



## **THE EFFECTS OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT ON HOST COMMUNITIES**

A CASE STUDY OF SUBA AND  
CIUDAD BOLÍVAR LOCALITIES  
IN BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

International Committee  
of the Red Cross in Colombia

Brookings Institution-London  
School of Economics Project  
on Internal Displacement

Bogotá, October 2011

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**BROOKINGS**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>CAVIF</b>	Centro de Atención Integral a Víctimas de Violencia Intra-familiar [Center for Comprehensive Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence]
<b>DC</b>	Distrito Capital [Capital District]
<b>FARC</b>	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia]
<b>ICBF</b>	Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar [Colombian Institute of Family Wellbeing]
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced person
<b>JAL</b>	Juntas Administradoras Locales [Local Administrative Boards]
<b>LSE</b>	London School of Economics
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>PIU</b>	Plan Integrado Único [Integrated Unified Plan]
<b>RUPD</b>	Registro Único de Población Desplazada [Single Registry of the Displaced Population]
<b>SENA</b>	Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje [National Learning Service]
<b>UAO</b>	Unidad de Atención y Orientación a la Población Desplazada [Assistance and Orientation Unit for the Displaced Population]
<b>UPZ</b>	Unidad de Planeamiento Zonal [Zonal Planning Unit]

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**D**uring the many years of conflict in Colombia, internal displacement has been dominated by movements of populations from rural areas, smaller cities and towns across the country to large cities, particularly to the capital city, Bogotá. Upon arrival, displaced persons typically reside in peripheral and poor areas of these urban centers. Here they experience harsh living conditions and limited economic opportunity alongside host communities who have previously settled there.

This study was based on focus groups composed of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities in the localities of Suba and Ciudad Bolívar in Bogotá, which both have large IDP populations, as well as interviews with state officials and members of aid and outreach organizations working in the area.

Suba and Ciudad Bolívar lie on the outskirts of Bogotá and were consolidated as parts of the city over the last 20 years through a process of spontaneous and unregulated urbanization. As such, there has been no urban planning and limited access to public services. The majority of inhabitants in these areas are internally displaced persons from all parts of the country who fled violence, as well as some economic migrants.

In this study, the term ‘host communities’ refers to individuals who have lived in Suba and Ciudad Bolívar for more than ten years. Although many in the host community were at one point forcibly displaced as well, the term ‘internally displaced persons’ –according to local usage and adopted in this study–only refers to those who were forcibly displaced to these areas in the past decade. Besides more recent arrival, another distinction between the populations is that the IDP community has received government assistance through the system established under Colombia’s law on internal displacement, Law 387 of 1997.

### **Institutional Relationships**

Despite its limitations and problems, the state system of support for internally displaced persons is essential to their survival. All of the IDPs with whom the researchers spoke had received some sort of assistance. Nonetheless, it was also clear that state benefits are insufficient and temporary. Although IDPs have typically been displaced for long periods of time, they receive assistance only for the short term or, at most, the medium term.

The relationship between the national, municipal and local systems of assistance to displaced persons is extremely important in terms of the overall delivery of assistance to displaced persons. Suba relies more heavily on the national system of assistance to IDPs, whereas in Ciudad Bolívar the system is aided to a larger extent by local initiatives. The difference in approach stems from the issue of forced displacement being more prominently placed on the local public agenda in Ciudad Bolívar than in Suba.

The state accords minors preferential access to public services including primary and secondary education and healthcare. In the capital, there is almost universal access to public education. Nevertheless, these rights are not fully fulfilled for IDP children. For certain age groups the barrier to accessing education is schools located in dangerous neighborhoods. In terms of access to healthcare, the researchers found significant limitations in IDPs' ability to obtain medical treatment.

In addition, IDPs are characterized by lower levels of political participation in comparison to members of the host community, who have better established political networks. However, IDPs have begun to advocate for their rights through IDP organizations as well. Some of the most active organizations are run by Afro-Colombian IDPs, which carry out important activities in their communities. Importantly, IDPs have also gained political influence through legal action with considerable success at the Constitutional Court in particular.<sup>1</sup>

Non-governmental social organizations are also an important source of assistance to displaced persons. The role of the Catholic Church is of particular note for leading many support and protection activities for the IDPs in their parishes.

## **Economic Relationships**

The main problem IDPs face in securing economic stability in poor urban areas is obtaining a regular source of income. Access to the formal labor market is quite limited, particularly for IDPs. They typically only have occasional and temporary access to jobs in construction or domestic service. Participating in the formal work sector and social security system renders registered IDPs ineligible for state assistance offered to IDPs, which is another important consideration they must take into account when seeking employment.

Both IDPs and a significant proportion of the host community obtain what unsteady income they generate through the informal employment sector. State support for income generation enables IDPs to establish small, informal businesses. However, while providing them with income in the short term, these informal efforts in entrepreneurship are not reliable sources of income in the medium and long term due to the difficulty of sustaining the projects.

The growing demand for housing in urban spaces and rising prices render home ownership difficult for everyone in Suba and Ciudad Bolívar. This has led to an increased demand for rental housing that increases even further with each influx of displaced persons. By using state rental subsidies—which are temporary and intermittent—to rent houses or rooms in the homes of host community members, IDPs often find themselves in a complex economic relationship with host communities.

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<sup>1</sup> See further, Rodolfo Arango Rivadeneira, ed., *Judicial Protection of Internally Displaced Persons: The Colombian Experience* (Washington, DC: Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, November 2009), [www.brookings.edu/papers/2009/11\\_judicial\\_protection\\_arango.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2009/11_judicial_protection_arango.aspx)



Host community members who own their homes often build additions to rent to IDPs as additional sources of income. The fact that the income of IDPs is often unstable and that there are often cultural differences between IDPs and their hosts means that the landlord-tenant relationship is one often characterized by conflict.

## **Relations between Internally Displaced Persons and Host Communities**

Both internally displaced persons and host communities on the outskirts of Bogotá in Suba and Ciudad Bolívar live in poverty, but under different conditions. The host communities enjoy greater access to housing, services and work in both the formal and informal sectors. In contrast, displaced families are largely disadvantaged due to their lack of social networks, their dependence on state assistance and their difficulty in accessing formal and informal labor markets.

In the locations studied, the host communities single out IDPs based on their recent arrival to the neighborhood, where in Colombia they have arrived from and their access to state assistance.

Relations between host communities and displaced persons are complex. When IDPs first arrive there is often an expression of solidarity and support as friends or family members help them to get settled. But such good will is often short-lived due to the limited resources of the host community.

In general, IDPs are often treated with hostility by the general public. They may be viewed with fear, subjected to persecution for being displaced and blamed for increased crime rates. Cultural, regional and ethnic differences often produce conflicts between the two communities and become excuses for racism and discrimination in daily life, such as in the workplace and in the landlord-tenant relationship. Furthermore, host communities often do not understand the state assistance programs for IDPs. This can lead to hostility toward IDPs and unsubstantiated accusations regarding IDPs' supposed inability to use state assistance effectively, organize themselves or overcome their present situation.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations, which begin on page 27, focus on the following areas:

- Standardizing the urbanization process.
- Generating a supply of public housing for IDPs.
- Supporting family and neighbor networks.
- Raising the level of awareness of the host community about IDPs.
- Maintaining and deepening the state's assistance programs for IDPs in accord with the existing legal and constitutional framework.

- Reviewing policies of assistance to the displaced with a long-term perspective.
- Implementing the joint responsibility of the national government and its municipalities.
- Providing on-going training for officials.
- Promoting and protecting the political participation and representation of IDPs.
- Maintaining the involvement of international and non-governmental organizations through actions which bring together host communities and IDPs.
- Training IDPs for jobs in the formal sector.
- Generating permanent long-term income for IDPs as well as enhancing their connection to the economy's formal work sector.

## INTRODUCTION

Conflict, violence and generalized human rights violations in Colombia have been drivers for displacement for more than 40 years. With only occasional moments of partial ceasefires and the demobilization of a fraction of the many armed actors, conditions that would be conducive to bringing displacement to an end have not been met. As of 2011, prospects for large-scale returns are still stalled due to the state's inability to provide permanent security to its citizens. The internally displaced are therefore forced to remain away from their homes and prospects for durable solutions to their displacement are slim. For these reasons there is no end in sight to displacement in Colombia and there has not been a reduction in the number of displaced persons in the country.

One of the most recent studies of internal displacement in Colombia, carried out by the Civil Society Follow-Up Commission on the Public Policy of Forced Displacement (hereafter, "Follow-Up Commission"), an independent body established at the request of the Constitutional Court of Colombia, noted the following trends in its 2011 report (Follow-Up Commission, 2011):

- 62 percent of registered IDPs were displaced from rural to urban areas, while more than 8 percent have been displaced more than once.
- The state registry system for IDPs, the Single Registry of the Displaced Population (Registro Único de Población Desplazada or RUPD) has information from 1997 to 2011. The Follow-Up Commission noted that in the period between 1997 and 2002, 41.9 percent of all displacement occurred in the midst of the escalating conflict with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia or FARC) and the failure of the peace negotiations. Between 2003 and 2010, 47.8 percent of the displacement occurred during the development of a new security policy and the process of demobilizing a small number of paramilitary groups.
- The principal causes of displacement are direct threats and the assassination of family members — events that affect 60 percent of IDP families.

In 2009, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) described the trend of displacement from rural areas and small municipalities toward cities, noting:

"People are initially displaced to the nearest urban centers and subsequently—although not in all cases—families continue on to medium-sized or large cities, mostly due to their geographic proximity, cultural ties, possible familiarity with the location, or familial and personal relationships. Nonetheless, remaining relatively close by their place of origin can bring a continuing sense of insecurity, so many families will

continue on to another city, oftentimes medium-size or large, where they feel there is greater opportunity for work, income generation, and better education. In small towns, the State presence and number of services provided are limited and as such, displaced families seek to settle in cities with greater institutional capacity for providing assistance and services. These reasons, among others, lead the majority of the population to be displaced to urban areas. This assertion is supported by data regarding the nature of expulsion and reception in the country” (Carrillo, 2009, 3).

This report examines the impact of internally displaced persons on poor, urban environments. Fieldwork was conducted in two of the most densely IDP-populated areas of the city, the Ciudad Bolívar and Suba localities in greater Bogotá.

This study employs qualitative methods—focus groups and interviews with internally displaced persons, host communities and local authorities—which were supplemented by research. The researchers, together with the ICRC in Bogotá and the Brookings Institution-London School of Economics Project on Internal Displacement, specified the scope of the project, designed the surveys and agreed on the criteria for selecting focus group participants in Suba and Ciudad Bolívar. The ICRC facilitated and coordinated the interaction with the communities.<sup>2</sup>

The researchers hope this study will be followed by additional research in other urban environments in Colombia that represent the diversity of conditions internally displaced persons experience and the complex relationships they develop with host communities.

This report is divided into three sections: the first presents the two case studies; the second presents the conclusions; and the third puts forth some recommendations.

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<sup>2</sup> See Annex I for a description of the focus groups and interviews and the surveys.

## OVERVIEW OF CASE STUDIES: CIUDAD BOLÍVAR AND SUBA IN BOGOTÁ

**B**ogotá, DC is the capital of Colombia, with an estimated population in 2011 of more than 7.8 million inhabitants. It is governed by a mayor and city council, both of whom are popularly elected. Bogotá incorporates a series of neighboring municipalities into an area known as the Capital District which is in turn divided into 20 localities (*localidades*). These localities are governed by mayors appointed by the city mayor and have popular representation bodies known as local administrative boards (Juntas Administradoras Locales or JAL). Each of the towns, for the purposes of planning and the territorial government, has been divided into Zonal Planning Units (Unidad de Planeamiento Zonal or UPZ).<sup>3</sup>

Two cases are represented in this study; the first is the locality of Ciudad Bolívar, in the south of Bogotá, which has the greatest number of displaced persons in the Capital District. Within Ciudad Bolívar, the researchers chose a group of neighborhoods located in the Lucero Alto Zonal Planning Unit. The second case study focuses on the locality of Suba, in the north of the city, in which Tibabuyes Zonal Planning Unit in Suba was selected.

Both are settlements on the outskirts of the city, whose original, unsanctioned growth from the influx of internally displaced persons and economic migrants originating from around the country dates back 20 years.

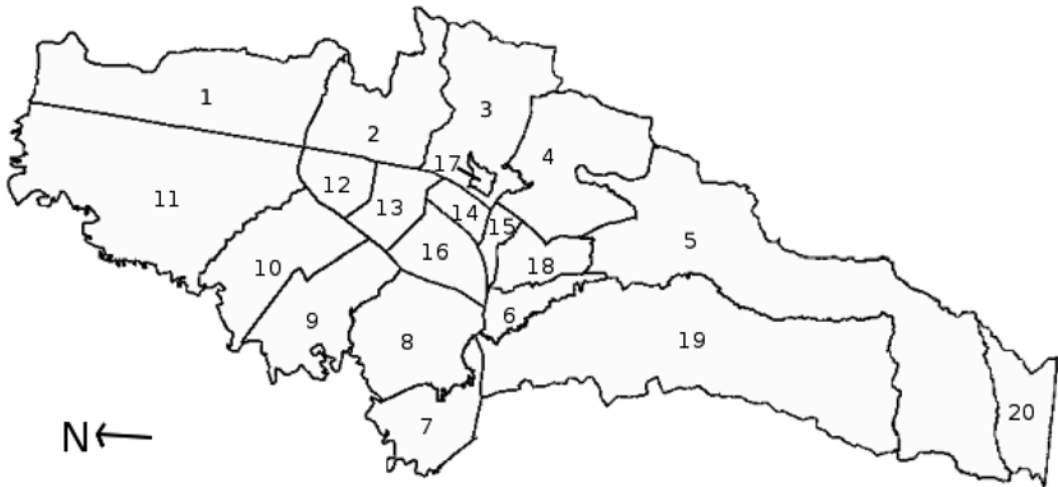
Ciudad Bolívar has the greatest number of internally displaced persons in Bogotá, DC and as such is the principal reception point for IDPs in Colombia. The town of Suba has the fourth-largest number of displaced persons.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “They are urban areas which are smaller than the towns and larger than neighborhoods. The purpose of the UPZ is to serve as a territorial unit or sector for urban development planning at the zone level” (Office of the City Mayor of Bogotá. District Planning Secretariat, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Between 1996 and 2010, according to information from Acción Social [Social Action] (Republic of Colombia. Agencia Presidencial para la Acción Social y la Cooperación Internacional [Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation], 2010).

### Administrative Map of Bogotá



**Illustration 1.** Localities (*localidades*) of Bogotá, Colombia. 1 - Usaquén, 2 - Chapinero, 3 - Santafé, 4- San Cristóbal, 5 - Usme, 6 - Tunjuelito, 7 - Bosa, 8 - Kennedy, 9 - Fontibón, 10 - Engativá, **11 - Suba**, 12 - Barrios Unidos, 13 - Teusaquillo, 14 - Los Mártires, 15 - Antonio Nariño, 16 - Puente Aranda, 17 - La Candelaria, 18 - Rafael Uribe, **19 - Ciudad Bolívar**, 20 – Sumapaz (Wolff, 2006).

### Urban Areas and Internal Displacement

The urban areas receiving internally displaced persons are, from an urban development perspective, characterized by high population densities and concentrations of mostly informal and illegal settlements, developed within what is referred to as ‘pirate urbanization’ (Centro de Estudios y Análisis en Convivencia y Seguridad Ciudadana [Center for the Study and Analysis of Coexistence and Citizen Security], or CEACS, 2007). The long-standing residents in the host communities consider themselves to be the holders (*poseedores*) of the homes in which they live, many of whom have been able to formalize their ownership titles (Ciudad Bolívar host community focus group, 2011).

The permanent influx of newly displaced persons exerts strong population pressure on these zones whose spatial expansion has reached its limit. In Suba, it is impossible to expand the poor neighborhoods due to a shared border with upper-class neighborhoods and industrial and agricultural zones. There is a similar situation in Ciudad Bolívar regarding the availability of new space, although there is some rural space extending towards the locality of Sumapaz. The housing situation is similar in that recently displaced persons have extremely limited ability to acquire their own housing, resulting in an increasingly dense arrangement of existing buildings, an increase in the height of buildings and a widespread system of collective housing rentals.

In general, host community members enjoy a higher quality of life than IDPs for several reasons. The overwhelming majority of the host community members, both in Suba and in Ciudad Bolívar, legally reside in or own the property in which they live. Typically, this housing has been built on lots whose control is legally authorized or in which the buildings are in the process of being legally recognized. Most host community members do not share a home with other families, and live in areas safe from the dangers of flooding or precautionary evictions for mudslides or other hazards.

By contrast, only a small portion of the displaced persons in both localities told us they had their own homes. Only in the case of Ciudad Bolívar did some displaced individuals tell us that they have built houses, albeit of very poor quality with temporary materials that do not meet minimum living conditions and most of which are located in high-risk zones.

The displacement process has also been different between the host community and IDPs in both localities. The host communities were able to secure accommodations or buy housing due to the fact that when they moved to the neighborhood there was a large black market for unsanctioned plots of urban land. For their part, IDPs have recently faced a double restriction in the illicit property market: the progressive depletion of available land and a greater institutional control over the process. Notwithstanding, on the border between the localities in the urban zone and the rural area and in some high-risk zones, there are strips of territory with illegal occupations in which a few displaced persons have been able to obtain urban land; however, this represents the minority of cases.

## **Relations between Host Communities and Internally Displaced Persons**

More than 90 percent of the people in the host community focus groups said they have been forcibly displaced from the central regions of Colombia. The majority were displaced due to violence and armed conflict while a minority were displaced for strictly economic or familial reasons. As such, members of the host community are also known as “historically displaced persons.”<sup>5</sup> However, they did not identify themselves as ‘internally displaced’ due to the fact that only in 1997 was the legal framework for the specific protection of IDPs developed.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> In the Ciudad Bolívar host community focus group, the researchers found the following cases of forced historic migration resulting from political violence: (1) an older adult who was displaced in 1959 from Villahermosa in Tolima, the department that suffered the most during the two-party violence in the country resulting from the liberal-conservative violence (Uribe, 1990) ; (2) a female head of household who was displaced two decades ago due to the forced disappearance of three of her children from Florencia in the department of Caquetá, one of the departments where the FARC-EP guerrillas exerted the greatest influence (Cubides, 1986); (3) a family that was displaced nine years ago from the municipality of Nunchía (Casanare) due to the threats made against the male head of household by armed actors; and (4) another person who was displaced from the department of Huila in the 1960s due to the late violence of the 1960s (resident population, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> In 1997, with the issuance of Law 387, the state assumed responsibility for the rights of the population displaced by “The Violence” (La Violencia). See Rodolfo Arango Rivadeneira, ed., *Judicial Protection of Internally*

The host communities in this study consist of the displaced who arrived in the neighborhood between 1959 and 1998 (Ciudad Bolívar IDP focus group, 2011). Their identity as the “host community” of the neighborhood is linked to the fact that either they or previous generations of their families had founded the neighborhood. The process attests to their capacity not only to establish the neighborhood and their homes, but also to consolidate political processes and organization allowing them to progressively obtain basic services and be institutionally recognized (Suba host community focus group, 2011).

IDPs stated that they had been expelled between 2004 and 2010 and in contrast to the host communities, had come from regions located not only in the center of the country (composed of Cundinamarca, Boyacá, Huila, Tolima), but also from the Pacific and Atlantic coasts and Antioquia. The majority of the displaced persons who settled in the town of Ciudad Bolívar where the researchers visited are *mestizos* and come from Chocó (Murindó), Tolima (Ríoblanco and Ortega), Boyocá (Labranzagrande), and other municipalities of Cundinamarca; that is, localities (*localidades*) which are located closer to Bogotá. While the population in Suba is similar, there are also large centers of Afro-Colombian peoples displaced from the Pacific coast and *mestizos* from the Atlantic coast.

The IDP community is comprised mainly of family groups of young parents with children aged two to three years, and more specifically, with female heads of household. The young mothers have been thrust into this role because their male partners have formed other family groups, were assassinated, or were forcibly disappeared, which is often the reason they had to leave their homes to begin with (Suba IDP focus group, 2011).

IDP families from rural areas tend to be larger than those originating in urban areas. They are typically not traditional nuclear families, but rather in many cases include grandmothers who take care of their grandchildren. Women often flee their places of origin with their older adult mothers or fathers, infant nieces and nephews, for example. Such familial arrangements can complicate the housing search in areas where children are not welcome (Suba IDP focus group, 2011).

The identity of an ‘IDP’ is discernible by having arrived in recent years and especially by the fact that IDPs have access to state services catering to IDPs. Their region of origin is used by the host community to infer that they are IDPs and to determine which armed actors caused their displacement, depending on whether they have been displaced from zones of paramilitary or guerrilla control.

On a related note, persons are identified by host community members as being ‘displaced’ when they approach state institutions to exercise their rights to state assistance. Participants in one of the Suba IDP focus groups of stated that they were identified as such

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*Displaced Persons: The Colombian Experience* (2009), op cit. See also, Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement, “National and Regional Laws and Policies on Internal Displacement: Colombia,” ([www.brookings.edu/projects/idp/Laws-and-Policies/colombia.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/projects/idp/Laws-and-Policies/colombia.aspx)).



when they requested services at what is called the Unit for Comprehensive Assistance and Orientation for the Displaced Population (Unidad de Atención y Orientación a Población Desplazada, or UAO) and especially during enrollment processes in high schools when the children are incorporated through special procedures established for the displaced population (Suba IDP focus group, 2011).<sup>7</sup>

### ***Specifics on Relations between Host Communities and Internally Displaced Persons***

IDPs and members of the host communities both face marginalization in the neighborhoods on the periphery of the city, but under different conditions. Relations between host communities and IDPs are highly nuanced.

Upon initial arrival, solidarity and assistance characterize the relations between IDPs and host communities. In many cases, host communities, family members or individuals from IDPs' regions of origin become the first support network to welcome them upon their arrival; however, such solidarity is limited in terms of the length of time it lasts. As one of the host community residents put it: "We provided lodging here for some family members who were displaced from Tolima, where I am from. We helped them for some months until we had to tell them to look for another place to live because the situation was no longer tolerable" (Ciudad Bolívar host community focus group, 2011).

There is also open hostility between host communities and IDPs. One reason is a prejudice prevalent among the host community that IDPs are responsible for the present lack of security in their neighborhoods. According to the participants in the host community focus group in Suba, "newly-arrived people create a situation of insecurity because they bring with them 'bad company' " and stay on the street, "and as such we are scared to come home late at night." While "around 12 years ago people came from all over the place and there was 'social cleansing,' now there is great fear because a lot of new people have arrived, newly-arrived people who are the ones with the problems" (Suba host community focus group, 2011).

In the town of Suba, an IDP talked about her lack of protection from threats made against her life, which create the risk of additional displacement, in this case inter-urban displacement:

"For several weeks I have been threatened through pamphlets which say that I cannot hide anywhere, that they know where I am. I have already gone to the police and to the Attorney General's Office to lodge formal complaints but they have not done anything ... I fear for my life and now they have also threatened my son. I don't know what to do" (Suba displaced Afro-Colombian IDP focus group, 2011).

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<sup>7</sup> The "Unidad de Atención y Orientación" (UAO) is a physical site where the different institutions that make up the National Comprehensive Assistance System for the Displaced Population or "Sistema Nacional de Atención Integral a la población desplazada" (SNAIPD) are located.

The hostility toward displaced persons is also paradoxically exacerbated by the aid programs offered by the state. Host community members resent the special treatment IDPs receive, including vis-à-vis the non-IDP poor. This results in accusations that the displaced persons are: not truly displaced, bad workers, people who do not know how to take advantage of opportunities, do not work, etc.

According to an official interviewed, “The Unit (UAO) greatly bothers the neighbors because the people who come stand in lines and there are so many of them that the lines wind out the door. The people are bothered by that. The high school complained because this situation creates a lot of insecurity for the children who study in the high school” (UAO-Government Secretariat official 1, 2011).

### ***Racism against Afro-Colombian IDPs***

The clashes or confrontations between IDPs and their hosts worsen the existing racism and regional biases of Colombian society, particularly because the older and newer IDPs hail from different regions of origin. This leads to displaced persons being identified and discriminated against for being black or from the coast, being loud, or from large families: a cultural clash exists. As one public official in Suba remarked:

“Here the situation in play is the issue of being an Afro-descendent or indigenous. Afro-descendents have faced a long history of problems—signs appear which read ‘apartment for rent, but not to blacks,’ or ‘get out of here, son-of-a-bitch blacks’—this was included in a publication produced by my colleague who was previously in this post. The host community says that the Afro-descendents have problems coexisting: very loud music, games, you rent to one and ten arrive, and above all, as they arrive in a highly vulnerable state, they do not have the capacity to pay and do not meet their rental and other obligations” (Public official in charge of providing assistance to IDPs in Suba, 2011).

While the officials believe the conflict is clearly due more to racism than to the displacement of the population, the fact that part of the Afro population moves to the city as a result of forced displacement makes it difficult to rule out displacement as a cause of tension. The host community in Suba considers the new people to be a population in a state of displacement as “the Afro-descendents and people from coastal regions” (Suba host community focus group, 2011).

Another source of clashes between these communities is the prevalence of families with many children or many family members. These families are discriminated against because they may rent lodging and share the space with several family members, which increases pressure on public services and can lead to an uncomfortable coexistence with their hosts. Consequently, there are limited facilities available for rent to large families and as a result, such family units must break into smaller groups or move to houses with poorer health and living conditions (Suba host community focus group, 2011).

### ***Dependency between IDPs and Host Communities***

Despite the differences that exist between host communities and IDPs, these two groups eventually establish relations of mutual dependence. IDPs are an important part of the demand for rental housing and the consumption of goods and services in poor neighborhoods.

There are also spaces for integration, such as in churches. This is the case with the Catholic Church, as noted by one of the participants of the Suba host community focus group: "In our pastoral work in the parish, we carry out activities that bring together the host community and IDPs" (Ciudad Bolívar host community focus group, 2011).

## **Institutional Relationships**

### ***National- and Local-Level Assistance to IDPs***

This research demonstrated the fundamental importance of the relationships between the national, municipal and local governments in terms of the fulfillment of displaced persons' rights. The complementarity of programs is very sensitive to national-municipal relationships and can become either a formula for success or failure.

The localities studied reveal differences in their relationship with IDPs. In Ciudad Bolívar the researchers found a certain degree of willingness on the part of the local administration to attend to the needs of IDPs. By contrast, in Suba the researchers found more resistance to providing assistance to IDPs.

It should be noted that in the case of Ciudad Bolívar, the reception given to displaced persons has been incorporated into the public agenda by means of earmarking resources for the promotion of livelihoods projects. In the same vein, the town hall is involved with actions developed by the city hall of Ciudad Bolívar through the UAO (Mayor of Ciudad Bolívar, 2011).

The mayor of Ciudad Bolívar has observed significant improvement in the coordination and organization of the assistance given to IDPs within the locality:

"The Local Committee of Assistance for Displaced Persons has advanced in its coordination with the district and the country. Soon an action plan will be drawn up which will deal with the displaced population's prioritization of the issues of housing and income generation. We want to host a roundtable on the issue of housing in order to present a housing model with a pilot phase which can be implemented in Ciudad Bolívar, in which all are involved" (Mayor of Ciudad Bolívar, 2011).

Lastly, recent advances in the area of political-administrative decentralization at the district level have enabled the mayor to improve public policies for both IDPs and host communities (Mayor of Ciudad Bolívar, 2011).

Likewise, the local authorities note that IDPs who come to the locality are also served by other assistance programs benefiting vulnerable populations:

“All displaced persons participate in the rest of city hall’s general programs, not explicitly but rather, implicitly. For example, in the general assistance programs for older adults, homeless people, female heads of household, youth who are highly at risk of delinquency. The district has a very large capacity to supply services, free education, regardless of whether or not the person is displaced. This also occurs in the area of health, which is provided free of charge” (Mayor of Ciudad Bolívar, 2011).

Further, according to officials interviewed, “Suba has several institutions, among them the UAO, that assist people from Suba, Engativá, Barrios Unidos, and Usaquén. The majority of institutions have a network and all are nearby, most of them located near the plaza” (Public official in Suba Hospital, 2011). In other words, assistance measures, while not uniform, are provided to IDPs in both communities.

The UAO in Suba includes the following institutions and programs;

“The Government Secretariat, Municipal Representative, Colombian Institute of Family Wellbeing [Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, or ICBF] and the Families in Action program, which is based in the same secretariat. The National Learning Service [Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje, or SENA] comes every eight days, health brigades are carried out with the Usaquén hospital and the legal office of the Autonomous University. The UAO has been in the town of Suba for five years and has always had the same regularity of entities and the “Together Network” [Red Juntos, now known as Red Unidos or ‘We are United’ Network] is also there. There are entities that come—the Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office and the Center for the Comprehensive Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence [Centro de Atención Integral a Víctimas de Violencia Intra-familiar, or CAVIF]—but this year they have not come. Also in operation is the Local Committee, whose members participate because they are legally obligated to do so” (Public official in charge of providing assistance to IDPs in Suba, 2011).

Among the obstacles to providing timely assistance which have been identified is the lack of officials given the large numbers of people who come for assistance in each town; the space is inadequate, the infrastructure and buildings are difficult for physically handicapped people to access, and there have been problems stemming from people standing in line outside offices who are not allowed to enter. The system for accessing the databases is extremely slow and the computer capacity is inadequate (Public official in charge of providing assistance to IDPs in Suba, 2011).

### ***State IDP Assistance: Perception vs. Reality***

The distinction between IDPs and those affected by poverty and extreme poverty is based on the special vulnerability of IDPs who become the poorest of the poor, as has been noted by

the Constitutional Court repeatedly in case law.<sup>8</sup> This distinction has sustained policies which attempt to compensate the material, social and political losses of IDPs through the creation of programs which entail the provision of some subsistence aid, preferential access to education and health, and financial assistance for obtaining housing, among others.

The Constitutional Court has demonstrated in its rulings that despite the existence of government programs for attending to IDPs and their gradual improvement in satisfying the needs of this population, the government does not guarantee the effective enjoyment of fundamental rights. The court's Decision T-025 of 2004 was directed to those individuals whose rights continue to be unfulfilled despite having been served by the system of assistance designed for displaced persons. This situation is what maintains the "unconstitutional state of affairs" ongoing since the court first declared this in its Decision T-025, and has been documented through successive evaluations carried out by the executive branch and the Court with significant participation of IDPs and their organizations.

This research confirms the conclusions of the monitoring process which the Constitutional Court has been carrying out. Namely, the researchers found the presence of the state social assistance for IDPs to have some very important effects on this population. Of particular note among the activities of the state are the efforts to guarantee preferential and easy access to the social security system and free primary and secondary education for minors. Access to these services is provided in Bogotá, where it is nearly universal, particularly in terms of public education. However in spite of successful results in some areas, the rights of IDPs are still not completely fulfilled. Problems of school enrollment for certain ages of children or in zones where schools are located in dangerous neighborhoods still persist. In terms of healthcare, the researchers found marked limitations to obtaining medicine. That being said, the researchers also found that IDPs in both localities, while differing to some degree, had at least received emergency housing assistance.

All of this means that while registered IDPs are covered by state programs that provide assistance to them as IDPs, this assistance renders them privileged among the poor. In turn, these programs cause hostility and resentment of the general poor toward IDPs as they perceive IDPs to be receiving preferential treatment.

The paradoxical aspect of this "privileged" situation is that it does not substantially or permanently address IDPs' unfulfilled rights; that is, the "unconstitutional state of affairs" of massive and permanent rights violations is maintained. As such, while IDPs may appear to be privileged, in reality they are in much greater need than the host community population and the general poor, even as they appear to be a population "favored" by the state system. It is this paradox that is captured by Decision T-025.

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<sup>8</sup> See further, Rodolfo Arango Rivadeneira, ed., *Judicial Protection of Internally Displaced Persons: The Colombian Experience* (2009), op cit.

In Suba, the institutional services that are offered are what differentiate IDPs from the host communities. An official the researchers interviewed declared that the host community population that is in a state of vulnerability feels disadvantaged in comparison to the IDPs in terms of subsidies and assistance.

“It’s just that they give the displaced people [IDPs] everything and they even have farms and everything and for that reason they [the host community population] try to pass themselves off as displaced persons [IDPs]; in daily life, they should invest their money in something else. It is very difficult for a population that is vulnerable for other reasons to understand that the situation of those who have left everything behind is very different, that they lost everything” (Public official in charge of providing assistance to IDPs in Suba, 2011).

Host community members in Suba expressed their opinion that IDPs receive priority in some child educational programs and community soup kitchens. When members of the host community attempt to register for these programs, officials tell them that the programs are only for the IDPs, or that they are entitled to 80 percent of the spots, leaving only 20 percent for the host community. They also claim that IDPs do not participate in these programs and take spots from people in the host community who do want to participate and live in that area. In Batuta<sup>9</sup> and other programs, they are told that these initiatives are only for IDPs (Suba host community population focus group, 2011).

Other areas in which this research found differences in terms of institutional services offered are in Familias en Acción [Families in Action] and soup kitchens, which are places where services are provided to vulnerable and internally displaced populations. The host communities say that the services are incorrectly used, claiming that IDPs continue using programs such as soup kitchens for a long time, thereby taking spots from people who really do need them. “It’s just that there are people who you see in the soup kitchens for years. For us it is normal to come for six months and then move on. That’s why they don’t find work, because they continue to rely on the soup kitchens” (Suba host community focus group, 2011).

The displaced persons interviewed by the researchers stated that in the soup kitchen and Families in Action: “They keep telling us to get a job so that we can stop going to the soup kitchen. There are many people that do not find a job in order to continue taking advantage of the soup kitchens” (Suba IDP focus group, 2011).

The notion prevalent among host community residents who view IDPs as being at an advantage contrasts with IDPs’ own perception of their situation. For example, in the area of health care, a participant in the Suba IDP focus group stated: “We must acknowledge that in health care there has been great advancement, but it is not enough; there are expensive

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<sup>9</sup> Batuta is a program of alliances of public bodies and private businesses through the development of music by a youth symphony orchestra (Batuta Foundation, 2011).

medicines and tests that the doctors prescribe, but which are not covered by the plan. That's bad for us..." (Suba IDP focus group, 2011).

Beyond the competition for institutional support is the idea that overcoming poverty is much easier for IDPs than for the rest of the vulnerable population. The participants of the Suba host community focus group responded unanimously that IDPs are better off than other vulnerable groups in the area or than they themselves were when they first came to live in the neighborhood (Suba Afro-Colombian IDP focus group, 2011). IDPs assert that they do not receive help from the host community because while IDPs do not receive adequate assistance from the state to overcome their situation, the host community thinks that "they give us help here and there and that we are living a lie" (Suba IDP focus group, 2011).

As expressed by one displaced Afro-Colombian female head of household, their situation is extremely precarious:

"Now I do not have any money to buy food; what I eat is given to me by other displaced women who support me. Because I have not paid my rent, the owner of the house where I rent my room periodically sicks the police on me to have me removed from my room, and he also filed a lawsuit against me in the local town hall for not paying the rent. He has even gone to the extreme of threatening me for not paying my rent and that's why he has cut off my utilities; right now I do not have electricity or sewage, and the owner of the room has not wanted to fix the roof. This winter I have a lot of leaks in my room which have worsened my health. And Acción Social [Social Action] does not pay out for the rent despite the fact that a year ago I requested an extension of the rental payments" (Suba Afro-Colombian IDP focus group, 2011).

Officials assert additionally that:

"The city dwellers, above all the businessmen, do not want to hear about the displaced population, as they do not link the displaced population to commercial production and do not employ them, and as such it is very difficult to buy from and sell to them and they do not permit the marketing of products offered by displaced persons" (UAO-Government Secretariat official, 2011).

### ***Political Participation in Representative Bodies***

In general terms, the host communities in Suba and Ciudad Bolívar enjoy higher levels of political participation than IDPs. This situation is manifested in greater representation of host community residents on community action boards [Juntas de Acción Comunal], in community organizations, political groups, and even churches, which permits them to exert greater influence on the institutions and guide local resources toward their own priorities.

In contrast with the other IDPs, the Afro-Colombian IDPs are organized and have a particularly strong organizational base in Suba. "Here there is a federation of 15 Afro-descendent participating organizations." While there are Afro-Colombians throughout the town, the

majority is concentrated in two UPZs—Rincón and Tibabuyes (Public official in charge of providing assistance to IDPs in Suba, 2011).

There has been a proliferation of IDP organizations which exert pressure principally on the national and district authorities who have specific duties in the protection system for the displaced, while the local mayors' offices have more general duties. In this sense, the pressure exerted by IDPs, together with the support of the judiciary and particularly the Constitutional Court, has translated into influence and a greater visibility of IDPs' needs in local development agendas, and in the targeting of town resources to assist them.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Assistance from the International Community and the Churches***

The participation of civil society and international organizations fulfills a fundamental and complementary role to the obligatory presence of the state in the localities. In the case of Suba, the Catholic Church's role is particularly noteworthy as regards the assistance it provides to IDPs as well as in its work to organize them along with the host community residents.

## **Economic Relationships**

### ***The Problem of Employment***

In the socioeconomic area, the central problem for IDPs is their inability to generate reliable income. In both localities, IDPs acknowledged having participated in state assistance programs in which money or goods have been distributed as seed capital for small businesses based on IDPs' commercial ventures.

It is an important, though insufficient, state activity. In the midst of conditions of poverty and extreme poverty, any contingency, regardless how simple it may be, such as a health problem or the payment of late rent, constitutes a sufficient reason to make use of the seed capital. As this benefit is provided only once, when this happens, the displaced are left without the ability to generate income or a recognized claim to further assistance from the state system.

### ***Displaced Persons' Access to Formal Employment***

In terms of access to employment, host community residents have more options for participating in the formal market, given the longer period of time they have lived in the city, which has permitted them to improve their educational level and build information networks. Construction and domestic work are the principal sources of temporary employment for the host communities and IDPs in both localities.

There were no cases in the IDP focus groups of participation in the formal employment

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<sup>10</sup> The difficulties of getting the municipalities to effectively commit to the policy of assistance to the displaced population have been amply documented by the Constitutional Court in its Court Order 314 of 2009 following up on Decision T-025 of 2004.



markets as a result of the state assistance they received. Possibly contributing to this situation is the fact that according to the perceptions of some people, the work to which they have access is of short duration, and would mean being enrolled in the formal social security program, which in turn would automatically remove them from the health services and aid programs to which they have a right as registered IDPs.

### ***Displaced Persons and the Informal Economy***

The researchers found that there are significant limitations to IDPs generating their own income given the contexts in which they live. While there are some programs which are intended to assist IDPs to find income in the informal sector, these are limited. Moreover, in the neighborhoods visited, the researchers found many small businesses providing food and other basic necessities in public areas which competed for a clientele that was also impoverished.

In Suba and Ciudad Bolívar, both the host community and IDPs earn their income primarily in the informal sector of the economy, although their involvement in this field is different. While some host community residents own businesses located in their own or rented property, IDPs compete for informal trade opportunities in public spaces.

IDPs also acknowledge the existence of this competition, and as such they do not do their street vending in the neighborhood so as to avoid creating problems with host community residents who also work as street vendors in similar conditions. Some have had confrontations with formal shopkeepers who demand that they move their stalls away from the front of their businesses (Suba IDP focus group, 2011).

The focus groups made clear the serious problems of sustainability of IDPs' livelihoods projects while responsible state agencies claimed to fulfill their duty by funding these projects, regardless of whether or not they were sustainable.

### ***The Rental Market as an Economic Link between IDPs and Host Communities***

For mayors, housing is the issue which poses the greatest challenge for local government institutions receiving IDPs: "The impact of the displaced population [IDPs] is huge. For example, regarding the issue of housing, many 'invasions' are carried out by the displaced population and we have to evict people; we try to find alternative solutions, but in truth there is not enough housing. There is not very much conflict generated over other services... The issue of housing is a disaster at the national and district levels for both the displaced and host populations. Notwithstanding this, we should recognize the national leadership of the district on the housing policy for displaced persons; however, as this policy depends on national policy to be viable, it continues in all cases to be insufficient and very precarious" (Mayor of Ciudad Bolívar, 2011).

A significant number of host community residents have been able to achieve home ownership through a gradual process of legalizing ownership over their property. The consolida-

tion of ownership has been accompanied by a process of progressive expansion in the height of the buildings as additional floors are built on the terraces. With the expansion of the houses, some host community residents are able to generate additional income by renting rooms or apartments—including to IDPs—or operating a business in their homes.

IDPs who participated in the focus groups held for this report said they have received state rental assistance on a temporary basis, which is subject to wide variation in the way extensions are implemented and is dependent on the availability of resources in the system. The intermittent manner in which this assistance has been distributed causes IDPs to face long, indefinite periods of waiting during which time they are often unable to pay their rent. This in turn makes IDPs undesirable tenants and exposes them to conflicts and successive evictions, causing them to live in ever more precarious conditions. Once again, there is state assistance, but it is too insufficient and too intermittent to fulfill IDPs' rights.

Despite the intermittent nature of this assistance, a rental housing market was consolidated which created relationships of economic dependency between host communities and IDPs . This has transpired in a context of a widespread scarcity of public housing in the city of Bogotá, where the construction of new housing is highly restricted due to the lack of available space.

In the search for housing, IDPs feel they are treated differently than the general population. First, they are asked directly if they are displaced before being offered a rental agreement. Second, they face obstacles and are asked to present documents in order to be able to rent a home. Third, they fear getting behind in their rental payments because they know that the next day they could easily be evicted. When asked what makes them scared, the response has consistently been: "I'm scared every month that I must either pay my rent or I'll have to find somewhere else to live" (Suba IDP focus group, 2011).

## CONCLUSIONS

Ongoing, prolonged displacement takes place primarily in the poorest neighborhoods on the periphery of the large urban centers in Colombia, principally those of the capital, Bogotá, DC.

According to the criteria of Colombia's Constitutional Court—that internal displacement ends when the rights of IDPs are reestablished – the country confronts a state of long-term displacement. This is due to both the permanent nature of the armed conflict and the inability of the state to guarantee that IDP rights are exercised completely and in a dignified manner.

### **Urban Areas and Internal Displacement**

Relations between host communities and IDPs are complex. They extend from the greatest solidarity among networks of friends, family members and neighbors when IDPs first arrive to sharp confrontations surrounding the use of public spaces for activities in the informal economy and the housing market. The poverty prevalent among host communities and IDPs exacerbates these conflicts and thus contributes to the ethnic and regional discrimination that exists throughout Colombian society.

The particularly vulnerable situation of IDPs requires preferential treatment and an individual response from the state. Nevertheless, state assistance programs for IDPs should be complemented by socioeconomic benefits for the population as a whole who also have unmet needs. This is the case with education, where it is possible for host communities to understand the need to facilitate access for the IDPs, but this occurs in the context where education is generally available for both host community residents and IDPs.

The housing situation and livelihoods projects are a different matter altogether. In these areas assistance is exclusively for displaced persons in the midst of a population which shares similar needs, and where the state's affirmative action differentiates between IDPs and host communities, thus making their integration difficult.

### **Institutional Relationships**

While the state's programs of assistance for IDPs are very important, it is also true that in the long term these programs lead to divisions between host communities and IDPs who face similar conditions of poverty.

While the state provides assistance for the short and medium term, displacement continues for the long term, often for many years. This contradiction has been noted and documented by the Constitutional Court. It is in the urban resettlement zones such as those

studied in Suba and Ciudad Bolívar where its effects are most evident.

In the case of Bogotá, where there is a universal expansion of the coverage of basic services and infant nutritional needs, there could be greater integration between host communities and IDPs. When everyone has access to state assistance, it greatly facilitates both populations' coexistence.

In fields such as health and education, in which IDPs are permanently incorporated into systems serving the population as a whole, the persons interviewed were generally more satisfied with the level of services. In contrast, in the fields in which state benefits are targeted toward IDPs for a short or medium-term period, IDPs face many problems which become reasons for conflict with host communities. This is particularly the case in access to income generation opportunities, both in the formal and informal sectors, and in access to housing, whether through ownership or rental agreements.

## **Economic Relationships**

One of the central problems in the areas where IDPs settle is the difficulty in securing a regular income – a problem which affects everyone in Suba and Ciudad Bolívar, but even more so the internally displaced population.

The government's methods for supporting the self-generated informal employment of displaced persons partially resolve the problem of income in the short term, but are not sustainable in the medium or long term. However, these small, albeit important measures of providing seed capital should not be seen as an adequate response to the fundamental problem of income generation among IDPs. Such efforts have been shown to be inadequate.

Access to formal employment is quite limited for all inhabitants of poor neighborhoods, but especially for IDPs who often face discrimination by employers because of the area in which they live. The displaced face more obstacles to employment due to their scarcity of connections and training for urban employment, as well as the lack of interest on the part of manufacturing sectors to offer them jobs.

There is serious competition between host communities and displaced persons to establish informal businesses in the public spaces which frequently leads to violent confrontations. For this reason, many displaced persons choose to install their small businesses in different neighborhoods in the city in order to avoid confrontation in their neighborhoods even though this entails higher travel costs.

In addition, IDPs' lack of access to primary and secondary education results in significant deficiencies in training for formal employment. To combat this issue, focus group participants spoke of their desire for higher or technical education to facilitate possible transitions into the more desirable employment opportunities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Regarding Urban Areas

#### ***Standardize the Urbanization Process***

1. Accelerate the processes of standardizing building titles as well as the urban planning of public areas. Irregular urbanization leaves neighborhoods with many deficiencies in terms of public services and public space.
2. Expand the coverage of public services and the acquisition of land for the public's cultural and recreational use as well as for the business ventures of host community residents and IDPs.

#### ***Improve Access to Public Housing for IDPs***

1. Promote the construction and development of dignified public housing solutions for host communities and displaced persons alike by making new spaces available or by means of planned—rather than simply spontaneous—development of the neighborhoods where people already live.
2. Generate a larger supply of land for building purposes in the dispersed vacant lots that are still available for the construction of public housing. These are areas in which the national and district housing subsidies can be effectively applied with grants targeted specifically at IDPs. The absence of housing is the prime reason why the few displaced persons who are lucky enough to have access to subsidies can neither apply them nor acquire housing.
3. Require housing developers to include minimum quotas of land for the construction of housing for IDPs in the land-use plans and licenses for town planning.
4. Complement the generation of a new housing supply with the promotion of multi-story building construction on the terraces of houses which have been standardized and are owned by host community residents.
5. Implement state watchdog mechanisms tailored to the leasing and subleasing of housing.
6. Promote citizen oversight groups composed of both populations for the purposes of maintaining dignified housing, good land use, and learning about mechanisms to promote dignified living and housing.
7. Guarantee the permanence of state cash subsidies for the payment of rent in collective housing. Any interruption in the flow of these resources immediately puts IDPs in a situation of extreme vulnerability vis-à-vis their landlords, which can result in conflict leading to their eviction by the authorities or to the use of violence.

## **Regarding Relations between IDPs and Host Communities**

### ***Support Networks of Family Members and Residents***

1. Develop support and orientation projects for families and networks of residents who provide the initial assistance to IDPs. These networks should not be underestimated, as they constitute the first social organizations providing protection to the displaced.
2. Recognize and strengthen the capacity of the networks of family members and residents to represent the interests of IDPs and link the problems of their areas of origin to their areas of displacement.

### ***Improve Community Awareness***

1. Develop educational campaigns with host communities for the purpose of understanding IDPs' needs.
2. Contribute to the training of IDPs regarding the conditions of coexistence in new cultural-urban environments which can facilitate their integration with the host communities.

## **Regarding Institutional Relations**

### ***Legally and Constitutionally Improve State Assistance Programs for IDPs***

1. Maintain and strengthen IDP assistance policies, in light of IDPs' particular vulnerabilities which have been repeatedly noted by the Constitutional Court in case law.
2. Guarantee full and effective respect for IDPs' rights, as opposed to the partial and temporary manner with which they are currently being addressed by the state.
3. Strengthen the comprehensiveness of the public policy of assistance to IDPs in order to prevent the weakening of existing programs and ensure greater respect for IDPs' basic rights.

### ***Review the Long-Term Orientation of IDP Assistance Policies***

1. Expand the provision of services and respect of IDPs' rights to include those in the host communities who also live in conditions of extreme poverty. It is not morally or legally justifiable that people experiencing the same degree of vulnerability and need receive different treatment. This expansion of the state's social services will permit the coexistence of IDPs and host communities, protect IDPs' rights and diminish the pressure exerted on the system by 'fake' IDPs.
2. Adopt policies structured in favor of Afro-Colombian IDPs, bearing in mind the high levels of socio-cultural discrimination this community experiences from the host community.

### ***Improve Coordination between the National and Municipal Levels of Government***

1. Improve coordination between the national and territorial entities of assistance to IDPs as ordered by the Constitutional Court.
2. Verify by means of monitoring and evaluation indicators the progress of the policy of protection of the displaced at the municipal and local levels.
3. Taking into account the fact that Suba and Ciudad Bolívar are two of the towns receiving the largest number of displaced persons arriving in greater Bogotá, the District government should direct more actions and financial resources to assist IDPs in these areas.
4. Improve coordination between the federal and municipal governments in the provision of services for IDPs. Despite the presence of IDP associations, responses to their lobbying efforts are not uniform and range from receptive to dismissive.

### ***Provide Ongoing Training for Officials***

1. Train authorities and leaders to reject any form of discrimination against IDPs, particularly against the dissemination of unfounded rumors regarding 'fake displaced persons' or that there is no collaboration on the part of the population to develop projects and programs.
2. Train officials on the manner in which the policy is being implemented, the principal obstacles and difficulties, and the progress made in each town.
3. Promote and protect the political participation of IDPs and support their organizations, capacity for dialogue with the authorities and local committees of assistance to IDPs and their integration into the PIUs (Plan Integrado Único [Integrated Unified Plan]).
4. Guarantee, support and encourage the participation of IDPs in state decision-making entities. IDPs are often marginalized from negotiations between the central government and municipalities, as they typically have organizational problems, can be uneasy about appearing in public, frequently face discrimination and are underrepresented.

### ***Keep International and Non-Governmental Organizations Involved Through Actions which Encourage the Integration of Host Communities and IDPs***

1. International and non-governmental organizations should become involved in the issue of the provision of assistance to IDPs by encouraging full compliance with state obligations. However, these organizations should not serve as substitutes for these assistance programs.

2. Adopt assistance criteria which permit the integration of host communities and IDPs by balancing the assistance given by the state in accordance with its legal obligations.
3. Arrange interventions with state authorities and take great care not to encourage the illegal occupation of territories or displacement in at-risk zones.
4. Carry out interventions in a coordinated fashion so that the assistance provided is prioritized, efforts are not duplicated and conflicts are not generated between the groups. This should be an additional effort to the guidelines set by the state in the field of international cooperation.

## **Regarding the Socioeconomic Conditions of IDPs**

### ***Build Capacity of IDPs for Employment in the Formal Sector***

1. Expand the technical and professional training programs for IDPs that could permit them to access employment in the formal sector of the economy.
2. Promote education and literacy projects among internally displaced women.

### ***Support Long-Term Income Generation Projects for IDPs***

1. Develop programs to incorporate IDPs into formal jobs. State plans for promoting small businesses and ventures in sectors which are already depressed lead to greater marginalization of the population in the long term.
2. Maintain the special social services for IDPs when they obtain formal employment for less than six months. Employment for more than six months indicates both a certain stability of their job and their ability to benefit permanently from the regular systems of social security. The automatic termination of IDP benefits which now occurs dissuades IDPs from seeking formal employment.
3. In addition to the construction sector, involve businesses in the generation of jobs that last longer than six months.



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## ANNEX I: METHODOLOGY

In Suba and Ciudad Bolívar, the researchers of this report conducted the following focus group discussions with IDPs and host communities and interviews with 11 government officials and community representatives.

### Focus Groups in Suba:

- Afro-Colombian IDPs settled in Suba (7 persons: 5 women and 2 men). The majority of them were from Colombia's Pacific coast from the departments of Chocó and Cauca while others were from the Atlantic Coast and had arrived in the city two to five years earlier (26 March 2011).
- The IDP *mestizo* population settled in Suba (6 persons: 4 women and 2 men) from different parts of the country, who have lived in the area for a period of three to five years and have informal and temporary work. Two of them participate in a community livelihoods project (26 March 2011).
- The displaced *mestizo* population settled in Suba (15 persons: 10 women and 5 men) (26 March 2011).
- The host community *mestizo* population (8 persons: 6 women and 2 men) who have lived for five to ten years in the area and are involved in community projects. While they and their families have experienced violence, they do not consider themselves to be forcibly displaced, but rather they relate their arrival in the neighborhood to the search for new opportunities. Participants themselves or their heads of household typically made the decision to move there (26 March 2011).
- A member of a development NGO in Suba who works with IDP and host populations in Suba (26 March 2011).
- Five in-depth interviews with foundations that provide assistance to Suba and people from other localities who come to Suba to receive assistance from these foundations. All of them have experience as public officials who provide assistance to the displaced or vulnerable populations. The duration of their employment in their current posts ranges from 6 months to 3 years, but they all had at least two years' additional experience in public service (March-April 2011).

### Focus groups in Ciudad Bolívar:

- Displaced *mestizo* population, El Paraíso (Paradise) neighborhood: 7 individuals (5 women and 2 men) who left their communities of origin two to seven years ago. These women are financially dependent on their husbands or children (27 March 2011).
- Host community population, Paradise neighborhood, Bolívar City: 10 individuals (5 women and 4 men) who have lived in the neighborhood for the past 15-40 years. Similar to the Suba host community focus group, while they have experienced violence,

they assert that their connection to these neighborhoods is voluntary. All of them had experience in community-based work, especially through the community action board (27 March 2011).

Interviews in Ciudad Bolívar:

- Mayor of Ciudad Bolívar (29 March 2011).
- Legal Director of the Ciudad Bolívar Mayor's Office, responsible for combating the urban occupations in the locality (29 March 2011).
- Municipal Representative of Ciudad Bolívar (29 March 2011).
- IDP leader, Paradise neighborhood, Ciudad Bolívar (3 April 2011).
- Official of the District Government Secretariat, the entity in charge of coordinating the District System of Comprehensive Assistance to the Displaced Population in Ciudad Bolívar (4 April 2011).





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