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Violence in Colombia: Building Sustainable Peace and Social Capital

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ACRONYMS

CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CISALVA	<i>Centro de Investigación Salud y Violencia</i>
CONPAPI	National Commission on Indigenous Policy
CRNV	<i>Centro de Referencia Nacional sobre Violencia</i>
DALY	Disability Adjusted Life Years
DESEPAZ	<i>Programa Desarrollo, Seguridad y Paz</i>
DGAI	Office of Indigenous Affairs
ELN	<i>Ejército de Liberación Nacional</i>
EPL	<i>Ejército Popular de Liberación</i>
FARC	<i>Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia</i>
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
INCORA	<i>Instituto Colombiano de la Reforma Agraria</i>
MAS	<i>Muerte a Secuestradores</i>
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
PNR	<i>Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación</i>
UCPI	<i>Unidad Coordinadora de Prevención Integral</i>
USAID	United States Assistance for International Development

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This report was completed in October 1998. Consequently it does not refer to the recommendations that have already been implemented by President Pastrana's administration, as part of their prioritization of peace as the country's most critical concern.

Executive Summary

Colombia, one of South America's oldest, middle-income democracies, has developed rapidly *despite* a fifty year 'simmering' civil war and increasing levels of urban and rural crime and violence. In the past decade, however, the scale and intensity of violence has changed from a marginal conflict to generalized violence that now dominates the daily lives of most citizens. As remote guerrilla activity has turned into country-wide 'war', bringing in paramilitary groups, drug cartels, and other social actors, so too the causes of violence have changed. These have included both external events such as the collapse of the Cold War, as well as internal changes relating to economic liberalization, coal and oil developments and the impact of the global trade in illicit narcotics.

Today government and civil society alike recognize that violence is *the* key development constraint. It affects the country's macro- and micro-economic growth and productivity, as well as impacting on the government's capacity to reduce the poverty, inequality and exclusion experienced by the majority of its urban and rural population. The election of the new government in August 1998 provides an important impetus to consolidate further the critical peace and development initiative begun by previous administrations. At the same time, it raises fiscal and financial questions in terms of paying for peace. This paper is intended to contribute to Colombia's effort to address the country's fundamental problem of violence. It introduces three critical issues of analytical and operational importance:

- **A conceptual framework that identifies a continuum of violence, including political, economic and social violence**
- **An assessment of the costs of violence, highlighting how violence erodes the country's capital and associated assets, especially its social capital**
- **A National Strategy for Peace and Development, comprising components at three levels – a national level peace program, sector level initiatives to integrate violence reduction into priority sectors, and municipal level social capital projects**

A conceptual framework for categorizing violence in Colombia

A conceptual framework that categorizes violence is a critical first stage in systematically understanding violence and formulating initiatives for sustainable peace. Important constraints include the fact that violence is highly complex and context specific, that perceptions about violence affect citizen well-being even when they are not borne out by statistical evidence, and finally, that community priorities about violence may differ from those of policy-makers. The conceptual framework introduces a threefold categorization of *political*, *economic* and *social violence*. Each is identified in terms of the primary motivating factor, for gaining or maintaining power through violent means, with the categories not mutually exclusive, but overlapping.

Recent violence trends in Colombia have generally worsened. Insurgent armed conflict has become more entrenched and widespread than in the past, and geographical areas with little state presence have increased. Violence increasingly affects some groups disproportionately, especially young, low-income men, both as perpetrators and victims. Women, children and indigenous groups have been disproportionately affected by violent conflict. Violence is also context specific with different parts of the

country experiencing distinct types of violence. The brutality of recent political violence obscures other types of violence, especially economic, with the drug industry exacerbating levels of violence. In urban contexts, 'social cleansing' is considered by some as an effective way to eliminate delinquents and 'undesirables'. Finally, the number of internally displaced people has increased over the last decade and is continuing to increase.

The causes of violence in Colombia

Violence in Colombia is highly complex not only because of the different categories, but also due to its multiple causes. This paper combines disparate existing theories to develop an integrated framework that identifies four different levels of causality - *structural, institutional, interpersonal and individual* - and that recognizes the mutually reinforcing role played by factors at different levels of causality. Underlying the causes of violence in Colombia is minimal state presence in many parts of the country, widespread corruption and impunity, high levels of societal acceptance of violence, and a regionally fragmented country.

The **causes of political violence** in Colombia are manifold. However, stated simplistically, they tend to revolve around such historical issues as *the legacy of political conflict*; broad structural factors such as *unequal access to economic power*, especially land and resources, and *unequal access to political power*, and causes rooted in institutional factors such as *the role of drug-related, paramilitary and guerrilla violence*.

Turning to the **causes of economic and social violence**, at the structural level these relate to *poverty, inequality and rapid growth*; at the institutional level, causes relate to both the *high levels of impunity within the justice system* and to the *lack of educational and employment opportunities*; finally, interpersonal and individual factors relate to *role of the household and family* in violence reproduction, and *situational precipitators* such as alcohol, drugs and firearms.

The costs of violence in Colombia: Eroding the country's capital and associated assets

The economic and social costs of violence are a burden for all Colombians. Despite more than a decade of research by economist *violentólogos*, these remain difficult to measure, with extensive debate over the accuracy of the different cost estimates. Although accurate measurements of the costs of violence are critical, assessments of the impact of violence on the country's capital – its stocks of assets – can also facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the situation. The paper distinguishes between four types of capital and highlights the way violence, by eroding the stocks of assets, increases the insecurity and vulnerability of Colombia's population.

- Violence erodes **physical capital** (also known as man-made or produced capital) when it reduces the country's stock of plant, equipment, infrastructure and other productive resources owned by individuals, the business sector or the country itself. Physical capital comprise those assets generally considered in financial and economic accounts.
- Violence erodes **human capital** when it limits access to education or health facilities by both users and providers; violence also affects the capacity of individuals to use their human capital by entering the labor market. Killing and death threats to rural teachers and health workers, increased health

sector costs of injuries, mental and physical disabilities, and the human capital losses of displaced people, are all serious concerns.

- Violence erodes **social capital** when it undermines trust and cooperation within formal and informal social organizations. Broadly interpreted as the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity, and trust embedded in social relations and institutions, social capital contributes to sustainable development. Violence has eroded the effectiveness of many formal social institutions, especially the judiciary, which is particularly affected by drug-related terrorism. Within communities, the erosion of social capital undermines the functions of local organizations. In some contexts, 'perverse' social capital, such as gangs and *sicarios*, create networks that service illegal activities. Violence has also eroded *household relations* as an asset when it reduces the capacity of households to operate effectively as units. In rural conflict zones, for instance, when men join guerrilla or paramilitary groups, family life is seriously disrupted both economically and socially.
- Finally, violence erodes **natural capital** when it destroys or damages the country's stocks of environmentally provided assets such as soil, forests, water and wetlands. In rural areas, land is a critical productive asset for the poor, while in urban areas, land is equally important for the provision of shelter. In Colombia the devastating environmental damage relating to oil spills due to terrorism have only recently been recognized.

Interventions to reduce violence

Throughout Colombia, there have been extensive, highly innovative interventions implemented to address violence. However, the tendency has been to target either political violence, or economic and social violence. There have also been few evaluations of existing interventions, or attempts to look across the policy spectrum, or to coordinate individual projects. Drawing on the dominant violence reduction policy approaches, the paper outlines a framework for intervention. It identifies a shift from interventions that emphasize **control**, such as the *criminal justice* approach, to those that stress **prevention**, such as the *public health* perspective, to more recent approaches that focus on **rebuilding social capital and trust** through *conflict transformation*, *human rights* and finally, the *social capital* approach.

Interventions to address political violence in Colombia are closely associated with endeavors to establish peace agreements as successive presidential administrations have shifted their strategies from partial military solutions, to negotiation of demobilization and reincorporation agendas. Concerted efforts to reach peace have straddled different political administrations. Underpinning these peace initiatives has been the formulation of a wide range of policies informed by different approaches. Conflict transformation, for instance, was attempted by all administrations from Betancur in 1982-1986, until the recent Samper government, 1994-1998. Both Betancur's National Plan for Rehabilitation, and Gaviria's 1991 Constitutional Reform placed important emphasis on rebuilding social and community institutions, while a human rights perspective was particularly important during Samper's administration, with the creation in 1997 of the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights of the United Nations.

Interventions to address economic and social violence have included an enormous range of innovative initiatives by the Colombian government and NGOs, encompassing a broad range of approaches. However, they have usually been implemented separately from interventions dealing with political violence. While some have focused independently on economic or social violence, others have addressed both types together. Important examples based on the criminal justice approach include the

Casas de Justicia, while from a public health perspective the DESEPAZ Program in Cali is well known. Despite extensive efforts to address the problem, success has been limited by the fact that most interventions have tended to focus on one particular issue, often at a small scale, with little national coordination and limited evaluation.

Recommendations: Building sustainable peace and social capital

The evidence presented in the paper indicates the urgent need for the new government to demonstrate its commitment to peace through negotiation of the appropriate peace agreements as well as the design and implementation of a comprehensive National Strategy for Peace and Development. While resolving armed conflict is a precondition for sustained peace and development, this will not automatically solve other, more prevalent forms of violence. To ensure sustainability, the causes of violence also need to be addressed, otherwise extensive interventions, however important and costly, can only be piecemeal, and are easily undermined.

Developing a National Strategy for Peace and Development should be based on a number of important principles, which include the following. First, *develop a fiscal policy to pay for peace*. Any sustainable peace initiative will bear a significant financial cost, with peace bonds, taxation and external donor assistance as some important interventions to be considered; second, *create partnerships for sustainable development*. This may include links with civil society, and the business community; third, *promote participatory debate about local-level causes and solutions to violence*. This would facilitate open debate among the major social actors on the causes of the conflict and assist in identifying local level solutions to rebuild social capital and citizenship; fourth, *develop a coordinated approach to economic and social violence reduction*. Despite the range of initiatives already implemented, a national level coordinated approach does not exist.

A National Strategy for Peace and Development seeks to control the symptoms of violence, to introduce preventative measures and to rebuild the fabric of society, particularly strengthening social capital. The Strategy has the following three critical components, or building blocks, that address the continuum of violence at different levels of causality.

- **National Level: Peace Program** that includes a pre-accord program to provide incentives for peace, as well as interventions for demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, reconstruction measures, and those to assist displaced populations.
- **Sector Level: Mainstreaming violence reduction into priority sector policies and programs** focusing on such sectors as *education*, involving, for example, curriculum review and conflict resolution programs, and the *judiciary*, to strengthen the justice system through, for instance, community based conflict resolutions programs and tribunals. Other important sectors include the *environment*, and *livelihood and job creation*, involving both rural and urban populations and dealing with issues of land, security and making a living.
- **Municipal Level: Social capital projects** to rebuild trust and social cohesion through small-scale participatory ‘bottom-up’ projects. This may include the formulation of a municipal-level strategic plans for peace and reconstruction, community-level needs assessments, as well as focused pilot projects, and the creation of municipal level task forces for peace and development to monitor the process. These decentralized projects would allow for the creation of peace and reconstruction plans that address the particular types of violence affecting specific municipalities.

I. Introduction

Colombia, one of South America's oldest and most enduring democracies, a middle-income country rich in natural and human resources, with sustained improvements in its social and economic indicators over the last decades, has developed rapidly *despite* a fifty year 'simmering' civil war, growth of drug cartels, and increasing levels of urban and rural crime and violence. With the roots of contemporary political violence in the 1948 'El Bogotazo' urban insurrection, the 1940s-1950s partisan conflict between Liberals and Conservatives, known as *La Violencia*, expanded into left-wing guerrilla insurgency through the 1960-1980 period. Until the late 1980s, serious though it was, armed conflict had only a marginal capacity to disrupt the country's economic development process. It affected primarily those involved in the conflict itself and marginal populations in remote rural areas, while urban crime and violence mainly affected the lives of low-income *barrio* dwellers rather than society at large.

In the past decade, both the scale and intensity of violence has changed such that generalized violence now dominates the daily lives of most citizens, albeit in different ways. As remote guerrilla conflict has turned into country-wide 'war', bringing in paramilitary groups, drug cartels, and further changes in the social actors involved, so too the causes of violence have changed. These have included both external events such as the collapse of the Cold War, as well as internal changes relating to economic liberalization, coal and oil developments and the impact of the global trade in illicit narcotics.

For the past thirty years, *violentólogos*, commentators from within a uniquely Colombian academic discipline involving the study of violence, have analyzed changing patterns of political violence, while since 1982, successive governments have tried both military and political solutions to reach peace with different guerrilla groups, offering programs to address the root causes of the nation's violence and guerrilla warfare. At the same time, government agencies, NGOs and private foundations have spent untold millions of pesos attempting to reduce levels of urban crime, while military and police forces have endeavored to break drug cartels.

Despite such efforts to reduce levels of violence, today government and civil society alike recognize that violence is *the* key development constraint, affecting the country's macro- and micro-economic growth and productivity, as well as reducing the government's capacity to reduce the poverty, inequality and exclusion experienced by the majority of its population in both urban and rural areas.¹ The recent election of President Pastrana and the arrival of a new government in August 1998 provides an important impetus to further develop the critical peace and development initiative begun by previous governments. At the same time it raises fiscal and financial questions in terms of paying for peace.

This paper² is intended to contribute to Colombia's effort to more effectively address the country's fundamental problem of *violencia* by introducing three critical issues of conceptual and operational relevance of particular importance today:

¹ This is well illustrated by the World Bank's 1997 Colombian Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), undertaken through a participatory approach that included consultations with civil society, that identified violence as the country's priority economic development constraint and the need for a comprehensive inter-sectoral policy on sustainable peace and development for the country. *Violence reduction*, and its counter-side, *peace and development*, were therefore identified as one of six key areas of strategic importance where the World Bank could assist Colombia in its development process.

² This paper summarizes issues addressed in the recently completed World Bank Sector Study, *Violence in Colombia: Towards Peace, Partnerships and Sustainable Development* (World Bank 1998). To prepare this sector study key background papers

- A conceptual framework that identifies a continuum of violence, including not only political violence, but also economic and social violence;
- An assessment of costs of violence, that includes both the economic and the social costs, addressing in particular the way in which violence has eroded the social fabric /social capital of local Colombian communities;
- An integrated future 'package' of interventions that takes account of these issues to assist in the complex process of reducing overall levels of violence.

II. A conceptual framework for categorizing violence in Colombia

A. A threefold categorization: Political, economic and social violence

A conceptual framework that categorizes violence is a critical first stage for systematically better understanding violence and developing sustainable peace initiatives. There are, however, a number of important constraints including the following: first, violence is both highly complex and context specific; second, perceptions about violence affect citizen well-being even when they are not borne out by statistical evidence; third, community priorities regarding the importance of different categories of violence may differ from those of politicians or policymakers; finally, any categorization by its very nature is static, in reality a continuum exists with important reinforcing linkages between different types of violence.

Building on the work of Colombian *violentólogos* and others, this paper introduces a threefold categorization of *political, economic and social violence*, identified in terms of the primary motivating factor, either conscious or unconscious, for gaining or maintaining political, economic, or social power through force or violence. Table 1 summarizes some of the common types of violence in Colombia according to this categorization. These are deliberately broad, and not necessarily mutually exclusive in terms of specific violent acts committed.³

A framework that distinguishes between political, economic, and social violence is critically important for a number of reasons. First is its capacity to provide an *integrated* approach, both conceptually and operationally, that recognizes the connections between the dynamics of different types of violence. Currently academics policymakers and project managers alike tend to focus *separately* on different types of violence and not view their impacts or causality in a holistic manner. In many contexts, urban violence is equated with delinquency, and rural violence with guerrilla warfare; interpersonal violence is rarely incorporated in the public discourse of causality and impacts, and gender analysis is limited to domestic violence and homicide victimization. This compartmentalization limits efforts to move from individual violence reduction interventions toward integrated strategies for sustainable peace.

were commissioned from experts, most of them Colombian, who constitute the foremost thinkers in their respective fields. These papers provided primary source for descriptive data, preliminary analyses, and case studies for the sector study.

³ For example, a guerrilla group may kidnap a local official to make a political statement; the same group may kidnap a wealthy landowner to generate revenue. A youth gang member commits a robbery as an initiation rite with his peer group; another youth robs for money. Violence on an interpersonal level -- a man beating his wife, neighbors in hostile argument -- can be an issue of social dominance.

Second, this framework highlights the need for *different approaches to violence reduction* based on the differing motivations of the perpetrators. Politically-motivated violence will require a negotiated peace; however, the economic dimensions of belonging to a guerrilla group require job creation for demobilized combatants. The economic issues related to the drug trade have complicated the quest for peace, whereby guerrillas use revenue-generating tactics such as “taxation” of drug traffickers which allow them financial stability. However, efforts to eliminate cocaine production will not eliminate the guerrilla forces, who will find other means to support their essentially politically motivated violence. Similarly, while economic independence through job creation may aid some battered women, it does not address the root causes of this socially-defined violence based on gender subordination. This disparity explains why many battered women are middle-class, employed, and educated.

Third, this framework assists in explaining *why interventions to reduce one type of violence may not yield results in relation to other types of violence*. Reductions in one sphere of violence can be accompanied by increases in another. For example, community policing programs have been credited with a 43 percent decline in New York City’s economic crime rates, while reports of that city’s police brutality have increased by 41 percent. In the wake of El Salvador’s peace accords and reduction in political violence, post-conflict rates of homicide and economic crime increased. For instance, deaths by violence in 1994 stood at 9,135 (164.5 per 100 million), and despite a decline to 8,047 (139 per 100 million) in 1996, this exceeded the annual average of 6,000 deaths during the civil war (Pearce 1998). Similarly, in South Africa, police data show that violent crimes have increased substantially during the democratic transition from Apartheid, especially since 1990, and particularly in relation to murder and rape (Louw 1997).

Table 1: Framework of violence

Category of violence	Definition	Manifestation
<i>Political</i>	The commission of violent acts motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, to obtain or maintain political power.	Guerrilla conflict; paramilitary conflict; political assassinations; armed conflict between political parties.
<i>Economic</i>	The commission of violent acts motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, for economic gain or to obtain or maintain economic power.	Street crime; carjacking; robbery/theft; drug trafficking; kidnapping; assaults made during economic crimes.
<i>Social</i>	The commission of violent acts motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, for social gain or to obtain or maintain social power.	Interpersonal violence, such as spouse and child abuse; sexual assault of women and children; arguments that get out of control.

B. Categorizing violence trends in Colombia

Turning to Colombia, it is important to highlight the most salient trends in violence, identifying as far as possible the different categories of violence to which these trends refer. At the outset, it should be emphasized that examination of trends of different types of violence, especially those based on statistics, are subject to widespread underreporting. This is particularly marked in relation to social violence, especially intra-family violence.

1. Some trends in violence have worsened

Using homicide rates⁴ as a proxy for violence levels, officially reported figures increased from 15 to 92 per 100,000 inhabitants between 1974 and 1995.⁵ Generally, violence levels have grown dramatically in the post-1985 period, although more recently, homicide rates in large cities have begun to decline. Less than 20 percent of homicides are categorized as 'political' in nature; recent evidence attributes 60 percent of these to paramilitary, 23.5 percent to guerrilla and 7.5 percent to military armed attack by the military (Chernick 1997). The remaining 80 percent of 'non-political' homicides are the consequence of economic violence, both organized crime (relating to drug trafficking and organized kidnapping) and unorganized delinquency (including robberies, car jacking, and kidnappings) as well as social (interpersonal) violence, particularly alcohol and firearm related deaths. While the types of violence vary between urban and rural areas, homicide rates are roughly similar. The three major cities of Bogotá, Cali and Medellín account for between 40 and 60 percent of urban homicides, while rural violence is most keenly experienced along the agricultural and natural resource frontiers and where medium-size coffee farmers predominate.

2. Insurgent armed conflict is more entrenched and widespread than at any point in the past three decades

During the past five decades the number of social actors involved in armed conflict has expanded from the guerrilla and armed forces to include drug cartels and right-wing armed paramilitary groups. This has been accompanied by increasing density - both spatially and in terms of interdependent reciprocal networks - between different actors involved. The most violent zones of the country are those in which two or more actors are in conflict particularly those with simultaneous guerrilla and paramilitary presence. This has also created a huge diversity of types of violence, manifested in different ways in various parts of the country.

3. Spatial areas with an active state presence have declined

While there is no direct or linear relationship, some areas experiencing an increase in various types of conflict have witnessed a decrease in the active presence of state institutions at the local level. Municipalities with some type of guerrilla presence increased from 17 percent in 1985 to 58 percent in 1995. If areas experiencing paramilitary, drug and armed forces activity are added, approximately 75 percent of the country is experiencing some level of armed conflict. This has resulted in a growing number of displaced people, estimated to be around a-million.

4. Violence increasingly affects some groups disproportionately

Younger, lower-income, and less educated men, are more likely to be both perpetrators and victims of homicide. National homicide rates between 1980-1995 for males aged 15-44 years increased from 29 to 394 homicides per 100,000; for females the increase was from 23 to 30 per 100,000. The homicide rate for men thus increased 13.5 times between 1980 and 1995, with shifts throughout this

⁴ The homicide rate, expressed as the number of deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, is the most commonly used indicator for crime and violence both in Colombia and internationally. Although it is the most widely used indicator, its limitations require recognition; a society may manifest considerable criminal activity and non-lethal violence with relatively low homicide rates; similarly social violence can be high and ongoing without being reflected in homicide rates.

⁵ These numbers are based on government statistical sources; CISALVA, a research NGO that collects its own data reports rates of 50/100,000 in 1980; 219.3/100,000 in 1993, and 179.9/100,000 in 1995.

period towards younger men reflected both in lethal and non-lethal injuries. In the central city delinquency areas of Bogotá, homicides reach the extraordinary level of 341 per 100,000 (Camacho and Guzmán 1997). Extremely high proportions of perpetrators and victims of urban economic and social crime are minors. In 1997, 16 percent of murder victims in Bogotá were under 18 years of age, and nearly 20,000 minors were charged with felony offenses, including 747 rapes and 3,445 other acts of social or economic violence leading to injury or death. (Ross 1998). Conversely, women and their dependent children are the group most affected by displacement. Of Colombia's internally displaced population, 58 percent are female and 75 percent are under 25 years old (Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana 1994). Indigenous communities have also been disproportionately affected by armed conflict throughout the country.

5. The brutality of recent political violence obscures other types of violence

The severity of mass politically motivated killings and human rights abuses means that economic and social violence receive less attention. Of these, economic violence is arguably the more severe and is overwhelmingly an urban problem. Reported 1996 figures from Bogotá, for instance, list homicides (65 percent), traffic accidents (20 percent) and suicides (6 percent) as causes of death. However, over the past three years there has been a decline in homicide rates - in Bogotá and Cali these have reputedly declined by 30 percent, while in Medellín they have dropped by 50 percent (Guerrero 1998a).

The majority of reported violent deaths and injuries is attributed to common delinquency. National data indicate that 12 percent of households had been victims of violence during the past year of which 10 percent were victims of robbery, 0.6 percent victims of assault, 0.6 percent victims of extortion, 0.5 percent victims of homicide, and 0.02 percent victims of kidnapping. Reported levels of social violence are relatively low compared with other types of violence. The only national survey conducted on violence against women, for example, found that 19.3 percent had experienced some form of violence. Of these, only 27 percent reported physical and sexual assaults by their partners to the authorities. In turn, a national survey on children reported 4.3 percent to be physically abused and 9.7 percent emotionally abused at some time, yet less than 2 percent of this number are reported to *Medicina Legal* in a given year.

6. The drug industry exacerbates levels of violence

One critical factor generating economic and political violence in Colombia is the extensive illegal drug industry. As one of Latin America's three significant coca cultivation countries, an important processing center, and increasingly a consumption country, Colombia experiences a number of different types of drug-related violence that vary both in significance and intensity: first, violence is linked to the organized crime around drug production and trafficking. This includes violent attacks to prevent aerial eradication, drug-distribution violence relating to inter-gang killings, and assassinations of prominent political and judicial figures, widely associated with the Medellín and Cali cartel and most frequent during the 1989-93 period; second, violence is linked to the militarization of the fight against drugs which has re-legitimized the domestic role of military forces, and served to blur the distinction between the respective roles of military and police, and national boundaries as legal entities; third, disorganized violence occurs around distribution and consumption when drug addicts need money for their drug habit or street dealers are challenged for their profits. Recent analysis suggests that the long-term sustainability of guerilla activity since the early 1980s is closely associated with their increasing involvement with the drug industry.

7. “Social cleansing” is considered by some as the fastest and most effective approach to eliminate delinquents and other undesirables

“Social cleansing”, defined as the eradication of an identity type to maintain neighborhood stability through homicide, either individual or collective, targets such groups as criminals, drug addicts, youth gangs, street children, garbage-pickers, homosexuals, prostitutes, and homeless people. The objective is to reduce criminal activity, particularly property crimes, with the killing a consequence of perpetrators’ perception that the victims are impossible to rehabilitate, the belief that state agencies are not equipped to address the problem judicially, and the high level of impunity of delinquency and homicide (Rojas 1996). Copied from Brazil and Uruguay, Colombian “social cleansing” was first reported in Pereira in 1979, where criminals’ faces were stained with a non-removable red paint; discovery of corpses followed soon thereafter. In the 1980s at least 500 street children were assassinated in Colombia, an estimated 300 in Medellín, with the remainder in Bogotá and Pereira. During 1988-93, 183 victims of “social cleansing” were reported in Bogotá. The breakdown of the identity of the victims was as follows: 35 percent were alleged criminals; 24 percent drug addicts; 17.5 percent homeless; 8 percent street children; bazuco users, homosexuals, and prostitutes totaled another 4 percent. The single most important group were in the 16-20 year old age group (25 percent) and male. At least 40 groups for “social cleansing” have been identified in Colombia, including *Muerte a Gamines*, *Mano Negra*, and *Los Cucas*. These organized groups reportedly account for 81 percent of “social cleansing homicide,” while police account for the remaining 19 percent (Rojas 1996).

8. The number of internally displaced people has increased over the last decade and is still growing

Displaced people fleeing from political violence – relating to the guerrillas, paramilitary groups and the armed forces – contribute significantly to exaggerated urban expansion. Displacement occurs throughout the country, but levels are highest in areas such as Urabá, Magdalena Medio, and Ariari – all localities with high levels of conflict. A 1995 study reported that 600,000 persons had been forced to leave rural areas during the previous decade (Meertens and Segura 1996); other sources indicate that since 1985, some 920,000 people have been displaced (*Defensoria del Pueblo* 1996). The Presidential Council for Human Rights assesses that the current number of displaced has reached one million, about 2.5 percent of country’s population; other sources estimate some 1,200,000 displaced peoples in 1998 (Reyes 1998; CODHES 1998). An estimated 35 percent of displacement is caused by persecution from illegal paramilitary organizations, 17 percent by the armed forces and police, 24 percent by armed opposition groups, and in 24 percent of the cases, the internally displaced were not able to identify those responsible (Amnesty International 1997).

Rural families account for the majority of displaced persons. At least 31 of 100 displaced households are headed by women, and 76 percent of those are headed by widows, or women abandoned during displacement who have the responsibility for an average of four children (CODHES 1997). An estimated 7 out of 10 displaced households have moved to urban areas, most commonly to the provincial capitals of the regions of expulsion: Medellín and Montería for those from Urabá and Atlantic coast, Barrancabermeja for those from Magdalena Medio, and Villavicencio for those from the Eastern Plains.

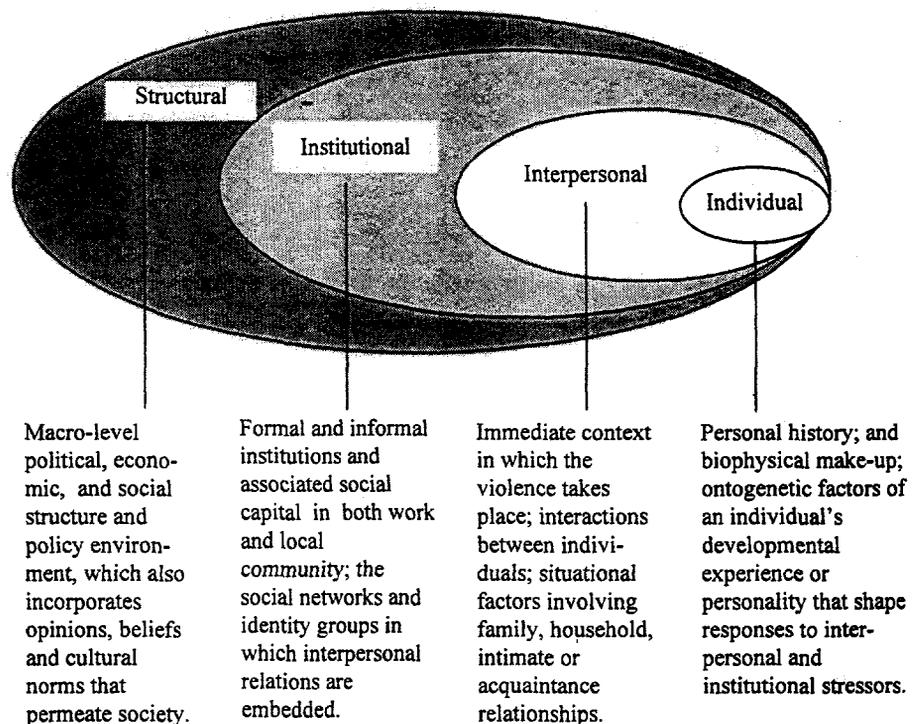
III. The causes of violence in Colombia

A. An integrated framework for causality

Violence in Colombia is highly complex not only because of the different categories that are present, but also because of its multiple causes. Empirical evidence indicates that all individuals are not equally violent, that communities vary in their levels of conflict, and that across societies violence tolerance levels differ.¹ Circumstances relating to the individual, the family, the community, and the broader national context combine together to play a role in violence perpetration or victimization.

Despite the wealth of descriptive evidence on violence, theoretical analysis of the specific *causes* of violence is both limited and fragmented. Theories of the determinants of causality tend to reflect the professional disci-

Figure 1. An integrated framework for violence causality



pline informing the debate, and therefore are often compartmentalized and disarticulated with each other, perpetuating a uni-dimensional understanding of violence (see Annex 1).

In seeking to combine the disparate theories of causality, this paper adopts an integrated framework that identifies four different levels of violence causality: *structural*, *institutional*, *interpersonal* and *individual*. This framework, illustrated in Figure 1, recognizes the mutually reinforcing role played by factors at different levels of causality. Drawing on the so-called “ecological model”⁶, it seeks to demonstrate that no one level or cause is singly deterministic or wholly explanatory but, when combined with one or more additional causal variables, may yield a situation where someone

⁶ First used to explain human development (Bronfenbrenner 1977), the “ecological model” has been applied to elucidate the complexities of violence etiology. Used variously to explain child abuse (Belsky 1980), sexual coercion (Brown 1995) and domestic violence (Heise 1998), the ecological model is a multi-level framework that incorporates biophysical, psychological and social factors at the individual level as well as external factors that act upon the individual.

commits, or is victimized by, violent acts. Applications of this framework are not necessarily confined to a single manifestation of violence, nor do they focus primarily on fomenting factors or risk factors, for violence victimization or perpetration. The integrated framework is sufficiently flexible to identify the pre-determinants of political, economic and social violence without reducing the analysis to an assessment of a sole cause of any single type of violence.

B. The causes of violence in Colombia

The causes of violence in Colombia are both multifaceted and complex. Not only are there three different types of violence, but each has different, yet intersecting causes. In addition, these causal factors operate at different levels – structural, institutional, interpersonal and individual. This section examines some of the causes of political, economic and social violence in Colombia, and how these are manifested at different levels.

As brief context, it is important to outline some of the conditions which underpin all three types of violence in Colombia: first is the minimal presence of the state throughout much of the national territory; second, the state has arguably criminalized some forms of social and political protest, while simultaneously being inconsistent in dealing with violence; third, high levels of corruption and impunity exist within state institutions; fourth, there are high levels of societal acceptance of violence as a means to resolve disputes; fifth, Colombian society is regionally focused, historically and geographically, resulting in economic, political and social fragmentation; sixth, the state has delegated authority to local power holders even where there is limited state presence; finally, there is the complex interplay between rural and urban violence.

1. The causes of political violence⁷

As with all types of violence, the causes of political violence are manifold. However, they tend to revolve around the **historical legacy of violence**, together with **unequal access to economic power** (especially land and natural resources), **unequal access to political power**, and the **role of drug-related, guerrilla and paramilitary violence**. During the past five decades, as the number of social and political actors has multiplied, and the interrelations among them has become more complex, so the spatial and regional density of conflict has worsened. As a result, the constraints associated with resolving the conflict have increased (see Annex 2).

Historical legacy of violence: Historically, the roots of Colombia's political conflict extend back to the 19th century with the violent confrontations between the Conservative and Liberal Parties. However, the start of contemporary violence is closely identified with the famous 1948 *El Bogotazo* - the violent response to the assassination of the Liberal politician Jorge Eliécer Gaitán. Between 1946 and 1964, *La Violencia* cost 200,000 lives (Oquist 1978), although its impact was much greater – over two million peasants were forced from their land, business, institutional and family networks were destroyed, and the population was plagued with the widespread proliferation of revenge killings.

Unequal access to economic resources, including land and natural resources: At a broadly structural level, unequal access to land and natural resources is thought to be an important cause of political violence in Colombia. Despite numerous attempts to address these inequalities through agrarian reform in the last three decades, the state has often exacerbated rather than improved the situation.

⁷ This section draws heavily on Reyes 1998, Chernick 1997, and Deas 1998.

Related to this has been the steady expansion of left-wing guerrilla activity which took root in remote communities, often in areas lacking in active state presence. Among the 'first generation' guerrilla groups comprising a range of dissident Liberal factions, peasants, and radical students, were the pro-Soviet FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*), the Maoist EPL (*Ejército Popular de Liberación*), and the pro-Cuban ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*). In order to expand their area of operation, the guerrilla often capitalized on the discontent of peasants who lacked land, or where agrarian reform had failed. Guerrilla activity, extortion and kidnapping has severely undermined the landowning class and contributed substantially to the political violence in rural areas. However, it has not broken the domination of the landowners, nor brought about more equitable patterns of landholding.

Unequal access to political power: Interrelated with agrarian issues at the structural level are perceived inequalities in access to political power resulting from, for instance, the *Frente Nacional*, (1958-1974) which excluded non-traditional political groups. In the 1970s, 'second generation' guerrilla groups such as the M-19, were founded on an agenda to confront traditional party control and prevent suspected presidential fraud. Other groups, including 'armed social movements' such as *Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame* in Cauca, organized indigenous communities into self-defense groups for land invasions and armed activities for indigenous rights. Although guerrilla groups still rally around inequalities in political participation, the government has in fact negotiated numerous individual peace agreements with some smaller guerrilla movements, such as the M-19, as well as making significant efforts to widen political participation. These include various decentralizing measures and the 1991 Constitutional Reforms; the latter has been especially important in terms of granting and widening constitutional rights to indigenous groups and Afro-Colombians. Nevertheless, traditional guerrilla groups remain strong, augmented by urban militias based in poor neighborhoods.

The role of drug-related, guerrilla and paramilitary violence: Also central to analysis of the causes of political violence at the institutional level is the debate over the relationship between guerrilla groups, the peasant coca producers and the drug-traffickers. In the late 1970s, many Colombians argued that the FARC did not oppose coca production by *campesinos* in the eastern plains and the Amazon basin because of the risk to their peasant power base. Instead, they regulated the illicit market of coca by imposing obligations and taxes upon farmers and a range of intermediary production processes and shipping. This has since extended to most productive commercial operations in the Colombian countryside, earning millions of dollars annually for the FARC and ELN from the coca/cocaine boom, kidnapping and other types of extortion. Paramilitary forces have also grown, especially the civil defense groups funded by landowners, emerald magnates and drug traffickers, which have arguably increased due to the failure of successive governments to reach a solution with the guerrilla groups. In the 1980s, the drug-traffickers also formed their own territorial security forces such as the MAS (*Muerte a Secuestradores* or "Death to Kidnappers") whose targets were guerrilla fighters and their families. In the 1990s, paramilitary activity became more diverse with some groups falling under the rubric of rural security cooperatives – such as Samper's effort to create more civilian security through CONVIVIR. All these developments highlight the violent struggle between all groups for control of coca as a financial resource for both the insurgency and the counterinsurgency. In addition, they have had important implications for land ownership and internal displacement, with large holdings increasing between 1984-1997 from one third to one half of the land surface as they fall into the hands of drug-traffickers and guerrilla (Reyes, 1998).

2. The causes of economic and social violence in Colombia

As highlighted earlier, the economic and social causes of violence in Colombia have received less attention than the political causes of violence. This section therefore reviews some examples of these causes of violence, again identifying them at different levels. The most important relate to **poverty, inequality, and rapid growth**, together with **high levels of impunity within the justice system**, the **lack of educational and employment opportunities**, the **role of the household and family in violence reproduction**, and finally, **situational precipitators** such as easy access to alcohol, drugs, and firearms.

Poverty, inequality, and rapid growth: At the structural level, poverty may act as a precursor to violence, particularly economic violence, in which the poor resort to violent action for material gain. With poverty levels in Colombia rising between 1992 and 1995 (Oxford Analytica Brief, 1997; World Bank 1994), this provides a context which encourages violence to occur. Being poor, however, is not a determinant of violent behavior. Some argue that inequality, not poverty, is an underlying cause, suggesting that the most violent areas in Colombia are those of greatest wealth, especially in natural resources (Faynzilber et al. 1998). In relation to this, others argue that violence is associated with rapid economic growth; poverty and inequality are often associated with rates of violence only in the context of population change, urbanization and industrialization (Sampson and Lauritsen 1994). Depending on the theoretical perspective, violence is said to result from lack of adaptation of rural migrants to cities where educational or employment opportunities are scarce (see below), or as a form of resistance among economically and socially disadvantaged groups (Rogers, 1989). At the interpersonal and individual levels it is sometimes argued that in situations of rapid change, societal disorganization may mean that people have fewer common bonds and thus are more likely to (re)act violently.

High levels of impunity and lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms within the justice system: At the institutional level, weaknesses in both formal and informal institutions can contribute to social and economic violence. Especially significant in Colombia are high levels of impunity in the justice system. When the system is weak, then deterrence fails to prevent violent crimes. Indeed, deterrence has been shown to have a significant inverse relationship to Colombia's levels of violent crime both at the macro- and micro-level (Fajnzylber, et al. 1998). Furthermore, corruption in one area often resonates in others, usually linking the malfunctioning of the judicial system with economic gains associated with the drug-trade and guerrilla activity (Bejarano et al. 1997; Rubio 1997c). Therefore, as the judicial sector continues to be ineffectual in meting out justice, Colombians are increasingly taking justice into their own hands, with alarming numbers of revenge killings and "social cleansing" massacres (Klevens 1998). Reported figures for these types of killings have increased steadily in the last ten years, with particularly high concentrations in urban areas in the departments of Valle (30 percent of the total), followed by Antioquia, and the Central District (Human Rights Watch/Americas 1994; Rojas 1996).

Lack of educational and employment opportunities: At the institutional level, lack of access to education, coupled with limited job opportunities, may have contributed to a burgeoning criminal market and violence among youth in particular in Colombia. Underpinning this are limitations in availability and quality of primary and secondary education (World Bank 1994). Furthermore, improvements in education alone will not address the causes of economic and social violence without viable employment opportunities. In rural areas of Colombia, for example, under-resourced schools offer few incentives for youth, many of whom may instead turn to the guerrilla as their sole employment option. In urban areas, drug traffickers shrewdly recruit the more successful secondary school students, who realize that area stigma, depressed wages and a precarious investment climate limit their ability to secure employment, especially in poorer neighborhoods. In terms of secondary enrollment rates, Colombia's national trends mirror international findings where the average number of years of schooling of the population appear to

be positively (yet weakly) associated with higher levels of homicide (Fajnzylber et al. 1998; CISALVA 1997). In addition, recent studies suggests an increase in levels of human capital among the criminal population.⁸ Indeed, lack of economic opportunities tends to channel entrepreneurial spirit and human capital into better-remunerated, illegal activities (Rubio, 1998).⁹

The role of the household and the family in violence reproduction: At the interpersonal and individual levels, the family is the primary institution for the transmission and reproduction of social norms. The role of the family in perpetuating violence may be a precursor to violent behavior, especially child and partner abuse. For example, leading Colombian experts on child abuse believe that abusive child-rearing patterns are responsible for transmission of trauma, of the growth of a sub-culture of violence through socialization processes and interpersonal relationships of individuals living in similar conditions (Ross 1998). It is important to note, however, that while belonging to a violent household may negatively influence behavior in children, it is not deterministic. Therefore, while the relationship between physical punishment and abuse is not clear, it still conveys a message that violence is acceptable, normal and necessary (Klevens, 1998; Bayón and Sierra 1997; CISALVA 1997). According to Colombian child abuse experts, many juvenile offenders are “charged with hate,” originating from early abuse at home (Ross 1998). In terms of domestic and sexual violence in the home, a 1989 study in Cali found that partners and blood relatives were involved to a high degree in the practice of sexual violence against women (Mesquita da Rocha, 1997). This not only leads to fragmentation of household structures, but also to the loss of support functions which may create a context whereby children may be more likely to become involved in violent activities as adults (Moffit 1993).

Situational precipitators such as alcohol, drugs and firearms: Again dealing with individual and interpersonal levels, the role of ‘situational precipitators’ such as alcohol, drug consumption and use of firearms may act as a catalyst in potentially violent situations. Among the most important in Colombia is alcohol consumption, which has increased between 1993 and 1997. While more common among men, alcohol abuse is increasing among women and the very young (Ross, 1998). Alcohol abuse is linked with various types of social violence, especially interpersonal feuds, acquaintance violence, and partner abuse through ‘binge drinking’ (CRNV 1995; Profamilia 1995). There is also an association between early drinking, poly-drug dependency and juvenile violence (Ministerio de Salud 1997). Turning to drug consumption, while the relationship between this and aggression is inconsistent, drug use doubles the chances of committing a violent crime (Harrison and Gfroerer 1992; Valdez et al. 1995). Outreach workers with street people in Bogotá believe that youths involved in delinquency are, virtually without exception, substance abusers, where it may provide both the effect of intoxication, but also a source of self-esteem. Although there is debate over the role that alcohol and drugs play, evidence suggests that among those with a tendency towards violent behavior, this contributes to violence (AMA Council on Scientific Affairs 1993). Finally, gun ownership or carrying a gun may lead to violence or at least to a fatal outcome in a violent situation. In Colombia, 75 percent of all homicides are handgun fatalities (Klevens 1998). In one study, carrying a gun (or even pretending to carry one) was strongly associated with aggression (Duque 1997).

The examples outlined in this section highlight the multidimensionality and complexity of the causes of political, economic and social violence. While these types and their causes are presented as

⁸ For example, the proportion of university-educated persons among convicted criminals has quintupled in two decades, increasing from 1.2 percent in 1972 to 5.9 percent in 1993 (Rubio 1997b).

⁹ For example, estimated per capita income for guerrillas in 1995 amounted to US\$70,000 per capita compared to the national per capita income of US\$1,800 and per capita military expenditure of US\$900 (Granada 1995).

discrete categories, in reality they are all interrelated. Given that violence permeates the core of Colombian society, economy and culture, it is perhaps not surprising that the costs are so high, or that violence is seriously eroding the capital and associated assets of the country.

IV. The costs of violence in Colombia: Eroding the country's capital and associated assets

The economic and social costs of violence are a burden for all Colombians.¹⁰ Despite more than a decade of research by economist *violentólogos* these remain difficult to measure, with an extensive debate as to the accuracy of different cost estimates. In the context of macro-economic deterioration, with rising rates of inflation, unemployment, and fiscal deficits, and where the relationship between economic insecurity and crime and violence has become a critical public concern, it is important to understand the current direct and indirect consequences of violence at various levels.

While accurate measurements of the costs of violence are critical, assessments of the impacts of violence on the country's capital - its stocks of assets - can also facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the situation. This paper distinguishes between four types of capital: *physical*, *human*, *social* and *natural*, each with a number of associated assets¹¹ (see Box 1). To identify the costs of sustained high levels of violence to Colombian society, it is useful to also highlight the links between vulnerability and asset ownership. The more assets that individuals, households and communities can acquire and the better they manage them, the less vulnerable they are. The more their assets are eroded, the greater their insecurity and consequently, their levels of poverty. Table 2 summarizes some of the main findings identified in terms of different kinds of capital.

Box 1. Four kinds of capital and their associated assets

Physical capital (also known as **produced** or **man-made capital**) comprises the country's stock of plant, equipment, infrastructure and other productive resources owned by individuals, the business sector or the country itself.

Human capital includes investments in education, health and the nutrition of individuals; labor is one of the most critical assets linked to investments in human capital; health status determines people's capacity to work; skill and education determine their returns to labor.

Social capital is embedded in social institutions, both formal and informal, that are critical for a society to function; at the local level it is consolidated through reciprocity within communities and households based on trust; and strengthened by both the density and heterogeneity of informal networks and associations. Household relationships, for instance are an important informal institution for pooling income and sharing consumption.

Natural capital includes the stocks of environmentally provided assets such as soil, atmosphere, forests, minerals, water and wetlands. In rural communities land is a critical productive asset for the poor; while in urban areas land for shelter is also a critical productive asset.

Sources: Serageldin 1996; Moser 1996; Moser 1998

This sections briefly highlights some of the economic findings on the costs of violence in Colombia, and then outline the findings of qualitative, descriptive studies that elucidate the ways in which political, economic and social violence has depleted investment in assets linked to the different types of capital at national, regional and local community level.

¹⁰ This sections draws heavily on Klevens 1998 and Rubio 1998.

¹¹ This draws on recent work on sustainable economic, environmental and social development (Serageldin and Steer 1994; Serageldin 1996) as well as on the asset vulnerability framework (Moser 1996; Moser 1998)

Table 2 : Summary findings of different studies on the costs of violence¹²

Costs of violence to different kinds of capital	Summary findings
Physical capital	<p>From 1991 to 1996, net costs associated with urban violence and armed conflict totaled 18.5 percent GDP, representing a yearly average of 3.1 percent GDP (Trujillo and Badel 1998).</p> <p>Estimated expenditures on private security total 1.4 percent of GNP (<i>Comisión de Racionalización del Gasto y de las Finanzas Públicas</i> 1996, as cited in Rubio, 1998).</p> <p>Over the past decade, attacks on infrastructure total approximately 1 percent of GNP (Trujillo and Badel 1998).</p> <p>With estimated values of up to US\$5-6 billion per year, Colombia's drug money represents half the value of all legitimate exports (Kalmanovitz, 1990).</p> <p>Thirty-one percent of businesses and 10 percent of households reported victimization by robbery and, seeking protection from further losses due to stolen or damaged property, Colombia invests up to 15 percent of its GNP on security measures (DANE 1997).</p>
Physical / human capital	<p>Total costs associated with guerrilla conflict, including private and public expenditures and human capital costs, averaged over 4 percent of GDP from 1990 to 1994 (Granada and Rojas 1995).</p>
Human capital	<p>Colombia loses an estimated 4 percent of its GNP annually as part of the human cost of homicides (Lodoño, 1996).</p> <p>Colombia loses an estimated 1 percent of its GNP annually as part of the human cost of homicides (Trujillo and Badel, 1998).</p> <p>Twenty-five percent of the health burden (calculated in disability adjusted life years, or DALYs) is attributable to intentional injuries, compared with a 3 percent average for all of Latin America (Ministerio de Salud, 1994).</p> <p>Health care expenditures for victims of violence is an estimated 1 percent of the total cost of violence (Trujillo and Badel, 1998).</p>
Social capital	<p>Public spending on security and judicial systems is currently around 5 percent of the GNP, reflecting a rise of 2 percent of GNP during the 1990s (<i>Comisión de Racionalización del Gasto y de las Finanzas Públicas</i> 1996).</p> <p>Resources destined for the military and police, which grew by some 4.5 percent in real terms during the second half of the 1980s, grew by a little less than 15 percent total in real terms in the last three years (Rubio, 1998).</p>
Natural capital	<p>Between 1986 and 1997, Ecopetrol registered 699 attacks on oil pipelines; for every 100 barrels of crude oil spilled as a consequence of guerrilla attack, only 25 to 30 barrels are recovered (Trujillo and Badel, 1998).</p>

¹² Note that figures expressed as percentage GNP or GDP cannot be numerically aggregated, given that different methodologies, indicators, and data sources were used in each calculation.

A. Macroeconomic costs of violence

The growing body of literature on the costs of violence to Colombia clearly indicates that over the last two decades, Colombia has sustained significant losses due to deaths, disabilities, and “transferals” resulting from property crimes (CISALVA 1997; Departamento Nacional de Planeación 1998; Granada y Rojas 1997; Rubio, 1998; Trujillo and Badel 1998). Violence, primarily homicide and kidnapping, also has a negative impact on investment. In particular, violence has a greater effect on investment decisions than on production decisions (*Departamento Nacional de Planeación*, 1998). When indicators for human capital and homicide rates are factored into the traditional equations for calculating inflation and the capital costs of investment, there was a negative and significant impact of violence on investment in Colombia. For example, if Colombia’s violence could be reduced to levels comparable to those throughout Latin America, the relationship between investment and GNP could reach levels now seen in countries with high levels (i.e. 30 percent) of economic growth (Parra 1997).

Nevertheless, because Colombia’s civil war has been low-intensity relative to other Latin American conflicts, it has been suggested that political violence has had comparatively little influence to date on Colombia’s economic performance. While there are short-term correlations of war intensity with private investment and productivity, long-term growth may not be significantly affected. The coca boom of the 1980s and the oil boom of the early 1990s have been cited as reasons for covering the losses in growth due to increasing violence (Ahrends 1998).

Variability among these and other findings (see Table 2) is an overall indication that cost calculations are difficult to assess and methodological challenges remain. While many results are expressed as percentages of GNP or GDP, they do not imply that, had these losses not occurred, GNP would have increased by that percentage. Furthermore, these figures cannot be numerically aggregated, as different methodologies were employed to generate each analysis. Rather, these figures are useful for assessing the magnitude of loss in terms relative to total GNP and are not intended as expressions of exact financial costs.

In many sectors detailed accounting and cost analyses are virtually non-existent. Expenditure assessments of the police, judiciary, penal system and armed forces are constrained by serious problems of access to information. Reliable cost figures for paramilitary groups are also unavailable. However, media sources estimate approximately US\$500 per month. It is reasonable to assume that their numbers have grown alongside those of the guerilla. Figures for 1995 estimate per capita income for the guerilla (FARC and ELN) as US\$70,000; for the armed forces as US\$900; and nationally as US\$1800 (Granada and Rojas 1997).

B. Violence and the erosion of physical capital

Violence erodes *physical capital*, (also known as man-made or produced capital) when it reduces the country’s stock of plant, equipment, infrastructure and other productive resources owned by individuals, the business sector or the country itself. Physical capital comprise those assets generally considered in financial and economic accounts.

Both *banking and taxation* are affected, albeit indirectly, by illegal violence linked to the drug industry. Drug syndicates generate profits in enormous amounts of cash, which, to be useful, must pass

through legitimate international banking or commercial channels. With estimated values of up to US\$5-6 billion per year, Colombia's drug money represents half the value of all legitimate exports (Kalmanovitz, 1990). 'Dirty' capital not only tends to displace 'clean' capital in business and industry but also to precipitate a flight of clean capital abroad, thus increasing the relative importance and power of the drug entrepreneurs (Thoumi, 1994). The very size of transactions makes them difficult to conceal from vigilant banking systems. Drug money also affects the tax system, where the Colombian custom service estimates 88 percent of all whiskey consumed in Colombia enters the country illegally through a system run by drug traffickers. Untaxed alcohol not only brings drug profits back unchecked but cheats the state of income. In addition, by making cheaper spirits available this situation contributes to the country's already serious alcohol abuse problem.

Costs associated with violent attacks on *infrastructure*, especially petroleum and electrical installations, roads and airports, are mounting. In the last decade, guerrilla forces have launched approximately 700 attacks on the petroleum industry's installations and infrastructure. While the environmental impact includes the contamination of water supplies and damage to productive lands (see below), cost analyses are limited to repair and replacement costs for property and materials, labor costs of clean-ups, and estimated costs of spilled petroleum. For the coal industry, the attacks have led to lost sales, high repair costs, and shipping delays. The electrical power industry has suffered over 100 attacks against its infrastructure in the past five years, resulting in numerous direct power shortages to the productive sector in addition to extensive repair costs.

As Colombia's police and judicial institutions weaken, the *privatization of security* is a growing phenomenon in both rural and urban areas, increasing production costs to the private sector. Information on legal and registered businesses alone shows that, since 1980, there has been a greater increase in personnel working in the private security sector than for the National Police. In 1980, Colombia had 2.5 policemen for every private security agent; by 1995 this ratio had dropped to 1-to-1 (Ospina 1997). As private security and judicial services spread, private security operatives of one neighborhood often become the principal source of crime and violence in adjacent areas (Jaramillo 1993; *Corporación Región* 1997). This situation is aggravated when the private security groups have contacts with organized crime, and when there is social acceptance of the notion that the protectors of one neighborhood are allowed to wreak havoc in another.

C. Violence and the erosion of human capital

Violence erodes *human capital* when it limits access to education or health facilities by both users and providers; violence also affects the capacity of individuals to use their human capital by entering the labor market.

The costs of violence to both *education and health* are a critical problem. Increasingly, violence negatively affects access to, and quality of, education. Killings and death threats to both rural teachers and health workers by guerrilla and paramilitary groups have led to the abandonment of many rural facilities across the country. (Parra et al. 1997). Recent studies in Bogotá show that conflict among neighbors -- family conflicts or scandals, the presence of gangs, neighborhood drug use, and prostitution activities in the neighborhood -- had a significant effect on school dropout rates (Knaul 1997). Elevated school dropout rates were also associated with domestic violence, abuse, or the presence of alcohol or drug use within the family (Knaul 1997). Further studies indicate that 14 percent of students had stopped attending night school for fear of street or public transportation crime victimization, while 25 percent of

Colombians who used to work at night reportedly left these jobs for similar reasons of insecurity – with the number of youth working at night dropping by one third (Cuéllar de Martínez 1997).

In some regions, doctors and nurses have problems maintaining a neutral position in relation to armed conflict. As with teachers, when health workers become targets of death threats and assassinations, the result is often the abandonment of health posts and clinics. Violence is creating an added burden for the health sector, with trauma care consuming an important proportion of health resources. This includes not only physical injuries and disability caused by violence, but also the psychological consequences of victimization or even witnessing violence among adults, which ranges from emotional stress to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The human capital of *displaced populations* can be seriously eroded; many lose access to health and social services when they move to the big cities. For those who arrive in Medellín, for example, 23 percent have access to some sort of health care, while in the expulsion area of Urabá the figure is approximately 87 percent (Angarita and Osorio 1998; *Instituto de Estudios Regionales* 1997). Their *labor* as an asset is eroded; a 1995 study of pre- and post-displacement unemployment rates showed male rates increasing from 6.2 percent (when most worked in rural agriculture) to 34 percent (when they had relocated on the urban periphery); comparable female rates show an increase from 6.5 percent to 19.2 percent (Meertens and Segura-Escobar 1996) Women use domestic work experience to find jobs as domestic servants or laundry women, or resort to street begging, and occasionally to prostitution.

D. Violence and the erosion of social capital

Violence erodes *social capital* when it reduces trust and cooperation within formal and informal social organizations and their members. Social capital is the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity, and trust embedded in social relations, social structures, and societies' institutional arrangements which enable its members to achieve their individual and community objectives (Narayan 1998).¹³ This broad definition subsumes both social capital at the micro-institutional level (such as communities and households) as well as referring to the rules and regulations governing formalized institutions in the market place, the political system and civil society (North 1990; Olson 1982).

The importance of social capital relates to its recognized contribution to sustainable development – and the evidence that the size and density of social networks and institutions, as well as the nature of interpersonal interactions, significantly affects the efficiency and sustainability of development processes (Putnam 1993). Amongst the factors that erode trust and reciprocity – the social capital – one of the most important is violence (Moser 1998; Moser and Holland 1997). This can occur as much in formal social institutions, and informal community level institutions as in households.

1. Formal social institutions

Violence has severely eroded faith in the relevance and *effectiveness* of many social institutions as a consequence of both human rights violations and a reported 98 percent impunity rate. The growing concern that judicial, educational, health, media, and security institutions are no longer viable is testing the institution of democracy. Of particular importance is the violence-linked drug industry that has sought to erode the state by corrupting institutions and dividing the population.

¹³ In this very new area of analytical research definitions of social capital vary. Putnam (1993) defines it more narrowly as the informal and organized reciprocal networks of trusts and norms embedded in the social organization of communities, with social institutions both horizontal and hierarchical in structure.

The effect of drug trafficking on the *judicial system* is a primary example of the impact of violent crime on institutions, where narco-terrorism, threats and acts of kidnapping and assassination have influenced the administration of justice and changes to the penal code to benefit them. Corruption of the judicial system has manifested itself, for instance, in the arbitrary dismissal of evidence against, or the release of, well known drug traffickers. The influence of guerrilla and paramilitary groups on the judicial system is less well documented, although some municipal-level studies indicate that the presence of armed organizations exert an effect upon the workings of the judicial system (Peñate 1991, 1998; Uribe, 1992, as cited in Rubio, 1998).

Continued violence in the form of death threats, kidnappings and assassinations has created an understandable climate of fear, anxiety and mutual distrust among civil society actors. In a recent survey 22 percent of a representative sample of Colombians feel that they were personally in danger (DANE 1997). Fear of victimization modifies behavior patterns, such as avoiding dangerous places and times, participating in community activities or not going out alone (Warr 1994). Violence affects the *communications media*, a key actor in providing information to an informed democratic civil society. Systematic threats and attacks against the media have been meant to alter media behavior and information content. In a broader context, this alarming trend effectively suppresses “the voice” of civil society institutions to participate effectively and peacefully in the political decisions at community and national levels (Quintero and Jimeno 1993).

2. Informal community-level institutions and ‘perverse’ social capital

The capacity for community-level organizations to function depends on levels of cohesion as well as personal safety and the ability to meet locally. In Colombian cities, epidemiological studies and police figures show that murder and violence are clustered in specific delinquency areas, lead by Bogotá’s central barrio of Santafé followed by Kennedy and Ciudad Bolívar - with its high concentrations of prostitution, street crime and drug dealing, low income housing, unemployment, single parent families and school desertion. These indicators contribute to the creation of a cultural climate in which violence and delinquency are normative.

In some instances, violence seems to contribute to the creation of “perverse” social capital, in which networks, contacts and associations are created in the service of illegal activities (Rubio 1997b). *Gang involvement* is a primary example where young people, bereft of strong family and community support form mutually reinforcing groups. In many neighborhoods, gangs form the main pole of socialization for children, who join as young as 12 or 13. In Medellín, for instance, by 1990 there were 120 youth gangs, involving approximately 3,000 youths with an average of aged 16 years. (Rodgers 1998). Actively involved in robbery, theft, drug consumption (marijuana, bazuco, cocaine), and assaults, and at war with rival groups, gangs provide an ideal *sicario* (paid killer) training. In some neighborhoods they protect their neighbors, committing crimes elsewhere; in others they prey on their neighbors, creating a climate of fear (Human Rights Watch/Americas 1994). In some contexts, youth gangs have developed strong symbiotic interrelationships with the drug cartels, who recruit them as *sicarios* to confront rival drug groups

3. Household relations and social capital

Violence has eroded *household relations* as an asset when it reduces the capacity of households to effectively function as a unit. In rural conflict zones where many men have joined illegal groups, whether the guerrilla or paramilitary, family life is seriously disrupted with high levels of stress. In poor urban poor communities many women have identified a direct link between male unemployment, alcohol

abuse, and increased domestic violence. In the case of internally displaced populations, research shows that women are more vulnerable than men at the moment of eviction, when they are exposed to unexpected widowhood, threats, clandestine action, flight, and separation from their homes. While men, in contrast, seem better equipped to cope at such times, the reverse is true when displaced household restructure their lives; then the impact is greater for men who become unemployed and experience a loss of status as breadwinners and a rupture of their sense of masculine identity. Women seem better equipped to develop support networks to continue the routines of daily survival and find new ways of earning an income, creating social capital not with other women originating from the same area, but with those sharing the same history of displacement.¹⁴

Finally, sustained conflict, arbitrary killings of suspected guerrilla sympathizers and widespread death threats have systematically reduced trust between *neighbors and communities* across the country – further eroding social capital. Recent evidence shows higher levels of participation in community action groups in less violent areas, and lower levels in more violent areas. (Cuéllar de Martínez 1997). In response to the statement that “the use of violence is never justifiable to achieve political goals”, 62 percent of residents in the most peaceful zones of Colombia claimed to be “totally in agreement” compared with 37 percent in the most violent zones. In the most peaceful zones, 70 percent of residents said they would “definitely not want a neighbor who had committed a crime or murder,” compared to 63 percent in more violent zones. The respective percentages when questioned as to the desirability of having a drug trafficker as neighbor are 45 percent and 35 percent (Cuéllar de Martínez 1997). Other measures of social capital – specifically participation in religious activities -- rise in response to increased violence. Areas with high levels of violence report 30 percent of community members belong to some religious organization, while areas with less violence report 14 percent. (Cuéllar de Martínez 1997).

E. Violence and the erosion of natural capital

Violence erodes *natural capital* when it destroys or damages the country’s stocks of environmentally provided assets such as soil, forests, water and wetlands. In rural areas land is a critical productive asset for the poor, while in urban areas land is equally important for the provision of shelter. While historically Colombia is exceedingly rich in such assets, the devastating effects on the environment have only recently been recognized as a significant cost of violence, particularly political violence.

First, and most dramatic, is the *environmental damage* due to oil spills from terrorism. Colombia has had to devise technology to handle oil spills in non-maritime environments and the long-term impacts are incalculable. One tragedy in Catatumbo, near El Tamá National Park, indicates that all vegetation and life forms have disappeared from approximately 5,000 hectares due to oil pipeline attacks and oil spills (Granada and Rojas 1995). Second, additional contamination of soil and groundwater results from aerial spraying of illicit crops, rendering these lands unusable for many years. Third, deforestation rates increase when peasants, driven from their lands after the spraying, raze nearby forests for planting. Fourth, the destruction of the fragile highland *páramo* habitat has been accelerated by the drug cartels’ recently increased diversification into heroin poppy cultivation. Finally, environmental degradation in and around urban areas is exacerbated by the influx of displaced populations, worsening “brown issues” such as solid waste disposal and water contamination. In Cartago, the estimated 150 people arriving daily thwart city planners’ attempts to protect watersheds and biodiversity, as the reclamation of land for precarious housing exceeds the ability to meet the demands of sustainable development (Quintero 1998).

¹⁴ (Meertens and Segura-Escobar 1996).

While the issue of equitable *land* distribution and agrarian reform has challenged Colombia for the past thirty years, land degradation and inappropriate land use has been exacerbated by high levels of political violence. - when peasants have been forcibly evicted by the competing interests of guerrillas, paramilitaries, and drug traffickers, or voluntarily fled to escape death threats, joining the thousands of rootless displaced people on the edges of cities. A recent study in Cali, for instance, reported that 53 percent of the rural displaced had land ownership rights that they relinquished upon migrating and 83 percent of these were landowners (CODHES 1997; Angarita Cañas and Osorio Moreno 1998). Since many peasants do not hold legal title to their lands, if it is abandoned, they lose their legal rights to ownership, while those with legal title do not necessarily have recourse to judicial processes to regain their land or claim compensation. The displacement process of rural peasants in order to claim valuable land, often sold at very low prices, has been identified as a deliberate and forced relocation of the population in affected territories. This has “cleansed” the civilian population from areas of guerrilla influence, concentrated property ownership, expanded the areas dedicated to large-scale cattle ranching and subverted rural agriculture (Reyes 1998). At the same time, in cities such as Medellín displaced settlements are located on the outskirts of the city, in geologically unstable areas. The municipal government has evicted displaced people from the city itself on the grounds that their presence could cause a risk both to natural disaster, and to public order (Angarita Cañas and Orsorio Moreno 1998).

V. Interventions to reduce violence

A. An integrated framework for intervention

Throughout Colombia, in particular during the past decade, extensive, highly innovative interventions to address and reduce violence have been implemented. As in other countries, the analysis of violence and its related interventions tend to have been dominated by a particular policy approach and its associated professional discipline (such as criminology or epidemiology). In addition, interventions have tended to prioritize a particular type of violence and focus on a particular level of causality. Even where initiatives successfully address more than one type of violence or target multiple levels of causality, the lack of impact evaluation or cost-benefit analysis severely restricts the identification of “best practices” and the possibility of replicating successful interventions.

To provide an integrated framework for intervention it is important to classify the dominant policy approaches in the field in terms of both the categories of violence they address, and the causal factors on which they focus. This framework is intended to assist policymakers to shift from menu-like checklists of interventions towards an interdisciplinary approach that recognizes a continuum of violence, and addresses simultaneously the reduction of different categories of violence. At the outset, it should be emphasized that where such innovative projects do exist in Colombia they are often small-scale, with little coordination among them, and therefore lack sustainability on a national scale.

1. Changing policy approaches to violence intervention

In identifying changing policy approaches, it is possible to delineate a broad shift from approaches which focus on the control of violence, to those which concentrate on prevention, to more recent perspectives which aim to rebuild social capital. Consequently the framework of different policy approaches should be viewed as ‘ideal types’ (see Table 3). More than one approach can be adopted simultaneously, and established perspectives are often combined with more innovative ones.

- **Criminal justice** is one of the most widely established approaches. It focuses on *violence deterrence* and *control* through higher rates of arrest, conviction and punishment, facilitated by judicial, police, and penal reform. More successful in reducing economic crime, with limited success in reducing social and political violence, this top-down approach is popular with politicians seeking short-term solutions to the symptoms of violence.
- The **public health** approach also focuses on economic and social violence at individual and interpersonal levels. This is another well established approach, that focuses on *violence prevention* through the reduction of individual *risk factors*. It draws on epidemiological surveillance, especially homicide rates, as well as risk factor identification to modify individual behavior and/or the social and physical environment.

Table 3: Different policy approaches to violence intervention

Approach	Objective	Category of violence addressed	Causal level(s) addressed	Policy/planning intervention	Limitations
Criminal justice	Violence <i>deterrence and control</i> through higher arrest rates, conviction rates and punishment.	Economic	Individual Institutional	Top-down strengthening of judicial, penal and police systems and their associated institutions.	Limited applicability to situations of political and social violence; success highly dependent on enforcement.
Public Health	Violence <i>prevention</i> through the reduction of individual risk factors.	Economic Social	Individual Interpersonal	Top-down surveillance; risk factor identification; associated behavior modification; scaling up of successful interventions.	Almost exclusive focus on individual; often imposed top-down; highly sensitive to quality of surveillance data; limitations in indicators.
Conflict transformation	Achieving non-violent <i>resolution</i> of conflict through negotiated terms between conflictive parties.	Political Social	Interpersonal Institutional Structural	Negotiations to ensure conflict reduction between different social actors; key third party mediation. May be top-down or bottom-up.	Often long-term in its impact; often challenging to bring parties to the table, then mediate a conflict.
Human rights	<i>Legal enforcement of human rights</i> and documentation of abuse by states, and other social actors	Political Social	Individual Structural	Top-down legal enforcement reinforced by bottom-up popular participation and NGO lobbying.	Legalistic framework often difficult to enforce in a context of lawlessness, corruption and impunity; dangerous to document abuse.
Social capital	<i>Building social capital</i> to reduce violence in both informal and formal social institutions, such as families, community organizations and the judiciary	Political Economic Social	Interpersonal Institutional Structural	Bottom-up participatory appraisal of violence; institutional mapping to address problems; community participation in violence reduction measures	Less well articulated than other approaches; fewer indicators have been developed.

- The **conflict transformation** approach is a less established perspective that aims to rebuild the fabric of societies. It was initially influenced by the role of international actors such as the United Nations, and addresses both political, and to a lesser extent, social violence through non-violent negotiation among conflictive actors using third-party mediation. While negotiation may be through international organizations at the structural and institutional levels, it is also important at the interpersonal level through formal and informal arbitration, and community-based training in communication skills.
- The **human rights** approach is what is known as a 'rights-based approach' to violence reduction. It deals with citizens' entitlements to be free from the threat or victimization of violence and focuses on the role of the state in protecting these rights. Drawing on the documentation of abuse in relation to international human rights conventions, this approach addresses political and social violence, mainly at the individual and structural levels. While early use of this perspective dealt with governments as primary violators, more recent formulations have included all social actors who deny or abuse rights. In particular, this deals with excluded groups, such as indigenous people, women, and children, as well as with future generations in relation to the natural resource base.
- The **social capital** approach is still in the process of formulation. Of all perspectives it focuses most directly on rebuilding social capital among informal and formal institutions such as families, community organizations, and the judiciary. Using bottom-up, participatory processes, this approach builds on community identification of needs to create trust, and focuses on the strengths of communities affected by violence. It also provides the potential for community based needs to be scaled-up to public sector interventions.

B. Interventions to address political violence and negotiate peace in Colombia¹⁵

Attempts to address political violence in Colombia are closely interrelated with government endeavors to establish peace accords. Since the renewed escalation of political violence in the 1980s, an end to political violence has been at the forefront of Colombian policymaking. Successive presidential administrations have shifted in their strategies for dealing with political conflict. These have ranged from a partial military solution, to negotiation of demobilization and re-incorporation agendas.

Along with shifts in emphasis, there has been broad consolidation of efforts over time, often straddling different political administrations. For example, while the Betancur administration opened the door to negotiations with the guerrilla, and the M-19 in particular, it was under the Barco administration that a political accord was established. Yet it was the Gaviria administration who developed the Reinsertion Program for the M-19. Similarly, the groundwork for the 1991 Constitutional Reform and Constituent National Assembly was laid under Barco, yet came into effect under Gaviria's administration (Box 2 highlights some of the main initiatives).

Underpinning these peace initiatives has been the formulation of a wide range of policies informed by the approaches discussed above.¹⁶ **Conflict transformation, social capital, and human**

¹⁵ This section draws heavily on Chernick (1997), and Cleves (1998).

¹⁶ It is important to recognize that this analysis of government political interventions in terms of different policy approaches is undertaken with hindsight; governments themselves did not necessarily identify their interventions as falling within a particular approach. Such an analysis, however, provides important lessons from past practice.

rights perspectives have been important in influencing the peace initiatives. Although military solutions have been used as a last resort when negotiations or other methods failed – for example, when Gaviria's negotiations with Coordinadora Guerrillera Simon Bolivar broke down, he turned to a military strategy – the non-military approaches have mainly revolved around rebuilding the assets of society.

Conflict transformation strategies have influenced negotiations with the guerrilla since the early 1980s. Instigated by Betancur, who was the first to recognize the severity of the guerrilla issue, and to negotiate a temporary ceasefire in 1984, each subsequent government has attempted some form of conflict transformation method. However, this dialogue has not been confined to negotiating solely with the guerrilla, but has also included the intervention of other actors. For example, Betancur established a 'national dialogue' among members of civil society and government, although the armed forces were left out of the dialogue process. Also, the Constitutional Reform of 1991 was partly a response to proposals from civil society and the guerrilla, and in 1997, Samper authorized regional dialogues between governors and armed groups.

Rebuilding social and community institutions, or **social capital**, also runs through peace endeavors since 1982. Betancur's National Plan for Rehabilitation, for example, directed funds to areas most affected by political violence in order to rebuild the social and economic fabric, which was reinforced by Barco's Policy of Reconciliation, Normalization and Rehabilitation. Also important from this perspective was Samper's 1995 policy for populations displaced by violence. In an effort to build capacity at the local level, various governments have instituted a range of constitutional decentralization measures. For example, Betancur introduced a constitutional amendment establishing the direct election of mayors. Perhaps most important were Barco and Gaviria's Constitutional Reforms that firmly established the importance of decentralized state functions and of community participation at the local level. Similarly, Gaviria's reinsertion program attempted to rebuild social capital among ex-combatants in conjunction with creating human capital through the health and adult education components.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, a **human rights** perspective was significant during the Gaviria and Samper governments. As in other countries, Colombia has shifted in its approach to human rights from viewing the state as perpetrator, to a recognition of human rights abuses by other social actors. In addition, the issue of exclusion of minorities has also been addressed, especially through the 1991 Constitutional Reform and the subsequent National Commission on Indigenous Policy (CONPAPI) within the office of indigenous affairs (DGAI), and the Special Commission for Black Communities. The most systematic use of the human rights approach has been by the Samper administration. Among other things, this has included the creation of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the UN in 1997, as well as the provision in the Law 418 outlining norms for the protection of children from the effects of conflict.

Box 2: Summary of some of the main government initiatives for peace in Colombia

1982-86: Betancur Administration

- National Plan for Rehabilitation - PNR (*Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación*) to redirect funds to the areas most affected by political violence
- Political reform, reintegration and a democratic opening through negotiations with extra-institutional fora and the Congress
- Constitutional reform in Congress, including a constitutional amendment establishing direct election of mayors
- 'National dialogue' among diverse members of government and civil society
- Negotiation of temporary ceasefire with FARC, EPL, M-19 and ADO and 'regional peace processes' established

1986-90: Barco Administration

- Policy of Reconciliation, Normalization and Rehabilitation which incorporated the National Rehabilitation Plan and instituted local democratic fora in order to extend the state's authority over the civilian population
- 1986: Creation of Presidential Council for Peace (*Consejería Presidencial para la Paz*)
- 1989: Political Pact for Peace and Democracy which included a commitment to a unilateral ceasefire and the recognition that the end results of negotiations would be disarmament and reincorporation into the legal political system
- 1990: Political Accord with M-19 involving ceasefire, through the assembly of groups in a demilitarized zone and formal surrender of arms; further accord with PRT, EPL, and MAQL

1990-94: Gaviria Administration

- 1991: Constituent National Assembly (*Asamblea Nacional Constituyente*) and Constitutional Reform (*la Reforma Constitucional*) which involved constitutional reform in the political, economic, social and judicial sectors, recognizing community participation and minority rights, including indigenous peoples and Afro-Colombians, promotion of respect for human rights, and complying with agreements made with the guerrilla groups
- 1991: Reinsertion program (Programa para la Reinserción) for 6500 demobilized guerrillas of the M19 and other groups; co-financed by the government and municipalities offering housing, health care, skills training and adult education as preventative program to create 'culture of peace'
- 1991 and 1992: Negotiations in Caracas and Tlaxcala, Mexico with *Coordinadora Guerrillera Simon Bolivar* with a preliminary accord
- 1992: Creation of the National Commission on Indigenous Policy (CONPAPI) with the office of indigenous affairs (DGAI) and Special Commission for Black Communities
- 1993: Further Pact to Consolidate Peace signed between government and guerrilla groups in order to make further advances for national reconciliation
- 1994: 'Special Electoral Boundaries for Peace' to provide preferential treatment for ex-guerrilla in municipal council election
- Creation of civilian Minister of Defense
- Creation of Office of the High Commission for Peace (*Oficina del Alto Comisionado Para La Paz*)
- Creation of Office of Presidential Counsellor for Medellín, a presidential-level effort to reduce violence in Medellín

1994-98: Samper Administration

- 1994: Protocol II of the Geneva Convention signed establishing a code of conduct for internal wars
- Creation of security cooperatives in the form of CONVIVIR
- Established Office of Black Communities and Ethnic Collectivities
- 1995: National Program for Population affected by Violence (*Programa Nacional de Atención a la Población por Violencia*) to deal with displaced populations
- 1997: Established Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights of the UN (*Oficina del Alto Comisionado de Derechos Humanos de la ONU*)
- Formal request to establish Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees of the United Nations (*Oficina del Alto Comisionado para Refugiados de la ONU*) to deal with displaced populations
- Congress approved National Peace Council which was an initiative to guarantee that the search for peace would be a national commitment
- Congress approved Law #418 establishing 1) parameters for negotiation with armed groups; 2) norms for protecting minors from armed conflict; 3) instruments for attention to victims of violent conflict; 4) amnesty for those convicted of political crimes
- Laws passed to allow government to seize some of the narco-investment in land as possible basis for major land reform
- Government authorized regional dialogue between governors and armed groups

1. The role of civil society and the international community in the peace process

In the past decade, groups within civil society increasingly have become involved in violence reduction. Although most civil society initiatives have focused on economic and social violence reduction, there have been some interesting interventions that have addressed political violence reduction. Two examples of grassroots peace-building initiatives include the Network for Citizen Initiatives against War and Peace, and MINGA (McDonald 1997). Other important civil society interventions have been the creation of the *Comisión Nacional de Conciliación* - with the objective of identifying a solution to armed conflict - the "Vaccination Against Violence", and the national referendum on peace that in October 1997 collected "Ten Million Votes for Peace." The fact that ten million Colombians expressed their disquiet over armed conflict even if only through a symbolic vote reportedly influenced the ELN in their decision to reopen negotiation channels for peace negotiation. At the same time, the business sector has demonstrated its vested interest in violence reduction through a variety of sponsored initiatives. One of the best known examples is *Fundación Social*, a nation-wide social development program financed by private sector investments.

At the international level, the role of the United Nations has been particularly important with respect to human rights interventions, especially during the Samper government (see earlier). In addition, a number of national and international NGOs have established programs of emergency help and humanitarian assistance for displaced people. However, these have not been able to keep up with the growing need for emergency assistance, nor provided a longer-term solution to the problem. Nevertheless, groups such as the Popular Feminine Organization are seeking to educate displaced people on a number of issues.

To conclude, government and civil society initiatives to address political violence and bring about peace have been innovative, extensive and potentially far-reaching. While some interventions have been more successful than others, none have brought about peace (see Chernick, 1998). Of particular significance is the fact that governments have been beset by problems of **implementation**. These have revolved around lack of funds, the escalation in the number of groups involved in political conflict, the reduced control of the state over large areas of the country, and the intransigence of the guerrilla. At the same time, it is important to note that none of the government or civil society initiatives to date have addressed political violence together with economic and social violence.

C. Interventions to reduce economic and social violence in Colombia¹⁷

In Colombia, much less attention has been focused on economic and social violence than on political violence. Nevertheless, the Colombian government and NGOs have designed a wide range of innovative initiatives. These have usually been implemented separately from those dealing with political violence. While some have focused independently on economic or social violence, others have addressed both types together. Interventions have drawn on all policy approaches, with particular emphasis on the **criminal justice, public health and social capital** approaches. These interventions therefore span the different underlying aims of control, prevention and rebuilding assets.

¹⁷ This section draws heavily on Klevens, 1998, Rodgers, 1998, and Ross, 1998.

1. Criminal justice approach

Historically, efforts to reduce **economic violence** in Colombia, have been primarily based on the criminal justice approach. In terms of judicial reform, the 1991 Constitution established various mechanisms to control economic violence. These included harsher sentencing for felons, a shift to accusatory evidentiary procedures, and training for judges, prosecutors, and police. Other initiatives have addressed widespread corruption and impunity. These include the IDB's recent judges training program. Other examples are two community-based surveillance strategies implemented by the Bogotá police department aimed at controlling economic violence. The first was designed to increase patrols in high crime areas, and the second, to train community leaders as watchmen who monitor the number of crimes and victims per neighborhood. In terms of **social violence**, a key criminal justice intervention in Colombia was a law passed in 1996 to criminalize domestic violence. This also included punishment for failure to meet child support payments, coupled with other legal changes increasing punishment for rape and other sexual offences, especially against children.

One of the most interesting interventions which focuses primarily on **social violence** is the *Casas de Justicia* program. Since the program is implemented within low-income communities with high rates of violence, it also indirectly addresses the issue of **economic violence**. The *Casas de Justicia* are particularly important as they provide different forms of conflict resolution. Rather than simply employing traditional judicial procedures, these are designed to improve poor communities' access to conciliation, legal and human rights services. These are drawn primarily from a criminal justice perspective, yet are also influenced by other innovative approaches. For instance, various types of conflict transformation tools have been introduced, and manuals based on 'Conciliation Techniques' developed. Educating low-income groups on human rights issues is also integral to the program (see Box 3).

2. Public health approach

The public health approach has also been important in relation to **economic** and **social violence**. Initiatives tend to focus on homicide reduction, with little distinction between economically and socially motivated deaths. Particularly important from this perspective has been the use of the media, especially through campaigns to limit violence on television, and to promote public awareness of the causes of violence. For example, the Bogotá District Health Office has carried out mass media campaigns focusing on the relationship between alcohol consumption and violence among adolescents. One campaign employed a multi-media strategy, using songs on radio, messages on billboards, and booklets distributed with the popular newspapers.

Other important public health initiatives in terms of **economic violence**, and to a lesser extent, **social violence** include controlling situational precipitators such as drugs, alcohol and firearms. In

Box 3. Addressing economic and social violence: *Casas de Justicia*

Colombia's *Casa de Justicia* program works within the criminal justice system to achieve binding resolutions, a first step in moving the judicial system towards a system that promotes conciliation rather than winners and losers. An additional objective of the *Casas de Justicia* is to facilitate access to the justice system in poverty-stricken communities with very high rates of violence.

A typical *Casa de Justicia* is the one created in 1994 in Bogotá's Ciudad Bolívar lower-income *barrio*. With support from USAID, the Foundation for Superior Education and the Ministry of Justice, the *Casa* includes a lawyer for consultations, a Center for Conciliation, a Family Commissary, a Police Inspector, a Forensic Doctor, a defender of Human Rights and a Prosecutor (Attorney General). Various manuals on "Conciliation Techniques" have been developed to support the program. Based on an initial follow-up survey of cases attended, over sixty percent of those who had used these services reported being satisfied with the result.

Source: Klevens, 1998

Bogotá, there have been various attempts to restrict the carrying of weapons, as well as the sale of alcohol in an attempt to reduce crime rates. Dealing with drugs and alcohol use, a campaign called “What You Should Know Before You Drink” program (*Programa “Saber Antes de Beber”*) was launched. Financed by the United Nations and developed by the Coordinating Office for Integral Prevention, it was designed to help youth analyze their attitudes and behavior towards alcohol and drugs, based on a set of card games which then lead to group discussions.

In terms of interventions focused specifically around **social violence**, the health and education sectors play a crucial role. To deal with domestic violence, a project in a Bogotá hospital has been established to systematically screen women with trauma for partner violence. This is being implemented with support from the House for Women (*Corporación Casa de la Mujer*), an NGO working for the defense of women. A number of education projects in Bogotá have developed teaching guides to help children and adolescents improve their **conflict resolution** skills.

Box 4. Combining policy approaches to address economic and social violence: Cali’s DESEPAZ Program

El *Programa Desarrollo, Seguridad y Paz* (DESEPAZ) was established by the Mayor’s Office of Cali in 1992 to address the high rates of crime and violence in the city. Grounded in a public health approach, it was based on an epidemiological analysis of violence - primarily homicide rates - to identify specific risk factors for urban violence as well as community involvement in combating crime and violence. DESEPAZ and the Colombian Legal Medicine and Forensic Science Institute identified several key risk factors for homicide in Cali, which revolved around alcohol use, gun ownership, and leisure time. For example, 56 percent of homicides occurred during weekends and holidays, and at night. They therefore restricted alcohol sales in public areas and initiated a disarmament program which appear to have had a beneficial effect on homicide reduction.

A key principle of DESEPAZ is that the prevention of crime and violence requires a commitment from all citizens. *Consejos Municipales de Seguridad* (Municipal Security Councils) were created in order to educate government officials in the epidemiology of crime and violence, review progress and chart future plans of action. In addition, the mayor held weekly meetings with community leaders in one of Cali’s 20 districts, bringing together members of the mayor’s staff and community leaders. In these meetings which are open to the public, participants discuss all matters related to crime and public security, and suggest and agree on concrete solutions. This community-based process has led to the creation of law enforcement, public education and social development programs.

Source: Ayres, 1998; Guerrero, 1998, Vanderschueren, 1996

One of the most important showcase public health interventions is DESEPAZ (*Programa Desarrollo, Salud y Paz*) in Cali. This employs public health tools such as epidemiological surveillance, environmental manipulation, and behavioral modification to achieve measurable reductions in homicide. It identifies risk factors, such as alcohol use and gun ownership, and then attempts to limit exposure to these risks. The DESEPAZ program is notable in that it focuses on economic violence using a number of approaches to the problem. For instance, its emphasis on community-level solutions indicates that rebuilding community and social institutions is also important. In addition, some of its interventions have direct and indirect implications for social violence reduction (see Box 4).

3. Conflict transformation approach

Interventions which draw on conflict transformation mechanisms such as mediation, arbitration, non-violent conflict resolution, have been developed only quite recently in Colombia. In terms of **social violence**, one example is the Family Commissary, created in 1989 and run by the District Department for Social Welfare. It is staffed by a family law judge, a psychologist, a physician and a social worker who mainly attend problems related to family violence or parents/spouses not meeting their economic or social obligations. They provide legal and psychological counselling, help in negotiating a solution, legal judgments and therapy.¹⁸

¹⁸ During 1997, these Commissaries attended 76,744 cases in Bogotá compared to 15,683 cases in the previous year.

Emphasizing **economic violence**, the Centers for Conciliation and Arbitration, created by the Office of Commerce fifteen years ago, are concerned with disputes relating to economic control over resources. They mainly offer people in the business sector mechanisms for resolving their conflicts. In 1997, for example, they reconciled 1,052 conflicts and refereed another 100 for a range of organizations such as the Mennonite Church, the Air Force, various Law Schools, and an Association of Truck-drivers. In some cases, the centers also helped them set up their own conciliation and arbitration centers. In addition to businesses, they also address **social violence** issues, such as family conflicts, gender conflicts and claims against the State.

Another example of a project that addresses both **social** and **economic** violence, is a project to rehabilitate juvenile gang members. Developed by the Coordinating Office for Integral Prevention (*Unidad Coordinadora de Prevención Integral*, or UCPI), with the support of the non-profit organization *Fundación Social*. This project focuses on conflict transformation. With support from the UCPI, two mediators spend three to four years in local Bogotá communities working with gang members, especially those using drugs. After this period, the mediators were able to identify and sign pacts of non-aggression with 180 youths, and to encourage them to hand in their weapons.

4. Human rights approach

In a number of cases, initiatives informed by the human rights approach is relevant for the reduction of economic and social violence. A particularly pertinent issue relating to **economic violence** is deterrence and rehabilitation in the penal system - which is also relevant to criminal justice. Although juvenile justice has become a human rights issue in Colombia, to date interventions have been minimal. Minors held in detention centers before trial, or before getting a place at reform school, can incur human rights infringements. Conditions for adult prisoners appear to be equally harsh. The issue of prisoners' rights was recently highlighted by prison riots in Bogotá, where striking prisoners sewed their lips shut to protest against inhumane conditions.

A human rights approach is also gaining greater recognition in terms of **social violence**, especially in relation to such issues as the rights to security in the home, rights to food, gainful employment, and natural resource patrimony. Colombia is a signatory to the Convention to Eradicate, Sanction and Prevent All Forms of Violence Against Women and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. In addition, the 1991 Constitution embodied many of these tenets, through legislation to promote greater equality and democracy.

5. Social capital approach

Interventions aimed at building social capital often focus on youth. Interesting examples are the Youth Clubs (*Clubes de Jóvenes*) and Youth Houses (*Casas de Jóvenes*) which provide alternative recreational opportunities and residential arrangements for at-risk youth. Both types of projects provide adolescents with a meeting place free from alcohol- and drugs, where they are encouraged to engage in other activities such as sports, music and so on. The Youth Houses are an initiative of the Ministry of Education with the aim of building social and human capital among youth and especially drug-users. They address both **economic** violence, by reducing crime rates, as well as **social** violence, through issues of socialization, roles models and involvement in gang activity.

Another interesting project that also attempts to build social capital from a public health perspective, is a small-scale maternal health project in Bogotá. Focusing on **social violence**, it was initiated by a small non-profit agency whose mission is to "humanize childbirth". In 1996, it expanded to

include community health training workshops for caregivers in community childcare homes, branching out into other areas of community development, including leadership training, recreational and sports activities for children and adolescents, a community newspaper, training in arts and crafts, training in construction, plumbing, carpentry, and electrical installations.

This brief summary of different interventions illustrates the wealth of existing experience in Colombia. However, tremendous challenges have yet to be overcome. Among these the most important include lack of national coordination, the small scale of some projects, and limited evaluation of initiatives. Colombia has the potential to meet these challenges. The paper now turns to various recommendations for meeting the goal of building sustainable peace and social capital.

VI. Recommendations: Building Sustainable Peace and Social Capital

A. Introduction: President Pastrana's mission

The evidence presented in this paper indicates the urgent need for the new government to prioritize peace and development, demonstrating this commitment through negotiation of the appropriate peace agreements as well as the design and implementation of a comprehensive National Strategy for Peace and Development. Experience to date suggests that resolving armed conflict is a precondition for sustained peace and development. However, to ensure sustainability, the causes of different types of violence and their context-specific nature in different parts of the country, also need to be addressed, otherwise any interventions, however important and costly, can only be piecemeal, and are easily undermined. At the same time, it is critical for the government to recognize that solving political violence – through a negotiated peace – will not automatically solve other, more prevalent forms of violence. Recent post-conflict experience from El Salvador, for instance, demonstrates that a peace accord in itself, may, at least in the short-term, increase economic and social violence.

B. Basic principles for a National Strategy for Peace and Development

Developing a National Strategy for Peace and Development should be based on a number of important principles, which include the following:

1. Develop a fiscal policy to pay for peace

A peace strategy not only requires political will, but also an adequate budget to implement it. Any sustainable peace initiative will bear a significant financial cost. How to pay for peace, therefore, is a fundamental challenge for the new government. In the current economic climate this may create an important policy tension between, on the one hand, making progress with fiscal austerity – essential for economic growth – and, on the other hand, funding social and economic policies – essential to sustain peace. This may involve the renegotiation of fiscal targets to take account of the peace components, especially those associated with the establishment of the peace accords. Amongst the different measures that are potentially viable to help Colombia realize this goal, peace bonds, taxation and external donor assistance are some important interventions to be considered.

2. Create partnerships for sustainable peace and development

While the government has responsibility to provide the necessary security to ensure its citizens' safety, it requires the collaboration of key social actors to fulfill this obligation. This becomes particularly important when the institutional capacity of the state itself is weak. In the light of this, the private business sector, civil society and the international community are already contributing to the process of facilitating sustainable peace and development. With current levels of armed conflict and disorganized violence, now widely perceived as a real threat to democracy, such actors are increasingly significant. The burgeoning culture of respect for human rights and citizenship, and a growing conviction of the urgent need for political solutions, reached through a negotiated settlement, rather than military solutions, means that today a social movement around peace is developing. It is the partnerships linking civil society with the business community that increasingly articulate a nation's exasperation with high levels

of insecurity and failure to resolve the civil war. The challenging road ahead, therefore, is twofold; first, to ensure a transition from individual civil society initiatives, to a well-defined, integrated civil society policy agenda; and second, to promote flexible state-civil society partnerships to implement policies and programs for sustainable peace and development.

3. Promote participatory debate about local-level causes and solutions to violence

Sustainable peace and development will not be achieved unless the government promotes and facilitates open debate among all social actors concerning the causes as well as the solutions to violence. Participatory consultations are also necessary if agreement is to be reached on such key issues of national interest as agrarian reform, environmental policy and the distribution of profits from the country's natural resources, particularly oil, natural gas and coal, and alternative development policy in drug-growing areas. Such participatory processes can also identify local level solutions to rebuild social capital and citizenship and focus on the perceived needs of priority target groups, including displaced populations, demobilized combatants and excluded urban youth.

4. Adopt a coordinated approach to violence reduction

During the past decade government, private and non-governmental sectors have implemented an impressive menu of initiatives that stand as testimony to the breadth of peace and development initiatives. Nevertheless, their impact has been limited by the following factors (i) lack of cohesive policy that integrates different objectives and instruments for reducing violence; (ii) fragmented approaches to violence reduction with single-focused independent programs; (iii) a proliferation of interventions focusing on short-term gain rather than long-term structural change (iv) limited evaluation and cost analyses restricting informed policy decisions regarding the relative fiscal returns of different programs. To allocate resources efficiently, decision-makers need basic information and tools to design appropriate interventions, establish project benchmarks based on community needs, and assess project impact with accurate data.

C. Components of a National Strategy for Peace and Development

A National Strategy for Peace and Development will involve not just making peace, but also owning, supporting and sustaining peace (Colletta et al. 1998). Drawing on the extensive initiatives already implemented by Colombians, the Strategy outlined below seeks to control the symptoms of violence as well as introducing preventative measures. It also aims to rebuild the fabric of society with particular emphasis on strengthening social capital. In some cases single interventions can address different types of violence simultaneously, in other cases a number of interventions need to be combined to reduce violence.

As outlined in Table 4, the Strategy has the following three critical components, or building blocks, that address the continuum of violence at different levels of causality:

- 1. National Level: Peace Program**
- 2. Sector Level: Mainstreaming violence reduction into priority sector policies and programs**
- 3. Municipal Level: Projects to rebuild social capital**

Table 4: Summary of proposed National Strategy for Peace and Development: Examples of different potential interventions

Type of strategy	Details of potential interventions	Main type of violence addressed	Priority group addressed
National level: Peace program			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-accord project support • Demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants • Reconstruction measures • Programs for displaced people 	Political	Guerrilla groups, communities affected by violence; ex-combatants; displaced people
Sector level: Mainstreaming violence reduction into priority sector policies and programs			
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum review • Conflict resolution programs • Restructuring timetable • Referral of youth 'at risk' • Teacher security protection 	Economic Social	Youth 'at-risk' including gangs; future generations
Judiciary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community based conflict resolution programs • Community based tribunals • Reduce judicial congestion • Strengthen managerial capacity to reduce corruption 	Economic Social	Poor rural and urban communities; people illegally detained; people affected by impunity
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to ensure the adequate protection of environmentally fragile regions, especially those with natural resources 	Political Economic	Peasants and indigenous groups living in remote, environmentally sensitive areas
Livelihood and job creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural financial services for credit • Micro-enterprise loans • Private sector partnerships to generate jobs 	Political, Economic Social	Peasants and indigenous groups with no access to land or livelihood; poor urban populations
Municipal level: Social capital projects			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal level strategic plans for peace and reconstruction • Community level assessments • Projects to build social capital • Mechanisms to upscale local solutions 	Political Economic Social	Urban and rural communities affected by violence, especially in regions most affected by conflict

1. National level: Peace Program

A Peace Program can contain an extensive number of components, to be implemented at different stages of the peace process. Prior to the actual peace agreement, for instance, one important component may be pre-accord innovative project support as a form of venture capital in support of building social capital in conflict zones - that provides incentives for peace as well as helping preempt "spoilers". During the actual peace process the timing and sequencing for other aspects of a Peace Program will require careful consideration at the local level. Some of the other important components of such a program may include demobilization and re-incorporation of ex-combatants, reconstruction measures and a program for displaced people.

Demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants: Demobilization should include bringing guerrilla and paramilitary proposals to the negotiating table. The specifics of demobilization must be addressed within the peace negotiations and detailed agreements acceptable to all parties reached. Lessons may be learnt from the experiences of El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and elsewhere to ensure that ex-combatants can not easily re-arm (Spencer 1997). Reintegration of ex-combatants is also essential. This should include, first, social programs for ex-combatants (Coletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer 1996), and second, initiatives to address human rights violations. In terms of human rights, the *Consejería Presidencial de Derechos Humanos* and the United Nations *Oficina del Alto Comisionado de Derechos Humanos* should be consulted. Since extensive violations of human rights on the part of the military, the paramilitary and the guerrillas have destabilized previous peace dialogue, this is a central part of any agreement. There should therefore be consensus over basic commitments from all actors to respect fundamental human rights, freedom of political association and expression, as well as the application of International Humanitarian Law. While these measures primarily address political violence, they must be combined with other initiatives which deal with economic and social violence through reconstruction measures.

Reconstruction measures: These should focus on regions most adversely affected by armed conflict and address social, political and economic causes of violence. While a first step is the negotiation of peace among guerrilla, paramilitary and local populations, subsequent measures are essential. These may be integrated projects such as the Magdalena Medio project, a pre-accord experience, that deals with the continuum of violence at different levels, and drawing on different policy approaches (see Box 5).

Programs for internally displaced people: Even with a negotiated peace, the problem of displaced people remains. Because it is not certain whether the displaced will return to their rural communities, services in their cities of arrival are likely to remain over-stretched in terms of housing, employment and social welfare provision. The Colombian government has taken important steps to recognize violence-related displacement as a structural problem by adopting 1997 Law #387 as public policy for the re-integration of displaced people. However, the law lacks measures for protecting rights of the victims of displacement. Nor does it contain tools for addressing future relocations. To date, most displaced have refused to move, preferring to stay in resettlement communities, since any return home could prove fatal until conditions change in their home regions. The government therefore needs to define a clear policy agenda at two levels. First, to address the causes of displacement, and second, to ensure the protection and well-being of internally displaced people.

Box 5. Projects for Peace and Development: The Magdalena Medio Project

The Project for Peace and Development in Magdalena Medio is designed to address the four causal levels of violence at the local level. Founded in the context of a growing movement to promote regional dialogues to end the violence, its objectives are to foster peace, community-based development, and civic education in the central Magdalena River Valley, one of Colombia's most violent areas. The project covers 29 municipalities spread over 30,000 square kilometers. Twenty-six of the municipalities are 'internal colonization' zones – areas of immigration since *la Violencia* in the 1940s and 50s. The three largely urban municipalities include a city of over 200,000. The region contains great natural and productive wealth, including petroleum, gold mining, African palm, cattle, fishing and coca. It is also characterized by high levels of poverty and unequal land tenure, where over 75 percent of the zone's inhabitants live in precarious economic conditions, with inadequate housing, minimal education, and scarce health services. Armed conflict is entrenched with large landowners, local political bosses, paramilitaries and guerrillas competing for political, social and economic power. The region is under the political jurisdiction of four departmental capitals but is largely neglected and devoid of an active state presence.

The Magdalena Medio Project seeks to create community-based development programs, income-generating projects, and greater local participation in the region's natural and productive wealth. It also seeks to reduce violence directly by creating conditions for relationships to be forged among the armed actors, communities, NGOs and the government. In principle, all the major actors in the conflict have expressed a willingness to cooperate in such an endeavor at the local level, even before a national level settlement to the armed conflict has been reached. By reducing poverty and violence, the project's objective is to transform the area into a pole of peace and development.

To address this problem, the Magdalena Medio Project is implementing a peace and civic education program, emphasizing human rights, peaceful conflict resolution, and the construction of democratic decision making at the local level. This represents a multilevel approach to violence reduction, conflict resolution and social capital accumulation. At the structural level, the project seeks to confront poverty and political and economic inequality. At the institutional level, it strives to bring into the communities long-absent state agencies and agents, including police, justice and municipal governments. At the interpersonal and individual levels, it is creating strong educational programs for peaceful coexistence, democracy and engaged and informed citizen participation.

Source: World Bank 1998; World Bank 1998a.

2. Sector level : Mainstreaming violence reduction into priority sector policies and programs

Not only does violence affect the implementation and outcomes of a number of sector policies and programs not immediately associated with violence, but also provides important opportunities to introduce measures to control or prevent violence as well as rebuilding the fabric of society. Consequently, a National Peace and Development Strategy needs to mainstream, or integrate, violence reduction measures into its sector policy. This involves, first, the prioritization of sectors central to violence reduction – such as education, the judiciary, sectors concerned with livelihood and job creation and the environment; second, within these sectors it requires the identification of those interventions that will most effectively reduce violence. Simultaneously, far greater inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration is essential if the maximum synergy from sector specific interventions is to be translated into sustainable peace strategies. Sector level details of types of interventions require local consultation and consensus. Consequently the following comments are only intended to provide general observations of potentially relevant issues

Education sector: Weaknesses in the education sector contribute to violence, just as violence weakens the education sector. Overcrowding in schools, a principle reason for elevated drop-out rates, double- and triple-*turnos* for students, and limited access to secondary and higher education, all translate into lost opportunities for education, training and jobs. The short- and long-term negative effects on educational achievement associated with loss of human resources when teachers have been injured or murdered, elevated desertion rates when students cannot pass through guerrilla-, paramilitary-, or gang-

controlled areas, and property destruction, have been widely documented. These indicate the importance of trying to address these problems.

Strengthening the education sector provides youth with viable alternatives to delinquency, criminal behavior and guerrilla group membership. The provision of high quality education and training for all age groups in both rural and urban areas, going beyond mandates for universal enrollment or access to literacy skills, is required. This requires infrastructure investment, curriculum review and improved management. This involves building more schools, training more teachers and administrators, and designing materials that impart substantive knowledge relating to issues of violence and peace.

Schools therefore represent powerful socializing institutions for shaping values and promoting citizen participation and democracy. Teaching the use of conflict resolution techniques in classrooms will provide examples that can be reinforced elsewhere in society. The education sector can work with security organizations and communities to reduce safety problems for teaching personnel. Finally, the education sector has a role to play in the referral of children, youth and families who are at risk from violence. In this way, schools can act as a first line of defense, with strong inter-institutional ties to allow for referral and follow-up.

Judicial sector: Corruption, congestion, abuse, procedural delay and administrative inefficiency have undermined public confidence in the judiciary's ability to penalize criminal behavior and provide effective conflict resolution mechanisms at a community level. With a much cited 98 percent impunity rate, the viability of recent judicial reforms, such as sweeping constitutional changes, increases in judges' salaries, and training of jurists have been questioned by civil society. The lack of an effective judicial dispute resolution mechanism generates perverse incentives for defaulting parties to take advantage of procedural delays.

Recent recommendations¹⁹ include: first, increasing community-based conflict resolution mechanisms; second, reducing levels of congestion and process delay through (i) institutional and organizational changes; (ii) substantive investment in the training of judges (iii) modernization of the judicial office (iv) an emergency congestion reduction program, and (v) an intense communications campaign of public education; third, strengthening managerial capacity and key organizational functions, by improving (i) institutional coordination with other branches of the government and within the judicial sector, and (ii) key human resource management functions, including the selection of judges and administrative personnel, and performance evaluation.

A key element of the Judicial Reform Program is to increase the supply of community-based conflict resolution mechanisms, as mandated in the 1991 Constitution. Currently high costs, lengthy delays, and low confidence in the judiciary leave many Colombians without recourse to effective resolution mechanisms. Benefits would include the introduction of procedures based on oral arguments with less formality, and a reinforcement of the values and benefits of peaceful conflict resolution. To ensure greater access, measures should be developed for effective community outreach, such as an "outreach worker" responsible for the dissemination of service information.

Livelihood and job creation: Creating livelihoods for rural and urban people is central to peace building. Violence affects the manner in which rural populations make a livelihood and urban people

¹⁹ For a fuller discussion of the proposed Judicial Reform Program see World Bank (1998b).

secure jobs. A number of different state sectors, with links to civil society and private businesses, have responsibility for the creation of jobs and livelihood opportunities.

In rural areas, one potential initiative relates to the government's recommendation for market-based agrarian reform through the implementation of Law 160. This provides for government subsidies of up to 80 per cent for peasant groups to purchase and subdivide large land holdings voluntarily sold by their private owners. However, peasant groups are unlikely to qualify for credit, other than from the state-owned *Caja Agraria* which is currently being scaled-down. Therefore, alternative options to provide sustainable livelihoods for rural dwellers need to be developed. In addition, the government should recognize that the "land issue" must be re-examined within the peace negotiations. Job creation in urban areas must target not only areas of high unemployment, but also areas of high violence. In particular, vulnerable groups at increased risk from victimization, including women and the displaced, would benefit from the stability and asset stocks associated with employment. Partnerships among the government, business interests, and civil society, should generate micro-enterprise loans at affordable rates. These would preferably be linked to education and training initiatives.

Environmental sector: Given that Colombia has major reserves of oil, natural gas and coal, the issue of the protection of bio-diversity in environmentally fragile areas is a particular concern in regions rich with natural resources. The Ministry of the Environment, the private sector (both national and multi-national) and civil society should participate in public debate, identify and reach agreement on future national policy concerning the country's natural resources. In addition, monitoring of environmental policy should be strengthened. Of particular importance is the issue of indigenous people's land rights; while the government has already made provisions for such rights, these should be reinforced. In urban areas, attention should be paid to potable water and sanitation systems through infrastructure projects, especially in cities with high proportions of displaced people.

3. Municipal level: Social capital projects

At a time when the erosion of social capital, resulting from high levels of violence, continues to fragment poor communities, the rebuilding of trust and cohesion is a critical priority. Therefore large-scale 'top-down' sector level interventions should be complimented by small-scale 'bottom-up' municipal level projects.

The objectives of such projects will obviously vary depending on the context. Nevertheless, they may include the development of municipal-level *strategic plans* for peace and reconstruction. These would identify priority objectives, resources, needs, and benchmarks to strengthen local level institutions, reaffirm citizenship and provide mechanisms for the negotiation of conflict. Such decentralized plans would also allow the specific causes and manifestations of violence in different areas of Colombia to be taken into account. Such plans should be developed in an interactive, and participatory process, to involve as many stakeholders as possible. Key activities may include (i) capacity building of municipal institutions and civil society for operationalizing plans (ii) creation of steering committees to represent community interests.

Such a project could include the following components (i) *community-level assessments* to identify perceptions of the causes of violence, its costs for the community and the priorities for community-level solutions; (ii) a small number of *focused pilot projects* designed to consolidate social capital and help vulnerable members of the community, such as youth, feel less excluded; (iii) the incorporation of an appropriate *evaluation component* for all interventions to allow for more effective resource allocation and replication of best practices; and (iv) the creation of *municipal-level task forces*

for peace and development to monitor the process, consult regularly with civil society and facilitate the dissemination of information.

Annex 1: Different disciplinary perspectives on violence causality

Biomedical sciences explore the role of biobehavioral factors such as endocrinological mechanisms, neurotransmitters and receptors, nutrition, and aging processes to explain, for example, the preponderance of men and youth as perpetrators of violence.

Criminology focuses on deterrence as the principle means of controlling violent behavior. Punishment, including humiliation, incarceration or execution, are primary control mechanisms, and the demonstration effects of increased conviction and incarceration rates are arguably as important as direct punishment of offenders.

Economics relies on the theory of rational choice, where decisions to engage in criminal activity are based on considerations of costs (likelihood of punishment) and benefits (usually financial gain). A person commits an offense because the outcome appears more valuable than the outcome of other activities in which s/he could invest time and resources. People commit assaults not because their motivations are different, but because their perceived benefits and costs differ.

Epidemiology stresses violence prevention through the identification of individual risk factors and protective factors that indicate whether a person is more likely to become an aggressor or victim of violence. Underlying this approach is the assumption that behavior modification and/or environmental manipulation can mitigate risk factors and enhance protective factors.

Political science focuses on structural explanations that identify broad-scale societal, political or economic causes, such as poverty or lack of opportunity, which operate independently of human cognition. Violence and other “illegitimate” behaviors arise when people are deprived of “legitimate” means and resources to realize culturally valued goals.

Psychology emphasizes two principle explanations for violent behavior. The first is developmental theory, where key deterrents to violence are early parent-child ties of love, childhood experiences relatively free of punitive discipline or abuse, and experiences that reinforce child attachments, minimize frustrations and encourage flexible inner controls. The second is social learning theory, where behavior, including violent behavior, is learned through imitation of role models and reinforced by rewards and punishments received in interaction with others.

Sociology analyzes sociological explanations of violent behavior. It interprets this learned behavior in terms of the norms and values transmitted across generations. Certain subgroups exhibit higher rates of violence because they are participants in a subculture that has more violent norms. Within this discipline, the interactionist approach looks at the sequence of actions that escalates conflict into violence and the process through which assaultive violence occurs.

Adapted from Rosenberg and Fenley 1991.

Annex 2: Summary of the principle social actors involved in political violence in Colombia, 1948-1998

Social actors in violent armed conflict	1948-58	1958-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-94	1994-1998
Traditional political establishment: Liberals-Conservatives	Urban insurrection of 'El Bogotazo', followed by 'La Violencia'; Liberal - Conservative rural civil war	Political peace established with two party power sharing in a "Frente Nacional"	1970 Presidential elections widely perceived as fraudulent resulting in M-19 guerrillas. Turbay's National Security Statute	1982 President Betancour's Amnesty; Peace Process attempts at political reform, direct elections of mayors	President Gaviria's constitutional reform intended to decentralize and give local level political representation	State weakened by allegations of President Samper's electoral financial support from drug cartels
Peasant movement	Conflict for land	Peasant land invasions under ANUC	Failed land reform: joined guerrilla to fight and/ or grow coca		Peasant leaders targeted by paramilitary	
First generation guerrilla movements	Communist self-defense groups active in coffee-growing areas and remote mountains	National level guerrilla activities in conflict; pro-Soviet FARC formed in 1950s; Maoist EPL in 1960s; pro-Cuban ELN in early 1960s		FARC founding UP; fighting with armed forces/ protection to coca farmers; taxation of drug cartels; kidnaping; extortion.	Cold War collapse increases economic reliance on criminally derived domestic resources from drugs (FARC) and oil (ELN).	Intensification of armed forces conflict with forces participating in coca zones; expanding social base of guerrilla; conflict with paramilitary
Second generation guerrilla movements			Main guerrilla groups were M-19 - pursues political armed struggle for political representation; Movimiento Armado Quintin Lame fought for indigenous rights. 1989 Peace Accords made with various groups			
Marijuana/ coca producers			Conflicts associated with coca production with both armed forces, drug cartels, protected by guerrilla		Protection of labs and drugs operations by guerrilla means their sympathizers increasingly attacked by paramilitary and armed forces	
Drug intermediaries and cartels			Violent conflict relating to control and organization of drug crime	Establishment of MAS and other ACUs to kill guerrilla; early collaboration with armed forces	Violent penetration of agricultural areas to acquire (i) land for cattle ranching and commercial coca production, and (ii) trade routes for coca; increasing collaboration with paramilitary	
Paramilitary forces		Decree 3398 of 1968 giving military the right to arm civilians	Privatization of security forces through self-defense groups.		Establishment of CONVIVIR self-defense groups; terrorization of population in guerrilla held areas to control coca trade routes; untouched by military.	

Violence in Colombia: Building Sustainable Peace and Social Capital

Annex 3: Interventions to reduce economic violence in Colombia

Level of Causality / Policy Approach	STRUCTURAL LEVEL	INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL	INTERPERSONAL LEVEL	INDIVIDUAL LEVEL
Criminal Justice	Constitutional reforms that increase penalties for felonies, shift evidentiary procedure, strengthen judicial, police and penal services.	DESEPAZ in Cali: Coordinated efforts by Forensic Medicine, Police Department and Mayor's Office to collect and analyze information on street violence. Police surveillance of high crime areas.	<i>Casas de Justicia</i> : Improve poor communities' access to conciliation services and negotiated legal outcomes.	Incarceration for offenders.
Public Health	Restrictions on gun possession Limits on violent television.	Removal of street vendors from high crime areas. DESEPAZ in Cali: Epidemiological case surveillance of homicide; mayor, police, forensic medicine and community leaders coordinate efforts through bimonthly meetings to discuss homicide patterns.	Programs that teach parenting skills that promote secure attachment, psychological resiliency factors and non-violent environment for children.	Prenatal, early infant care and day care that promote secure attachment. Fostering development of protective personal attributes. <i>Que las armas descansen en paz</i> : Guns for vouchers; gun control laws.
Social Capital		<i>Clubes de jóvenes</i> and <i>Casas de jóvenes</i> : Provide alternative recreational opportunities and residential arrangements for at-risk youth. Schools for Sports Development Community Development	<i>Mujeres Creadoras de Paz</i> : Community-based activities for displaced relocated to urban areas. Community mediators negotiate "pacts of non-aggression" with Ciudad Bolivar gang members.	PROCREAR: Trains community leaders, runs community paper, recreation for adults and children, training in construction, plumbing, carpentry; credited with more neighborhood support and unity, lower rates of crime.
Conflict Transformation	Campaign "You think everything has to be solved with your fists?"		<i>Casas de Justicia</i> : Improve poor communities' access to conciliation services and negotiated legal outcomes.	
Human Rights				<i>Prisoners' rights</i> : demonstrations by prisoners protesting against conditions in overcrowded prisons.

Annex 4: Interventions to reduce social violence in Colombia

Level of Causality / Policy approaches	STRUCTURAL LEVEL	INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL	INTERPERSONAL LEVEL	INDIVIDUAL LEVEL
Criminal Justice	New Constitution Criminalization domestic violence Punish the failure to meet payments for child support Increasing punishment for sexual offenses	Coordinated efforts by Forensic Medicine, Police Department and Mayor's Office to collect and analyze information on violence Police surveillance high crime areas		
Public Health	Restrict gun carrying Limit violence on TV	Remove street vendors Network for Prevention of Child Abuse DESEPAZ, Cali	Improving drivers' and pedestrian's respect for the crosswalk	Prenatal and early infant care Day care Guns for vouchers "Know before you drink" Developing protective personal attributes Promoting secure attachment "Immunizing" Screening for women victims of violence and treating Treat child abusers and batterers
Social Capital		Cultural, Recreational and Sports Events for Youth Youth Clubs or Houses Schools for Sports Development Community Development Train and organize community guards		Empowering women victims of violence
Conflict Transformation	Campaign "You think everything has to be solved with your fists?"		Teaching conflict resolution skills Participatory development of a School Guide for Getting Along Houses of Justice Centers for Arbitrage and Conciliation Family Commissaries	
Human Rights	As a signatory country, applications of: - Universal Declaration of Human Rights - Convention to Sanction, Eradicate and Prevent Violence Against Women (Convención de Belém do Pará) - Declaration of the Rights of Children			*Empowering women victims of violence

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