postwar peace operations*. Routledge.

Peace Dividends and Beyond: Contributions of Administrative and Social Services to Peace-building. (2012). United Nations. http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/peace_dividends.pdf.

Pearlman, W. (2009). Spoiling Inside and Out: Internal Political Contestation and the Middle East Peace Process. *International Security*, 33(3), 79–109. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2009.33.3.79>

Péclard, D., & Mechoulam, D. (2015). *Rebel Governance and the Politics of Civil War* [Working Paper]. Swisspeace.

Perea, N. (2012). *Soy Atrato: vida y amargos recuerdos de un líder negro* (1. ed). Editorial Nuevo Milenio.

Petraeus, D. (2006). Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq. *Military Review*, 86, 12.

PGO - *Peaceful and Productive Atrato Activity*. (2021, October 5). USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/colombia/fact-sheets/pgo-peaceful-and-productive-atrato-activity>

Piven, F. F. (2013). On the Organizational Question. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 54(2), 191–193. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tsq.12013>

Piven, F. F., & Cloward, R. A. (1979). *Poor people's movements: why they succeed, how they fail*. Vintage books.

Polletta, F. (2005). How Participatory Democracy Became White: Culture and Organizational Choice. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 10(2), 271–288. <https://doi.org/10.17813/maiq.10.2.96746725j1312512>

Polletta, F. (2013). Participatory Democracy in Social Movements. In *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*. American Cancer Society. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm442>

Pouligny, B. (2005). Civil Society and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: Ambiguities of International Programmes Aimed at Building 'New' Societies. *Security Dialogue*, 36(4), 495–510. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010605060448>

Procuraduría Delegada para el Seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz. (2020). *Chocó Informe sobre el estado de avance en la implementación del Acuerdo de Paz en la subregión PDET*.

Proyecto “Fortalecimiento De La Asociacion De Consejos Comunitarios Y Organizaciones Del Bajo Atrato- Ascoba, Mediante La Formulación De Un Plan De Etnodesarrollo Para La Cuenca Del Río Domingodo-choco.” (2011). ASCOBA.

Puentes Ramos, J. (2019, March 27). Así quedó el plan que pretende “rescatar” a los municipios más pobres de Colombia. *Semana Rural*. <https://semanarural.com/web/articulo/planes-de-desarrollo-con-enfoque-territorial/887>

Quiceno, N., Enrique Mosquera, S., Palacios, H., Asprilla, E., Palacios, R., Palomeque, E., Palacios, T., Cañola, L. M., Pino, Z., Pino, C., Oneida Orejuela, A., & Rentería, C. (2015). *Pogue: un pueblo, una familia, un río*.

Raeymaekers, T. (2007). *The Power of Protection. Governance and Transborder Trade on the Congo-Ugandan Frontier* [Dissertation, Ghent University]. <http://hdl.handle.net/1854/LU-468655>

Raeymaekers, T. (2010). Protection for Sale? War and the Transformation of Regulation on the Congo-Ugandan Border. *Development and Change*, 41(4), 563–587. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2010.01655.x>

Rampf, D., & Chavarro, D. (2014). *The 1991 Colombian National Constituent Assembly Turning Exclusion into Inclusion, or a Vain Endeavour?* (Inclusive Political Settlements Series No. 1). Berghof Foundation.

Ramsbotham, O., Miall, H., & Woodhouse, T. (2011). *Contemporary conflict resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts* (3rd ed). Polity.

Regan, P. M. (2000). *Civil wars and foreign powers: outside intervention in intrastate conflict*. University of Michigan Press.

Reger, J., & Staggenborg, S. (2006). Patterns of Mobilization in Local Movement Organizations: Leadership and Strategy in Four National Organization for Women Chapters: *Sociological Perspectives*. <https://doi.org/10.1525/sop.2006.49.3.297>

Registro Único de Víctimas. (n.d.). Unidad Para Las Víctimas. <https://cifras.unidadvictimas.gov.co/Cifras/#!/hechos>

Renders, M., & Terlinden, U. (2010). Negotiating Statehood in a Hybrid Political Order: The Case of Somaliland. *Development and Change*, 41(4), 723–746. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2010.01652.x>

Reno, W. (1998). *Warlord politics and African states*. Lynne Rienner Publ.

Reno, W. (2004). Order and commerce in turbulent areas: 19th century lessons, 21st century practice. *Third World Quarterly*, 25(4), 607–625. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590410001678889>

Report of the Secretary-General: Peacebuilding in the Aftermath of Conflict. (A/67/499*–S/2012/746*). (2012). United Nations. https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/67/499

Restrepo, E. (2011). Etnización y multiculturalismo en el bajo atrato. *Revista Colombiana De Antropología*, 47(2), 37–68. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22380/2539472X.957>

Restrepo, E. (2013). *Etnización de la negritud: la invención de las “comunidades negras” como grupo étnico en Colombia*. Editorial Universidad del Cauca.

Review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (A/64/868–S/2010/393). (2010). United Nations. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/national_ownership_report.pdf

- Revkin, M. (2017). The Non-Economic Functions of Rebel Taxation: New Data from the Islamic State in Syria. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3023317>
- Richmond, O. P. (2006). The problem of peace: understanding the 'liberal peace.' *Conflict, Security & Development*, 6(3), 291–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678800600933480>
- Richmond, O. P. (2010a). A Genealogy of Peace and Conflict Theory. In O. P. Richmond (Ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding: Critical Developments and Approaches* (pp. 14–38). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230282681_2
- Richmond, O. P. (2010b). Resistance and the Post-liberal Peace. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 38(3), 665–692. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829810365017>
- Richmond, O. P., & Mitchell, A. (2011). Peacebuilding and Critical Forms of Agency: From Resistance to Subsistence. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 36(4), 326–344. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0304375411432099>
- Rincones Julio, D. (2019, September 11). Así va el PDET de la Sierra Nevada y la Serranía de Perijá en Cesar. *Verdad Abierta*. <https://verdadabierta.com/asi-va-pdet-la-sierra-nevada-la-serrania-perija-cesar/2/7>
- Rios Oyola, S. M. (2014). *Religion and the Social Construction of Memory amidst Violence: The Case of the Massacre of Bojayá (Colombia)* [Doctoral Thesis]. University of Aberdeen.
- Rodríguez Iglesias, A. I. (2019). *Territorial and Ethnic Peace in articulation. Chocó's PDETE: an intercultural dialogue of knowledges?*
- Rodríguez Iglesias, A. I. (2020). *'Peace Without Roots?' The Ethnic Dimension Of Peace In Colombia* [Doctoral Dissertation]. Universidade de Coimbra.
- Rodríguez Iglesias, A. I., & Rosen, N. (2021). *Infrastructure for Inclusion: Exploring the evolution of Afro-Colombian movement and inclusiveness from the 1991 Constituent Process to the 2016 Peace Agreement*.
- Rodríguez Iglesias, A. I., & Rosen, N. (2022). Local Participation at Stake: Between Emancipatory Goals and Co-Option Strategies. The Case of Territorially Focused Development Programs in Colombia. *Colombia Internacional*, 109, 89–114. <https://doi.org/10.7440/colombiaint109.2022.04>
- Rodriguez, S. (2019). Colombia: A long journey to peace. In C. Peterson, W. M. Knoblauch, & M. Loadenthal (Eds.), *The Routledge history of world peace since 1750*. Routledge.
- Rohlfing, I. (2012). *Case studies and causal inference: an integrative framework*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rolland, S. (2005). Los Consejos Comunitarios De Las Comunidades Negras: ¿Una Nueva Forma De Hacer Política En La Zona Del Bajo Atrato, Chocó? *Controversia*, 189, 1–20.
- Ruano, S., & Torres, N. (2020, January 24). El ¿cierre? del ciclo de violencia en Bojayá. *El Espectador*. <https://www.elespectador.com/colombia2020/opinion/el-cierre-del-ciclo-de-violencia-en-bojaya-columna-901374/>
- Rubin, M. A. (2019). Rebel Territorial Control and Civilian Collective Action in Civil War: Evidence from the Communist Insurgency in the Philippines: *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3290760>
- Rucht, D., & Teune, S. (2009). Forms of Action of Global Justice Movement Groups: Do Conceptions and Practices of Democracy Matter? In D. della Porta (Ed.), *Democracy in Social Movements* (pp. 171–193). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230240865_8

- Ruggeri, A., Dorussen, H., & Gizelis, T.-I. (2017). Winning the Peace Locally: UN Peacekeeping and Local Conflict. *International Organization*, 71(1), 163–185. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818316000333>
- Ruigrok, I. (2011). Facing Up to the Centre: The Emergence of Regional Elite Associations in Angola's Political Transition Process. In T. Hagmann & D. Péclard (Eds.), *Negotiating statehood: dynamics of power and domination in Africa*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rupesinghe, K. (Ed.). (1995). *Conflict transformation*. Macmillan [u.a.].
- Salamanca, R. E., Ramirez, L., Cárdenas, M., Yousuf, Z., & Close, S. (2017). *Indigenous women and Colombia's peace process: pathways to participation*. Conciliation Resources.
- Sánchez-Garzoli, G. (2019, October 31). Ethnic Communities are the Pathway to Peace in Colombia's Abandoned Areas. *Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)*. <https://www.wola.org/analysis/ethnic-communities-pathways-peace-colombia/>
- Santos, V., & Nohra, S. (2022, June 29). Los recursos de la paz: así se direccionaron los proyectos del Ocad Paz [Text]. Blu Radio. <https://www.bluradio.com/nacion/los-recursos-de-la-paz-asi-se-direccionaron-los-proyectos-del-ocad-paz-pr30>
- Saunders, C. (2009). Organizational Size and Democratic Practices: Can Large Be Beautiful? In D. della Porta (Ed.), *Democracy in Social Movements* (pp. 150–170). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230240865_7
- Scharbatke-Church, C., & Reiling, K. (2009). Lilies that fester: Seeds of corruption and peacebuilding. *New Routes*, 14, 4–9.
- Schatz, F. (2013). Fighting Corruption With Social Accountability: A Comparative Analysis Of Social Accountability Mechanisms' Potential To Reduce Corruption In Public Administration: Fighting Corruption With Social Accountability. *Public Administration and Development*, 33(3), 161–174. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.1648>
- Schock, K. (2015). Rightful Radical Resistance: Mass Mobilization and Land Struggles in India and Brazil*. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 20(4), 493–515. <https://doi.org/10.17813/1086-671X-20-4-493>
- Schou, A. (2014). Conflict resolution attempts in self-determination disputes: the significance of local minority groups concerns in the Philippines and Sri Lanka. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37(2), 302–321. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2012.729670>
- Schou, A., & Haug, M. (2005). *Decentralisation in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations* (Working Paper No. 139). Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research.
- Schouten, C. (2011). *Social accountability in situations of conflict and fragility* (U4 Brief No. 19). U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, CMI.
- Schweitzer, C., & Carrière, R. (Eds.). (2010). *Civilian peacekeeping: a barely tapped resource* (1. Aufl). Sozio-Publ.
- Scott, J. C. (1985). *Weapons of the weak: everyday forms of peasant resistance*. Yale University Press.
- Seawright, J., & Gerring, J. (2008). Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options. *Political Research Quarterly*, 61(2), 294–308. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912907313077>

Seay, L. E. (2013). Effective responses: Protestants, Catholics and the provision of health care in the post-war Kivus. *Review of African Political Economy*, 40(135), 83–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2012.761601>

Secretaría Técnica CINEP/PPP-CERAC. (2022). *Décimo informe de verificación de la implementación del Acuerdo Final de Paz en Colombia* (No. 10; Verificación Acuerdo de Paz). CINEP/PPP, CERAC.

Segundo Informe Al Congreso Sobre el estado de Avance de la Implementación del Acuerdo de Paz. (2020). PROCURADURÍA GENERAL DE LA NACIÓN Delegada para el seguimiento al Acuerdo de Paz.

Sepp, K. I. (2005). Best Practices in Counterinsurgency. *Military Review* /, 85(3).

Séptimo informe de verificación de la implementación del Acuerdo Final de Paz en Colombia. (2020). Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular / Programa por la Paz CINEP/ Programa por la Paz.

Shankland, A. (2010). The Indigenous Peoples' Movement, 'forest citizenship' and struggles over health services in Acre, Brazil. In V. S. P. Coelho & B. Von Lieres (Eds.), *Mobilizing for democracy: citizen action and the politics of public participation*. Zed.

Sharp, G. (2005). *Waging nonviolent struggle: 20th century practice and 21st century potential*. Extending Horizons Books.

Sharp, G., & Paulson, J. (2005). *Waging nonviolent struggle: 20th century practice and 21st century potential*. Extending Horizons Books.

Shawki, N. (2011). Organizational structure and strength and transnational campaign outcomes: a comparison of two transnational advocacy networks. *Global Networks*, 11(1), 97–117. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0374.2011.00309.x>

Shesterinina, A. (2019). Ethics, empathy, and fear in research on violent conflict. *Journal of Peace Research*, 56(2), 190–202. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343318783246>

Simmons, E. S., & Smith, N. R. (2017). Comparison with an Ethnographic Sensibility. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 50(01), 126–130. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096516002286>

Situación humanitaria en Riosucio y Carmen del Darién. Septiembre - octubre de 2015. (2015). OCHA.

SIVeL: Sistema de Información de Violencia Política en Línea. (n.d.). CINEP / PPP. www.nocheyniebla.org

Slater, D., & Ziblatt, D. (2013). The Enduring Indispensability of the Controlled Comparison. *Comparative Political Studies*, 46(10), 1301–1327. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414012472469>

Smith, J. (1992). The 1989 Chinese Student Movement. *Peace & Change*, 17(1), 82–101. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pech.1992.17.1.82>

Snyder, R. (2001). Scaling Down: The Subnational Comparative Method. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 36(1), 93–110. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02687586>

Soto, L. (2018, January 25). Los Pdets en el Pacífico, a contrarreloj. *La Silla Vacía*. <https://lasillavacia.com/silla-pacifico/los-pdet-en-el-pacifico-contrarreloj-64349>

Soule, S. A. (2013). Bringing Organizational Studies Back into Social Movement Scholarship. In J. van Stekelenburg, C. Roggeband, & B. Klandermans (Eds.), *The Future of Social Movement Research* (pp. 107–124). University of Minnesota Press. <https://doi.org/10.5749/minnesota/9780816686513.003.0007>

- Spear, J. (2002). Disarmament and Demobilization. In S. J. Stedman, D. Rothchild, & E. M. Cousens (Eds.), *Ending civil wars: The implementation of peace agreements* (pp. 141–182). Lynne Rienner.
- Speer, J. (2012). Participatory Governance Reform: A Good Strategy for Increasing Government Responsiveness and Improving Public Services? *World Development*, 40(12), 2379–2398. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2012.05.034>
- Staggenborg, S. (1988). The Consequences of Professionalization and Formalization in the Pro-Choice Movement. *American Sociological Review*, 53(4), 585. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095851>
- Staggenborg, S. (1989). Stability and Innovation in the Women's Movement: A Comparison of Two Movement Organizations. *Social Problems*, 36(1), 75–92. <https://doi.org/10.2307/800551>
- Staggenborg, S., & Lecomte, J. (2009). Social Movement Campaigns: Mobilization and Outcomes in the Montreal Women's Movement Community. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 14(2), 163–180. <https://doi.org/10.17813/mai.14.2.0414240734477801>
- Staniland, P. (2012). States, Insurgents, and Wartime Political Orders. *Perspectives on Politics*, 10(2), 243–264. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592712000655>
- Staniland, P. (2014). *Networks of rebellion: explaining insurgent cohesion and collapse*. <http://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3138598>
- Staniland, P. (2015). Militias, Ideology, and the State. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 59(5), 770–793. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002715576749>
- Stedman, S. J. (1997). Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes. *International Security*, 22(2), 5–53. <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.22.2.5>
- Stedman, S. J. (2002). Introduction. In S. J. Stedman, D. Rothchild, & E. M. Cousens (Eds.), *Ending civil wars: The implementation of peace agreements* (pp. 141–182). Lynne Rienner.
- Stedman, S. J. (2008). Peace Processes and the Challenges of Violence. In J. Darby & R. M. Ginty (Eds.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Peace Processes and Post-war Reconstruction* (pp. 147–158). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230584556_12
- Stewart, M. A. (2018). Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War. *International Organization*, 72(1), 205–226. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818317000418>
- Sutherland, N., Land, C., & Böhm, S. (2014). Anti-leaders(hip) in Social Movement Organizations: The case of autonomous grassroots groups: *Organization*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508413480254>
- Svensson, I., Hall, J., Krause, D., & Skoog, E. (2019, March 22). *Analysis | How ordinary Iraqis resisted the Islamic State*. Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/03/22/civil-resistance-against-islamic-state-was-much-more-common-than-many-think/>
- Tarrow, S. (2010). The Strategy of Paired Comparison: Toward a Theory of Practice. *Comparative Political Studies*, 43(2), 230–259. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414009350044>
- Tarrow, S. G. (2011). *Power in movement: social movements and contentious politics* (Rev. & updated 3rd ed). Cambridge University Press.
- Tate, W. (2001). Paramilitaries in Colombia. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 8(1), 163–175. JSTOR. <http://www.jstor.org.proxyau.wrlc.org/stable/24590184>
- Tercer Informe sobre el Estado de Implementación del Acuerdo de Paz de Colombia* (Informe 3; Iniciativa Barómetro, Matriz de Acuerdos de Paz,). (2019). Kroc Institute.

The State- and Peacebuilding Fund: Addressing the Unique Challenges of Fragility and Conflict. (2011). World Bank. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTLICUS/Resources/511777-1240930480694/OPCFC_fragility-brochure-final-150.pdf.

Tolbert, P. S., & Hiatt, S. R. (2009). On organizations and oligarchies: Michels in the twenty-first century. In P. Adler (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of sociology and organization studies: Classical foundations* (pp. 175–195). Oxford University Press.

Tovar Samacá, P., Peñuela Camacho, S., & Alonso Vinasco, O. (2020). *Participación, PDET y pandemia Realidades e ideas ante los nuevos desafíos*. Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP).

Tres años después de la firma del Acuerdo Final de Colombia: hacia la transformación territorial (Informe 4; Iniciativa Barómetro, Matriz de Acuerdos de Paz). (2020). Kroc Institute.

Tsai, L. L. (2007). Solidary Groups, Informal Accountability, and Local Public Goods Provision in Rural China. *American Political Science Review*, 101(2), 355–372. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055407070153>

Tull, D. M. (2003). A reconfiguration of political order? The state of the state in North Kivu (DR Congo). *African Affairs*, 102(408), 429–446. <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adg046>

Tull, D., & Mehler, A. (2005). The hidden costs of power-sharing: Reproducing insurgent violence in Africa. *African Affairs*, 104(416), 375–398. <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adi034>

UN Advisory Group of Experts. (2015). *Report of the AGE on the 2015 Peacebuilding Review*. United Nations. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/150630%20Report%20of%20the%20AGE%20on%20the%202015%20Peacebuilding%20Review%20FINAL.pdf>

UN HIPPO Commission. (2015). *Report of the Independent High-level Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO)*. United Nations. http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp

UNITAR and Nonviolent Peaceforce. (2015). *Unarmed Civilian Protection: Strengthening Civilian Capacities to Protect Civilians Against Violence*.

Urrego Rodriguez, M. del R. (2019). *Asunto: Respuesta Radicado 20196300037632, Solicitud de Informacion contemplada en el Acuerdo de Paz firmado entre el Estado colombiano y las Farc*.

U.S. Army And Marine Corps. (2006). *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps counterinsurgency field manual: U.S. Army field manual no. 3-24: Marine Corps warfighting publication no. 3-33.5* (University of Chicago Press ed). University of Chicago Press.

Uvin, P. (2009). Corruption and violence in Burundi. *New Routes*, 14, 17–19.

Valencia, A. (2013). Alternativas organizativas ante la guerra y el desplazamiento en el bajo Atrato. In E. Restrepo (Ed.), *Revista Estudios del Pacífico Colombiano* (Vol. 56). FUCLA.

Valencia, L. A. (2011). *Territorios En Disputa: Procesos Organizativos Y Conflicto Armado En El Bajo Atrato* [Magister]. Universidad de los Andes.

Valentino, B., Huth, P., & Balch-Lindsay, D. (2004). “Draining the Sea”: Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare. *International Organization*, 58(02). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818304582061>

van Tongeren, P. (2013). *Background Paper on Infrastructures for Peace* (Seminar On Infrastructures For Peace). Global Alliance For Ministries And Infrastructures For Peace (Gamip).

van Tongeren, P., Malin, B., Hellema, Marte, & Verhoeven, J. (Eds.). (2005). *People building peace II: successful stories of civil society*. L. Rienner Publishers.

- Velásquez, M., Ávila, N., Villota, M., Quintero, F., & Arbeláez, S. (2020). Largely on their own: Dealing with the rural legacies of conflict through local participatory peacebuilding. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, joac.12395. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joac.12395>
- Vélez, M. A. (2014). Entre el Estado y La Sociedad Civil: El Rol de Los Consejos Comunitarios. In C. F. Pineda & L. D. Matajira (Eds.), *La gestión de lo público: debates y dilemas* (1st ed.). Universidad de los Andes, Colombia. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7440/j.ctt1mtz4xg>
- Vélez, M. A., & Lobo, I. (2019). Challenges of Organised Community Resistance in the Context of Illicit Economies and Drug War Policies: Insights from Colombia. *Journal of Illicit Economies and Development*, 1(1), 72–79. <https://doi.org/10.31389/jied.15>
- Villa, W. (1998). El movimiento social de comunidades negras: La construcción de una noción de territorio y región. In A. Maya (Ed.), *Geografía humana de Colombia. Los Afrocolombianos* (pp. 431–449). Instituto de Cultura Hispánica.
- Villa, W. (2013). Colonización y conflicto territorial en el bajo Atrato: el poblamiento de las cuencas de la margen oriental. In E. Restrepo (Ed.), *Revista Estudios del Pacífico Colombiano* (Vol. 56). FUCLA.
- Vlassenroot, K., & Raeymaekers, T. (2004). The politics of rebellion and intervention in Ituri: the emergence of a new political complex? *African Affairs*, 103(412), 385–412. <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adh066>
- Vlassenroot, K., & Raeymaekers, T. (2009). Kivu's Intractable Security Conundrum. *African Affairs*, 108(432), 475–484. <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adp039>
- Voors, M. J., Nillesen, E. E. M., Verwimp, P., Bulte, E. H., Lensink, R., & Soest, D. P. V. (2012). Violent Conflict and Behavior: A Field Experiment in Burundi. *American Economic Review*, 102(2), 941–964. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.102.2.941>
- Wabgou, M. (2012). *Movimiento Social Afrocolombiano, Negro, Raizal y Palenquero: el largo camino hacia la construcción de espacios comunes y alianzas estratégicas para la incidencia política en Colombia* (Primera edición). Universidad Nacional de Colombia-Sede Bogotá, Facultad de Derecho, Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, Instituto Unidad de Investigaciones Jurídico-Sociales Gerardo Molina-UNIJUS.
- Walsh, J. (2014). *"Our Struggles Are Not The Same, But They Converge": Farmworkers, Allies, And The Fair Food Movement* [Doctoral Dissertation]. University of Pittsburgh.
- Walter, B. F. (2002). *Committing to peace: the successful settlement of civil wars*. Princeton University Press.
- Wampler, B. (2008). When Does Participatory Democracy Deepen the Quality of Democracy? Lessons from Brazil. *Comparative Politics*, 41(1), 61–81.
- Wanis-St. John, A., & Rosen, N. (2017). *Negotiating Civil Resistance* (Peaceworks). USIP.
- Weinstein, J. M. (2007). *Inside rebellion: the politics of insurgent violence*. Cambridge University Press.
- Westendorf, J.-K. (2015). *Why peace processes fail: negotiating insecurity after civil war*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Williams, A. J. (2010). Reconstruction: The Missing Historical Link. In O. P. Richmond (Ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding* (pp. 58–73). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230282681_4

- Wimmer, A., Cederman, L.-E., & Min, B. (2009). Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of a New Global Data Set. *American Sociological Review*, 74(2), 316–337. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240907400208>
- Wolfe, L. (2017, May 16). *10 do's and don'ts on how to interview sexualized violence survivors* - Women's Media Center. Women's Media Center. <https://womensmediacenter.com/women-under-siege/10-dos-and-donts-on-how-to-interview-sexualized-violence-survivors>
- Wood, E. J. (2000). *Forging democracy from below: insurgent transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wood, E. J. (2003). *Insurgent collective action and civil war in El Salvador*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wood, E. J. (2006a). The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones. *Qualitative Sociology*, 29(3), 373–386. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-006-9027-8>
- Wood, E. J. (2006b). Variation in Sexual Violence during War. *Politics & Society*, 34(3), 307–342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329206290426>
- Wood, E. J. (2008). The Social Processes of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11(1), 539–561. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.8.082103.104832>
- Wood, E. J. (2015). Social Mobilization and Violence in Civil War and their Social Legacies. In D. Della Porta & M. Diani (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199678402.013.51>
- Woodward, S. L. (2002). Economic Priorities for Successful Peace Implementation. In S. J. Stedman, D. Rothchild, & E. M. Cousens (Eds.), *Ending civil wars: The implementation of peace agreements* (pp. 141–182). Lynne Rienner.
- Zahar, M.-J. (2008). Reframing the Spoiler Debate in Peace Processes. In J. Darby & R. M. Ginty (Eds.), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Peace Processes and Post-war Reconstruction* (pp. 159–177). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230584556_13
- Zald, M., Morrill, C., & Rao, H. (2005). The Impact of Social Movements on Organizations: Environment and Responses. In G. Davis, D. McAdam, R. Scott, & M. Zald (Eds.), *Social Movements and Organizational Theory* (pp. 253–279). Cambridge University Press.
- Zartman, I. W. (1995). Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts. In I. W. Zartman (Ed.), *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*. Brookings Institution.
- Zeeuw, J. de (Ed.). (2008). *From soldiers to politicians: transforming rebel movements after civil war*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Zukerman Daly, S. (2016). *Organized violence after civil war: the geography of recruitment in Latin America*.
- zuo, cai (vera). (2015). scaling down: subnational comparative case studies in comparative politics and chinese politics. *European Political Science*, 14(3), 318–339. <https://doi.org/10.1057/eps.2015.26>