Resilience in Times of Crisis: Testing Social Mobilization in Low-Income Neighbourhoods in Cali, Colombia, During the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis (2020-2022)

Carlos Jose Zapata Alvarez

Thesis submitted to the University of Ottawa
in partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts in Political Science

School of Political Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Ottawa

© Carlos Jose Zapata Alvarez, Ottawa, Canada, 2023

Acknowledgements

I dedicate this thesis to my wife, Nicole, who supported me throughout all these years and gave me her unconditional love. I also dedicate this thesis to my parents, Carlos, Sr., and Gloria, for being an example of integrity and for teaching me the value of hard work. Finally, I would like thank Professor Marie-Christine Doran for her contributions, understanding, kindness, and guidance.

I would like to also thank the University of Ottawa, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Desjardins Group for their support throughout this research.

Abstract

This thesis aims to analyze how low-income communities in Cali, Colombia, responded to the pressures and constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis of 2020 and 2021. The emergency measures that the Colombian government implemented to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus, such as lockdowns and quarantines, as well as the increase on violence from state actors and illegal armed organizations during the summer of 2021, put unprecedented pressures and constraints upon low-income communities in Cali. For this reason, this thesis investigates how civil society groups in low-income communities in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District in Cali organized and mobilized during the pandemic crisis to respond to these challenges. This thesis uses ethnographic methods to explore how low-income communities in Cali engaged in processes of social mobilization during the pandemic crisis, giving special attention to the neighbourhoods of Polvorines, Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, and Potrero Grande. This thesis also investigates particular forms of social organization that low-income communities in Cali employed during the pandemic crisis, such as community kitchens.

Key words: social mobilization in Latin America, social mobilization in times of crisis, social movements, state violence in Colombia, social resilience.

Introduction

During the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, civil society groups—defined in this thesis as "small groups" that foster collective action, the building of identity, and provide communities with the collective organization to improve the quality of life of their members, "serving as a vehicle for the distribution and maintenance of collective goods" (Fine and Harrington, 2004, p. 344)—faced multiple challenges and pressures that obstructed their ability to organize and mobilize due to strict emergency measures, such as lockdowns and quarantines (Brechenmacher et al 2020, p. 1-2). In Colombia, however, these challenges and pressures that emerged because of emergency measures during the pandemic also came in hand with the worsening of poverty and inequalities, which created a more adverse environment for civil society groups in Colombia, particularly those in low-income areas in rural and urban settings (Amaya, 2020, p. 2).

During the first year of the pandemic in 2020, the Colombia government implemented programs to assist those who were being affected because of lockdowns, quarantines, and other emergency measures that tried to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The problem was that these programs, especially in 2020, were insufficient to resolve, or at least stop, increasing rates of poverty and inequalities. In 2020, programs that were crucial to protect the dignity, rights, and subsistence of low-income families fell short and excluded millions of low-income families from accessing these monetary transfers. The programs Solidary Income (*ingreso solidario*) and Families in Action (*familias en acción*) only covered 26% of children in conditions of vulnerability and marginalization, and only 20% of informal workers received financial assistance from these programs during such unprecedented times. These programs also provided very precarious monetary transfers to low-income families. Families in Action, for instance, provided a monetary transfer of 86 USD a month, which also included an increase of 38 USD (Blofield et al, 2021, p. 116-119).

For this reason, I started to wonder how low-income families in Colombia, especially in my hometown Cali, were overcoming all these challenges during the pandemic, such as increasing rates of unemployment and hunger, with such precarious and inefficient state programs. This question motivated me to propose a thesis to analyze social mobilization in Cali and thus be able to analyze how low-income communities responded to these pressures and constraints during the pandemic crisis. This research question, nevertheless, could lead me to various scenarios and results that I was not able to predict in Canada through academic sources. I counted with limited academic resources in 2020 on social mobilization in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali during the pandemic crisis. Most of the information that I had access to came from the local news. Multiple portals started to cover localized protests that emerged in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali due to staggering rates of material poverty and hunger, especially when people in Cali started to hang red rags in their window frames and doors as a symbol of hunger (Semana, 2020, https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/coronavirus-en-cali-protestan-por-falta-de-comida/663735/). However, I did not have access to more detailed publications on how social mobilization was emerging and materializing in these low-income areas of Cali.

Therefore, to remain true to local realities and complexities, I decided to propose a thesis to study and analyze social organization and social mobilization in low-income communities in Cali during the first two years of the pandemic crisis through ethnography. However, I wanted to propose something different in terms of methodologies, or at least to propose an alternative approach, which is the reason that I decided to travel to Cali and gather my data through participatory observations and interviews in October of 2021. I decided to travel to Cali and to employ ethnography because I did not know what to expect in low-income communities in Cali in terms of social mobilization—whether they mobilized or not was still to be answered—. Consequently, I decided to design a thesis that could *test* the ability of low-income communities in Cali to organize and mobilize during the pandemic crisis.

The reader then should expect an ethnographic analysis on how low-income communities in Cali responded to the pressures and constraints that emerged during the pandemic crisis. For this purpose, I will use participatory observations and semi-structured interviews and thus test the ability of these communities to organize and mobilize in times of crisis within their own contexts and local circumstances. I decided to use these methods because "ethnography is a *sensibility*" (Kubik, 2009, p. 5) that can gather and process the local realities and emotional dimensions of participants, as well as to process different phenomena through the contexts of low-income communities in Cali, which is what I aimed for in this research, considering the difficulties that these communities endured during the pandemic.

This ethnographic approach, as I will explain later, proposed multiple solutions to many of the problems that I anticipated in Canada and that I also encountered when formulating my thesis in the field in Colombia, problems that other Latin Americanists have encountered when conducting research in the region (Cesar Cisneros Puebla, 2011, p. 22-23), such as conducting research within the context of informality, state absence, material poverty, and violence. Although this method proposed effective solutions to my research, it also brought new obstacles that I had to overcome. First, I will explain in this thesis those first assessments and impressions of conducting research within the context of a society that went through multiple episodes of civil unrest in 2020 and 2021, which left Cali and its infrastructure in shatters and with a generalized sense of fear in 2021 (Bravo and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 151-152; Lara, 2021, p. 105-111; Salamanca, 2021). Second, I will also explain the difficulties of doing research in areas of Cali that present high homicide rates, especially when these homicides are linked to gang- and drug-related violence (Arana, 2020, p. 83; El Pais, 2022, https://www.elpais.com.co/cali/cifra-de-homicidios-en-cerro-el-ano-pasado-por-encima-de-los-1-200.html). It is important that the reader understands that this research is the result of an ethnographic work that was conducted within adverse and dangerous circumstances, such as the presence of gangs, the lack of public infrastructure, and multiple manifestations of violent phenomena—challenges and threats that people who live in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali face daily.

Even though this ethnographic approach made more complex the development of this research, it allowed me to analyze social mobilization in Cali based on what I was encountering in the field. Consequently, the literature review of this thesis came to be and grew within the boundaries of those realities and local complexities that I encountered in the field, which led me to propose a comparative analysis on how civil society has responded historically to past crises in Colombia. This approach helped me to have a clear indicator on how civil society mobilized and responded to structural challenges related to widespread violence and material poverty on past occasions. In this way, I will be able to point at certain indicators and anticipate how civil society might have mobilized during the pandemic crisis in Cali based on how civil society has organized and mobilized in the past in different regions of Colombia, especially those that have faced multiple crises in rural and urban settings.

This literature review will provide an analysis on past academic works that studied social mobilization in Colombia, especially in communities that have been facing conditions of vulnerability and marginalization—from material poverty to the negative effects of violence in rural and urban settings, especially when adding the effects of the internal armed conflict and the presence of powerful criminal organizations. I will present this literature review through a tripartite analysis of violence in Colombia that will allow the reader to grasp the structural challenges that low-income communities have historically faced in Colombia. In this way, I separate these ample manifestations of violence into three categories (unstable politico-legal changes, corruption, and political violence after democratic openings), where classification makes the understanding of these structural challenges much easier and visible.

This thesis will also present the challenges of doing fieldwork and gathering data for the purpose of this thesis after the 2021 National Strike, which consisted of multiple episodes of widespread protests in Colombia that started in April 2021 after the Duque government presented a tax and healthcare reform before Congress. The *Ley de Solidaridad Sostenible* (Sustainable Solidarity Bill), the backbone of the tax reform, and the structural changes on the General Social Security System sparked a generalized discontent among many Colombians who saw these reforms as detrimental to their well-being (CIDH 2021). During these episodes of civil unrest, the government and groups of armed civilians committed multiple human rights violations, including the murder, disappearance, and torture of people who participated in the protests (CIDH 2021, p. 46). During spring and summer of 2021, Cali homicide rates of almost 60 per 100,000 inhabitants. The most violent months of the year were between May and June, which is when the National Strike took place. During these two months, 331 people were victims of homicides in the city, meaning that Cali had almost six homicides a day during these months (El Pais, 20221). Poor people were also victims of repression and criminalization campaigns, where people in middle-class and wealthy areas of the city started to share information on WhatsApp and other media platforms describing people in low-income neighbourhoods as “poor, bad, and violent” (Bravo and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 151). These acts of aporophobia turned low-income populations in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca into open targets to the police and armed civilians (Bravo and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 155).

In conclusion, I proposed and designed this thesis to *test* the ability of low-income communities in Cali, Colombia, to organize and mobilize during the first two years of pandemic crisis. For this purpose, I used ethnographic methods to gather and analyze data through the local realities, complexities, and emotions of participants. This thesis is then designed to test, but also to capture, how civil society in low-income areas of Cali organized and mobilized their local communities to respond to structural challenges, such as increasing rates of material poverty and widespread violence, during the first two years of the pandemic crisis.

---

[1] https://www.elpais.com.co/cali/cifra-de-homicidios-en-cerro-el-ano-pasado-por-encima-de-los-1-200.html

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review, Theoretical Framework, Research Question, and Hypothesis

1.1 Literature Review

Evidence in the literature shows that civil society groups (CSGs) require an adequate or a minimum degree of physical (human) safety to play a meaningful role in society. If these fundamental guarantees of human safety are not met, state-led violence and other manifestations of violent phenomena could discourage people from engaging in processes of social organization and social mobilization, especially when those manifestations of violence that emerge in times of crisis, as Laia Balcells, Spencer Dorsey, and Juan F. Tellez (2019, p. 1742) argue, "supress dissent" and target those who engage in these processes of social mobilization (Adams, 2017, p. 1-3; also see Davenport 2014; García-Ponce and Pasquale 2019).

In the Latin American context of what Jenny Pearce calls "chronic violence" (Pearce 2007, p. 7), understood as the sustained presence of widespread lethal and non-lethal violence, the physical safety of people who engage in social mobilization is significantly more in danger. In Colombia, for example, the Electoral Observation Commission demonstrated that during the emergency measures of 2020, when CSGs organized and mobilized their communities to counterbalance the negative effects of the pandemic, like mass hunger (Dorado, 2020[2]), illegal armed organizations killed one CSG leader every three days due to their community engagement activities, which illegal armed organizations considered a challenge (El Tiempo, 2020[3]).

During the same year, the United Nations also argued that targeted violence against CSG leaders in Colombia posed the most significant threat to the consolidation of peace (United Nations, 2020). Therefore, the literature, until this point, was leaning towards the idea that targeted violence against people who participate in social mobilization, especially against leaders of CSGs, would result in lower rates of social mobilization in times of crisis in Colombia (Skocpol and Morris 1999, p. 2). However, despite this evidence of widespread violence against those who mobilize in Colombia, the theoretical and historical discussions about processes of social organized and mobilization in times of crisis in Colombia resulted more complex than simply arguing that violence emerge in times of crisis in Colombia, will obstruct the ability of CSGs to organize and mobilize their communities.

---

[2] https://elcomejen.com/2020/07/10/la-olla-comunitaria/

[3] https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/durante-la-cuarentena-cada-tres-dias-asesinan-a-un-lider-moe-505330

The analysis of Colombian scholar Saul Franco (2018, p. 18) proposes that Colombia has gone through a "generalization, complexity and degradation" (Franco, 2003, p. 22) of violence during the intensification of the internal armed conflict. In order to tackle how such overwhelming effects in society may affect social mobilization and avoid the dangers of an 'endless' discussion of violence in Colombia (see Dest, 2021; Ariza et al, 2021), I will propose a tripartite understanding of violence in Colombia, which will provide a filter through which one can analyze some of the most important challenges under which CSGs have organized and mobilized their communities in times of crisis. For this purpose, I argue that social mobilization within the context of violence in Colombia requires the analysis and inclusion of an unstable political and post-conflict context that bring numerous important changes, political corruption (e.g., embezzlement), and political violence. I propose this tripartite understanding of violence to understand how multiple phenomena related to violence and poverty, which are inherent components during episodes of crisis in Colombia, have affected CSGs when organizing and mobilizing in times of crisis (Botello, 2004, p. 35-36).

First, the literature shows that CSGs in Colombia have organized and mobilized through unstable political changes, where laws are enforced depending on the interests of the elected government, especially when a peace process, whether with guerillas or paramilitaries, is in the negotiation or implementation stage. Nobody speaks better about these legal discussions than Eduardo Pizarro (2017, p. 17-21), who argues that Colombia has gone through major constitutional reforms and legal changes due to its complex peace processes with guerillas and paramilitaries after the 1960s. Between 1981 and 2016, for example, the Colombian government has negotiated, providing legal concessions and even reopening the Constitution, with countless guerrillas and paramilitaries, including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) , the M-19, and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia.

During the past three decades, the Colombian government has negotiated the end of hostile activities with three major illegal armed organizations: the M-19 in the early 1990s, the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia in the early 2000s, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia in 2016. These peace processes brought new political and legal changes that were very important in the political and democratic transformation of the country, such as the formation of the National Assembly in 1991, the writing of the 1991 Constitution, the implementation of *La Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz* (Special Jurisdiction of Peace, as of 2016), and the proposition of major rural and political reforms that emerged from the M-19 and the 2016 peace processes (Pizarro, 2017, p. 195-200; and 375).

Monroy Melendez, Yira Rosa, and Darly Velasquez (2018, p. 56-57) argue that although these political and legal changes that emerged from peace processes were supposed to pressure the Colombian government to end the conflict through major reforms and provide a "comprehensive care and reparations for all the victims", they have not always worked in the benefit of victims, who, very often, happen to be members and leaders of CSGs that require special attention from the government, particularly in terms of physical protection and legal and monetary reparations. The incapacity or unwillingness of the different Colombian governments to enforce these new political and legal changes, such as those that emerge from peace processes, have resulted in "recycled cycles of violence" (Sanchez, 2022, p. 199; Venegas, 2021, p. 8), where the unstable conditions and resistance to the implementation of these political and legal changes have intensified manifestations of violent phenomena in multiple regions of Colombia.

The 2016 peace process is an excellent example of how the incapacity of the Colombian government to implement the political and legal changes of the 2016 peace process, such as agreements on non-forced coca eradication projects and productive rural projects, as well as agreements on the protection of members and leaders of CSGs in rural areas, have disproportionally affected CSGs in different regions of Colombia, who have suffered the territorial disputes among existing and emerging illegal armed organizations that compete against each other for territory, the control of coca fields, and drug trafficking routes (CNMH, 2020; United Nations 2019[4]; United Nations, 2022[5]). Indepaz, one of the most active non-governmental organizations in the study of violence in Colombia, demonstrated that these unstable political and legal changes have resulted in the strengthening ofillegal armed organizations in multiple rural regions of Colombia, which, in turn, have resulted in the selective killing of 1,327 CSGs leaders and human rights activists in Colombia between November of 2016 and March of 2022 (Gonzalez, 2022[6]).

---

[4] https://news.un.org/es/story/2022/01/1502572

[5] https://news.un.org/es/story/2019/12/1467341

[6] https://indepaz.org.co/parenlamasacre/

The University of the Andes (2022[7]) also provided a well-developed report on the progress of the 2016 peace process, which demonstrated that this peace process is not fulfilling the timeline for the execution of multiple political and legal agreements. The authors argue that between the fourth and the sixth year, the 2016 peace process was supposed to have a 50% completion average, especially when compared with other countries that implemented similar peace processes. However, the reality is that after five years of implementation, the 2016 peace process only completed 28% of what parties agreed, which leaves victims, especially CSGs leaders and former guerrilla fighters, in a vulnerable legal limbo, especially in terms of physical protection, access to judicial institutions, and monetary reparations.

The unstable implementation of these political and legal changes, manifested through the lack of "resources for land restitution programs" (University of the Andes, 2022), the slow progress on victim reparation programs (only 15% of victims had been compensated by August of 2021), the lack of protection to CSG leaders and human rights activists, and the lack of funding for productive projects in rural areas have resulted in the intensification of violence due to the arrival of other illegal armed organizations after the retreat of FARC. According to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace Report (2021[8]), there was a "reactivation of the armed conflict" in multiple regions of Colombian in 2021, where new and existing illegal armed organizations occupied territories formerly controlled by FARC as a result of the unstable implementation of political and legal changes proposed within the framework of the 2016 peace agreements, leaving many Colombians at the mercy of these illegal armed organizations that seek to expand their territorial control and military power and thus their finances, such as the National Liberation Army (ELN).

Therefore, one can say that although the Colombian government has proposed new political and legal changes to resolve conflicts through diplomatic means, the reality is that these political and legal changes have not always worked in favour of victims, especially leaders and members of CSGs, due to the unwillingness, especially during president Ivan Duque's government that succeeded the 2016 Peace Agreement with the FARC which had been concluded by the former government of president Juan Manuel Santos. In fact, Carlos Perez (2018, p. 95-96) argues that leaders and members of CSGs in Colombia have paid a really high price when the government has proposed new political and legal changes, like it happened in the 2016 peace process, where the unstable implementation of political and legal changes proposed by the 2016 peace process resulted in new cycles of violence that disproportionally affected members and leaders of CSGs, who illegal armed organization considered a threat to their operations and territorial expansion (also see Trejos, 2017). The constant "instability of both laws and their normative references" during periods of political and legal changes have not brought tangible guarantees for members and leaders of CSGs in Colombia, as they were supposed to do. Instead, these political and legal changes have brought new dangerous challenges that leaders and members of CSGs must face every day (Lemaitre and Bergtora, 2015, p. 10).

---

[7] https://uniandes.edu.co/es/noticias/dificultades-y-propuestas-sobre-la-implementacion-del-acuerdo-de-paz-firmado-entre-el-gobierno-colombiano-y-las-farcep

[8] https://www.jep.gov.co/Paginas/En-2021-el-conflicto-armado-se-reactiv%C3%B3-en-12-zonas-del-pa%C3%ADs,-dio-a-conocer-la-UIA-de-la-JEP.aspx

The literature also points that political corruption, such as the misappropriation of public funds, has also been a major structural problem for members and leaders of CSGs, as well as for the entire population of regions that present higher cases of political corruption. The literature says, for example, that those regions of Colombia that presented higher rates of violence and human rights violations, such as the case of the Pacific and the Caribbean regions, also presented higher rates of political corruption and thus imposing major challenges upon the local population, especially in terms of human development and economic growth (Gamarra, 2016, p. 36-37; Alvarez and Gonzalez, 2012, p. 70-71; Gamarra, 2016, p. 36-37; Horbath, 2004, p. 231).

Buenaventura, an important city port located on the Pacific coast of Colombia, just few hours from Cali, is one of those critical cases in Colombia where rampant cases of corruption have resulted in negative impacts on the local economic development and human capital. In 2017, the former mayor, Eliecer Arboleda, misappropriated around two million US dollars from money that was intended to pay for new public services, schools, and the new local hospital. Before that, in 2015, also the former mayor of the city, Felix Ocoro, was sentenced to eight-teen years in prison for embezzlement. He misappropriated more than 5,5 million US dollars from the city budget, affecting the construction and the provision of new public goods and services (Corrupción al Día, 2022[9]).

Political corruption, manifested through the lack of public funds towards education, healthcare, public infrastructure, and social programs, have led most of the population in Buenaventura to live inside what Jairo Nunez and Alberto Carvajal call the "poverty trap" (Nunez and Carvajal, 2017, p. 12). The lack of these fundamental goods and services in Buenaventura, as a consequence of corruption, have contributed and reproduced staggering rates of violence and material poverty due to the lack of life opportunities and dignity for the local population, which, in turn, have affected members and leaders of CSGs in this city and in other low-income regions of Colombia with similar rates of corruption. This lack of resources has strengthened illegal armed organizations in Buenaventura due to the lack of public investments and feasible life opportunities for the local population, which have also led to increasing rates of targeted violence against members and leaders of CSGs whose work aims to change these local realities of violence and corruption (HRW, 2021[10]; also see Sinisterra et al, 2020; Garcia and Delgado 2016; Molinares and Reyes, 2013, p. 8).

---

[9] https://corrupcionaldia.com/sobre-nosotros/

This analysis comes if one envisions the consequences of corruption through a “comprehensive perspective on the nature and role of resources" and understands resources as this whole network of public goods and service that societies have at their disposal (Edwards and McCarthy, 2004, p. 117). This approach on corruption can then explain the difficulties that members and leaders of CSGs must face when discussing how the lack of this whole comprehensive package of resources (e.g., public infrastructure, hospitals, schools) in their communities have reproduced material poverty and contributed to new cycles of violence (Jenkins, 1983, p. 530; see Molinares and Reyes, 2013). Therefore, the absence of this comprehensive package of resources, such as the case of Buenaventura, have forced members and leaders of CSGs to operate in contexts of widespread material poverty and violence (see Gonzales, 2017, chapter 2; see Santisteban, 2020)

The political violence after processes of democratic openings is also a good indicator to analyze the obstacles through which multiple CSGs have organized and mobilized in Colombia. Even though the Colombian government has opened important channels for political participation to historically disadvantaged populations during the past 30 years (see Gomez, 2019; Buitrago et al 2018, p. 33-34), these political opportunities have arrived with great risks, where members and leaders of CSGs have been systematically victims of selective killings, death threats, and political persecution when participating and taking advantage of these democratic openings (Castro et al, 2020, p. 2-3), because of the opposition of other political actors, namely non state armed groups, who oppose these openings for civil society in order to preserve the status quo.

---

[10] https://www.hrw.org/es/report/2021/02/10/lideres-desprotegidos-y-comunidades-indefensas/asesinatos-de-defensores-de

For example, the 1991 Constitution opened new channels for political participation and social organization that benefited ethnic minorities, especially Indigenous communities that started to form their own constituted associations, which gave Indigenous Peoples ideal political guarantees (Villa and Houghton, 2004, p. 14-15). However, as William Villa and Juan Houghton (2004, p. 20) argue, the reality is that leaders and members of Indigenous CSGs have been victims of "political violence"from groups that oppose social changes for marginalized communities. Therefore, illegal armed organizations have disproportionally targeted leaders and authorities of Indigenous CSGs that had taken these democratic openings in their advantage to protect and represent their communities.

The situation of the Nasa People in Cauca, located on the Pacific coast south of Cali, is one of the main examples of how the opening of democratic channels that aimed to benefit historically disadvantaged groups have not worked in the advantage of Indigenous CSGs in Colombia. Illegal armed organizations have targeted those leaders and members of Indigenous CSGs that have assumed a political leadership in their communities, especially those who defend their ancestral territory from illegal economic activities. Illegal armed organizations have killed multiple Indigenous leaders in their attempt to erode Indigenous political leadership and to gain more territorial control, even killing Indigenous leaders in front of their children and family (United Nations, 2022[11]).

Eduardo Arias (2015, p. 156-157) also explains how democratic openings during the 1980s that benefited left-wing political parties in Colombia resulted in the extermination of the Patriotic Union Party, where traditional political parties in collaboration with paramilitaries killed more than "5,000 of its leaders over the course of 20 years, from 1985 to 2005, including 2 presidential candidates (Jaime Pardo Leal and Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa), 8 parliamentarians, 13 deputies, 11 mayors and 70 councilmen". Arias also argues that these democratic opening also resulted in the assassination of presidential candidate Carlos Galan, who remains one of the most important political figures in Colombia and who challenged the status quo of traditional politics.

Scholars and international organizations on human rights have consistently given the example of the 2021 National Strike as one those instances where multiple structural challenges emerged and cohabitated, affecting members and leaders of CSGs in Colombia. During these episodes of manifestations, the Colombian government responded, as Santiago Niño says, with "deployed violence" against those who were protesting (2021, p. 63), which raised concerns about the democratic nature of the Duque government among the international community. Although the 1991 Constitution recognizes the right to life and to protest, following as well international treaties on human rights, Camilo Umana (2021, p. 10) argues that there was an "increase in cases of indiscriminate, excessive and disproportionate use of firearms against demonstrators by the security forces or armed civilians" during the National Strike. The international community also argued that "the high number of reports of human rights violations resulting from the excessive use of force in the context of social protests" (Niño, 2021, p. 86) were worrisome in Colombia. The laws and legal guarantees that the current constitution offers did not stop or at least mitigate the "excessive and disproportionate use of force" by the police, anti-riot police, among other forces of the Colombia government against civil society (Nino, 2021, p. 84). This thesis will discuss the analysis, including the consequences and effects, of the 2021 National Strike in further chapters, especially in chapter 3.

---

[11] https://www.ohchr.org/es/press-releases/2022/03/colombia-un-expert-says-killings-nasa-indigenous-human-rights-defenders

These three points of analysis (unstable political and legal changes, political corruption, and political violence after democratic opening) can really express the widespread violence and structural obstacles that CSGs have operated when organizing and mobilizing their communities in times of crisis in Colombia. This literature approach can show that CSGs in Colombia have operated and defended their communities in a no-win situation, where, as Andree Garces (2018, p. 72-74) holds, "systematic and widespread" violence, material poverty, stigmatization, and criminalization against their members and leaders have played a major role in the way CSGs in Colombia have organized and mobilized in times of crisis to advance social justice and peace in their territories (also see Gonzalez et al, 2022).

However, despite these structural obstacles related to widespread violence and repression, Laura Taylor (2016, p. 146) argues that Colombia has had a "vibrant civil society" and that members and leaders of CSGs have engaged in social mobilizations throughout multiple crises for many decades, especially those crises related to violence (Fernandez et al, 2004). Sandra Bautista (2012, p. 65 and chapter 2) also argues that CSGs have engaged in "high-risk collective action", especially in rural areas, to transform their realities of violence into realities of resistance and dignity through peaceful social mobilizations. The General Report of the Historical Memory Group (2013, p. 367) also highlighted the importance of CSGs during the intensification and degradation of the internal armed conflict in multiple rural regions of Colombia, where members and leaders of CSGs “saved, helped, and protected” victims across the country at the expense of their own lives. The literature here starts to show consistent indicators that CSGs have engaged in processes of social organization and social mobilization throughout multiple crises despite the risks and structural obstacles (McAdam, 1986; Bautista, 2012).

Mary Roldan (2010, p. 66) and Pablo Ortega (2009) argue that CSGs in high-conflict regions in Colombia have developed strong traditions of “citizen participation” despite suffering from “selective and sporadic violence” for many decades. The literature points that rural populations have developed “strong familial, social, and religious networks” (Roldan, 2010, p. 69; Villa and Avendano, 2017), which, in turn, have maintained strong bonds in high-conflict regions and have encouraged CSGs to protect their communities and territories despite the risks. For example, CSGs in the Oriente region have created multiple collective initiatives against illegal armed organizations during episodes of violence intensification, especially in areas where drug cartels and illegal armed organizations have disproportionally targeted the local population. Consequently, the literature here remains consistent that CSGs have actively engaged in social mobilization in times of crisis, especially during periods of sustained violence in high-conflict regions in Colombia (see Roldan 2010).

The literature continues to show that CSGs in Colombia, especially those in conditions of marginalization and vulnerability, have historically thrived to “demonstrate their strength as a community” in times of crisis, especially when facing dangerous opponents, such as illegal armed organizations and drug cartels (Roldan 2010, p. 68). This literature review is crucial to understand social mobilization in Colombia because despite the overwhelming sense of hopelessness during periods of crisis (see Pecaut 1999), CSGs in the country have organized and mobilized their communities against multiple local problems and violent phenomena, even in regions where the internal armed conflict, land dispossession, and drug trafficking remained a pressing obstacle for many decades (see Bautista, 2012).

Following the ideas of Kristian Stokke (2017, p. 194-195), the granting of legal status is important when defining the concept of modern citizenship. Nevertheless, the author explains that beyond the legal status, the concept of modern citizenship also requires other elements, such as membership, rights, and participation. For this reason, Stokke emphasizes that one of the main characteristics of modern citizenship is not so much the granting of legal status as such, but the set of rights that are intrinsically linked to the concept of formal citizenship. This thesis is also supported by Brian Gran and Thomas Janoski (2002, p. 3-4) who also hold that citizenship has political, social, and civil rights that go beyond the granting of legal status. in Colombia, however, there are multiple obstacles that have historically restricted the ability of Colombians to exercise these important elements of modern citizenship, such as political participation. In Colombia, however, exercising these elements of citizenship, such as political participation and social leadership, can lead to dangerous consequences and thus obstructing the ability of people and communities from exercising their full citizenship (see Alvarado, 2019; Gutierrez et al, 2020).

In the context of Colombia, the literature says that phenomena linked to political violence have obstructed the ability of CSGs to fully exercise their most fundamental rights, especially those associated to political rights. For instance, Ariel Avila (2019, p. 63-98) explains that between 1991 and the early years of the 2000s, illegal armed organizations systematically killed, threatened, and disappeared CSGs leaders in multiple rural regions of the country, especially those regions with high rates of drug trafficking and land dispossession. This systematic violence against CSGs leaders in these regions hampered the ability of many rural communities to fully exercise the most fundamental elements of modern citizenship, such as political rights. In many regions of Colombia, many CSGs leaders who occupied public offices were forced to resign by illegal armed organizations. Those who refused were forced into exile, murdered, or disappeared.

The literature says that during the 1990s and early 2000s, paramilitary structures persecuted and exterminated left-wing CSGs and political parties under the counterinsurgency discourse. The case of the left-wing Patriotic Union party is one of the main examples that the literature offers regarding violence against CSGs in low-income and working-class communities, which resulted in the persecution, forced disappearance, torture, and murder of countless CSGs leaders, especially those linked to social causes. The percussion of the Patriotic Union eventually obstructed the ability of CSGs to exercise their political rights for decades to come, particularly those CSGs linked to the advancement of social justice. During this overt persecution against the Patriotic Union, more than a thousand politicians and members of this political party were murdered or disappeared, which ultimately led to the dissolution of the political party and marked more than two decades of absence of mainstream socialist parties in Colombia. In 2016, former president Juan M. Santos, in representation of the Colombian government, acknowledged the responsibility of the Colombian government in the “political genocide” of the Patriotic Union (Verdad Abierta 2021; Rodriguez 2017; Ramirez 2019).

1.1.2 Conclusion of the Literature Review

Although members and leaders of CSG in Colombia have faced multiple structural challenges when organizing and mobilizing their communities in times of crisis, the literature review of this thesis concludes that CSGs in Colombia have historically rose to the challenge of promoting the rights of their communities and territories within the context of widespread violence, material poverty, and the structural challenges explained previously, such as dangerous political openings and unstable shifting legal frames (Forero and Capera, 2020, p. 222-223; Caro, 2019, p. 157-158). The internal armed conflict, forced displacement, targeted violence against members and leaders of CSGs, and other social phenomena related to widespread violence have always clashed against the strength of CSGs that are always willing to mobilize for peace, democracy building, and social justice. The literature states that members and leaders of CSGs have changed their realities of violence and material poverty into realities of peace and reconciliation through social mobilization for many decades in Colombia, even at the expense of their own lives (see Garrido, 2019; Mouly 2018; Van Teijlingen and Dupuits, 2021).

However, this literature review also requires the exploration of what other academic works say regarding the organizational nature of CSGs, especially within the context of a “historical absence and weak presence of the state” in low-income neighbourhoods and communities in Colombia, which is where most CSGs operate (Trejos and Luquetta, 2014, p. 43; see Lara-Rodriguez et al, 2020). In the face of this issue, CSGs have served as the permanent institutional network in low-income communities in rural and urban settings, to the point of even providing fundamental goods and services to the community, such as the provision of water (see Roa et al, 2015). The literature then seems to indicate that CSGs provide more than fundamental goods and services to their communities. The next section of this thesis will discuss the organizational nature of CSGs in Colombia within the context of state absence.

1.1.3 Problématique: The Legitimization Processes of CSGs

Between 2020 and 2021, when emergency measures were imposed to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the state assumed an orthodox “corporatist” attitude and prioritized the interests of the wealthiest families and largest corporations at the expense of the most vulnerable, which facilitated these privileged sectors of society to use state subsidies to protect their own economic interests (Diaz and Prado 2021, p. 10-12; Atwood, 2003; Diaz and Prado 2021, p. 10). During those difficult months of strict emergency measures, where people were forced into their homes and local economies were closed, the state offered multi-million-dollar subsidies to the wealthiest families and corporations of the country while offering only small subsidies to the poorest families (Infobae 2021; Portfolio 2022). Consequently, the “construction of citizenship” landed in the hands of poor people as opposed to landing in the hands of the state (Diaz and Prado 2021, p. 10-12). In the end, people in low-income neighborhoods had no other choice but to organize and mobilize to provide their people with fundamental goods and services, such as water and food (Sassone, 2007; Diaz and Prado 2021, p. 11).

CSGs in Colombia, as well as in other countries that suffer from high rates of poverty and violence in the Global South, have also functioned as non-state platforms to legitimize the social mobilizations and struggles of disadvantaged people, especially before benefactors and supporters. In due time, CSGs in Colombia have demonstrated to be competent non-state actors in the delivery of public goods and services, as well as in the provision of informal platforms to propose local solutions for local problems (see Cadena, 2020). Therefore, one can argue that, in addition to having taken on the challenge of mobilizing to promote peace in times of crisis and violence, CSGs became ethically defensible non-state actors that provided effective non-state planforms for community-based solutions. This, in turn, collected an immense social legitimization within and beyond their neighborhoods due to their work in advancing the well-being and wellness of their people, especially when the state did not provide institutional platforms for the resolution of local problems in low-income communities (Ahedo, 2020, p. 64-65; Hearits, 1995, p. 2-3).

In times when poor people in the Global South were more worried about dying of hunger rather than dying of COVID-19, CSGs provided the “rightful and proper” (Epstein, 1972, p. 1702-3) organizational structure to legitimize the social mobilization of the poor in times of crisis and to design community-based solutions for multiple local issues (see Burt, 1992 Waterman, 2004), which, in turn, attracted resources from outsiders that sympathized with their cause and with their shared sense of social justice (Doocy et al., 2019; Luna, 2018). CSGs allowed people in low-income neighbourhoods to gather, discuss, and design local solutions for local problems through community participation, especially when the state was not providing these platforms for public discussions and solutions (see Burt, 1992 Waterman, 2004).

People wanted to help during the crisis, but they did not want to do so through formal institutions of the state for multiple reasons, including issues of legitimization and trust. Instead, people preferred to donate to local networks of solidarity carried out by local CSGs because they knew their donations were in better hands. Consequently, one can argue that CSGs offered an "on-going process of reason giving" (Francesconi, 1982, p. 49) that legitimized social mobilization, attracted resources from outsiders, provided an effective organizational structure, built partnerships with outside benefactors, and delivered goods and services to their neighborhoods during times of crisis. The evidence then suggests that CSGs are important non-state actors that are at the core when understanding and analyzing both social organization and social mobilization in times of crisis in Colombia (Ramirez and Pinzon, 2015m p. 61-62).

1.2 Theoretical Framework: Theorizing and Conceptualizing Solidarity in Colombia

The theoretical framework of this research wants to introduce a theoretical explanation regarding why CSGs in low-income communities in Colombia have organized and mobilized so actively in times of crisis for so many decades, especially during the pandemics and National Strike, when the cost of organizing and mobilizing has always been so high in Colombia. This theoretical framework wants to discuss and present, in other words, the main principles and concepts that can provide an academic justification respecting why countless CSGs in low-income communities in Colombia have organized and mobilized their communities in the creation of community-based solutions in times of crisis regardless of the risks.

Monica Espinosa (2007, p. 54-56) argues that the "social memory" of Indigenous Peoples in Colombia, for instance, is an excellent example to show that the concept of resistance cannot be understood without the concept of solidarity in Colombia. These processes of social organization and mobilization that occur in marginalized and vulnerable sectors in Colombia are not tethered to individual crisis. Instead, these processes of organization and mobilization are related to the collective memory of those who suffer (Doran, 2020, p 58-59), and "such memory gives meaning to the demands for justice, land and autonomy, and transforms suffering into a political artifact that gives meaning to collective forms of solidarity and resistance." (p. 56).

Laura Taylor (2016, p. 146) explains that CSGs in Colombia have demonstrated that solidarity among their members is what have really encouraged them to help each other during times of crisis instead of that primal instinct for survival that I presented earlier. Their active willingness and desire to offer effective solutions against poverty, violence, and social exclusion despite the sustained violence that they face is key to understanding that there is something more profound and long-lasting behind social mobilization in Colombia. For this reason, Cindy Monroy, Diana Castillo, Natalia Corredor Parra, and Johana Rivera Izquierdo (2014, p. 47-51) argue that these processes of social organization and mobilization in the study of social movements in Colombia, such as *La Mesa Amplia Nacional Estudiantil* (National Student Broad Table), incorporate the "construction of solidarity through collective participation" (put the precise page here, not just 47-51) where these solidarity and communal values enrich processes of social engagement and cohesion. These authors conclude, by giving the example of the National Student Broad Table, that solidarity among people, as well as other values associated to communal values, such as social justice and equality, are at the centre of their social organization and mobilization processes, and is what have fostered social mobilization for so long in other social movements in Colombia despite what Jenny Pearce (2007, p. 7) calls "chronic violence" (also see Rojas, 2021).

This is when the concept of solidarity emerges as the best concept to explain social mobilization in Colombia in times of crisis, which resembles those ideas of "solidarity networks" that Janel Smith has proposed within the study of social mobilization in ethnically diverse societies that face challenging obstacles, such as high rates of violence and material poverty (Smith, 2009 p. 466). I am proposing solidarity as the theoretical foundation of resistance and social mobilization in Cali, Colombia, during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis considering that solidarity is not only a concept that I can theorize, but also a word that is frequently used and understood in the popular lexicon of low-income communities in Cali.

This concept of solidarity that I am presenting for this research navigate through those ideas of "uneventful activism" that have been proposed by Kerstin Jacobsson and Elzbieta Korolczuk (2020 p. 139) in the study of CSGs that have organized and mobilized through "low-key, small scaled" forms of social mobilization and that the mainstream media, local elites, and the state often disregard as legitimate ways of social mobilization (Koobak et al. 2021, p. 126).

This is not to say that large social mobilizations are not important in the understanding of CSGs and social mobilization in Colombia (see Libal and Kashwan, 2020). Instead, as Victor Barrera (2015, p. 69-70) argues, this "great wealth of communal organizations" that operate through their small-scaled networks of solidarity in Colombia provide a more accurate theoretical foundation to evaluate how CSGs organized and mobilized their communities in times of crisis in Cali—not doing so would lead to the exclusion of this extensive and diverse universe of community-based social mobilizations that are so important in the understanding of social mobilization in low-income communities in Colombia, including Cali (della Porta 2008; Scott 1990, p. 200).

The theoretical discussion of solidarity that I am proposing is then, as D'Auria et al. would describe it, aiming at "unpack[ing] solidarity through civic action" and how solidarity becomes the main engine that pushes members and leaders of CSGs to organize and mobilize their communities for the well-being and wellness of their people through community-based strategies regardless of the risks (D'Auria et al., 2019 p. 80). Therefore, solidarity is then understood as those "everyday relations" that occur within civil society and that aim at improving the quality of life of individuals and communities either through locally coordinated mobilizations or sporadic actions, as opposed to large and well-organized social mobilizations (D'Auria et all, 2019 p. 80-81).

First, this theorization of solidarity, as proposed by William Sewell (1996, p. 262) recognizes the power of small events and attributes those small events the power to "transform" society during times of crisis. This means that networks of solidarity within communities, although invisible for outsiders, the media, and bystanders, can have larger effects in society. Therefore, their community-based nature does not mean that they are meaningless in the understanding of how social movements operate and how social change occur (Fuchs, 2016, p.111; see Steup et all, 2018). For this reason, although the mainstream media and the public have placed special attention to large social mobilizations and have considered small social movements and small events irrelevant (Biggs, 2018, p. 351), this theoretical framework argues that small events are crucial in the understanding of social mobilization in Colombia, which is an attribute that emerges from their "transformative effect" (Sewell, 1996: 270).

Second, and continuing with the ideas of William Sewell (1996, p. 262), this theoretical framework sustains that solidarity contributes to the process through which "collective experiences develop" during processes of social organization and mobilization, which, in turn, encourage action and interaction that shape the identity of the collective. Unlike large social mobilizations and social movements, where large amounts of people act and interact in the building of the collective identity and mission statement of the movement, small movements and collectives still preserve a “small, trust-bound affinity” that maintains the group unified (Gillan, 2020, p. 529). Cristina Flesher (2010, p. 394) offers an analysis on the relation between collective action and the formation of collective identity, which contributes to the discussions of this theoretical framework. Flesher presents the work of Nancy Whittier and Verta Taylor (1992, p. 105) and Guobin Yang (2000, p. 381-382), especially the work of Whittier and Taylor, who argue that collective identity “derives from members’ common interests, experiences and solidarity” and thus showing the profound relationship between collective action and identity formation during processes of social mobilization. Therefore, this theoretical framework gives these actions and interactions in small events during periods of social mobilization the power of creating collective experiences that eventually frame collective identities.

Third, Donatella della Porta (2008 p. 48) argues that small social mobilizations “produce effects not only […] on the authorities or the public opinions but also on the movement actors themselves”, meaning that these small processes of social mobilization produce “effects” on political authorities (e.g., law enforcement agencies, local governments, political parties), the public opinion, bystanders, and participants through collective action. This means that this theoretical framework assigns small events and social movements within communities the power of engaging and influencing outsiders, especially in terms of support, opinion, and perception (Swim et al, 2019, p. 2-3). Consequently, the effects of small social movements can reach outside of the intimacy of their own communities, movements, and people.

Moreover, these effects that solidarity triggers, as della Porta also argues (2008 p. 48), have a high “cognitive, relational, and emotional” effect on participants and bystanders, which is fundamental to understanding those emotions linked to solidarity during times of crisis in low-income communities in Cali. For instance, these networks of solidarity promote a sense of “plurality” that unifies groups despite their differences due to the way people connect to each other emotionally (della Porta, 2008 p. 48), which is an important factor within the context of societies that have high rates of multiculturalism and socioeconomic inequalities, such as the case of Cali. For this reason, solidarity triggers an “identity building” component that transcends material demands and differences, which, in turn, opens the discussion to more abstract demands, such as the preservation of identities, culture, and history of communities (della Porta, 2008, p. 48-49).

Therefore, this theoretical framework, following the ideas of Tianna Paschel and Mark Sawyer (2008, p. 202) in the study of Afro-Brazilian movements, argues that small events and small social movements have the power to bring new dimensions into social mobilization, such as issues related to "discrimination, inequality, and the history of the brutality and resistance" and thus highlighting "the historic and cultural significance of this figure and these communities". Therefore, small events and social movements can have the power to address and to propose local solutions to issues related to postmaterialist demands, even within the context of societies that are still trapped within prematerialist socioeconomic conditions (Dobson, 2016, p. 50-51; see Paschel and Sawyer, 2008). This theoretical framework, to resume, sustains that small events can also have the power to address postmaterialist issues in circumstances where "physical sustenance and safety" seem more important than "belonging, self-expression, and the quality of life" (Dobson, 2016, p. 51; see Bustillo, 2021).

Although this theoretical framework includes the identity component of solidarity and how this creates bonds that can eventually lead to the "challenge of culture" and other structural changes in society, where marginalized and excluded groups challenge the hegemonic culture and oppose social structures within their societies and thus push their own agendas in the name of social justice and inclusion (della Porta, 2008, p. 48-49). This theoretical framework does not ignore the fact that solidarity can also have a dividing effect that might lead to what Heinz Hollan calls (1982, p. 868) "class antagonism", which might affect society in a more general sense. Therefore, although della Porta (2004) argues that solidarity can produce strong social bonds in disadvantaged communities that contribute to these processes of social mobilization, della Porta (2008 p. 50) also recognizes that solidarity can create "alliances and opponents" during "cycles of protests" that encourage one social group to mobilize and act against other social groups that are perceived as the rivals.

In conclusion, the theoretical framework of this research will facilitate the analysis of these small social mobilizations and small events and what they trigger in society. The theorization of small social mobilizations is meant to delineate the nature and reach of what Colombian scholar Natalia Perez (2017, p. 73-74) calls "new forms of organization and community mobilization", which, despite their size, are able to engage in remarkable forms of social resistance, such as the example that Perez offers in the study of communal mobilization in rural areas of Cali. In this way, following the ideas of Todd Rogers, Noah J. Goldstein, and Craig R. Fox (2018, p. 376), this theoretical framework can explain why despite the high costs and low benefits, people decide to engage in social mobilization and thus understand these processes of communal resistance that "particularly personal, entail social accountability, harness positive social norms, are identity relevant, and leverage social networks". However, the understanding and introduction of these theoretical discussions and how they manifest in society through community-based networks of solidarity require the analysis of the pressures and constraints that the pandemic crisis imposed upon CSGs in Colombia. For this reason, the next section of this thesis will introduce the challenges, especially those related to violence, that emerged during the pandemic and that affected CSGs in Colombia.

1.3 Civil Society Groups During the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis: presentation of the research question

The COVID-19 pandemic imposed new pressures and constraints that challenged the ability of CSGs in Colombia to organize and mobilize in times of crisis, especially when dealing with other issues, such as state absenteeism, the worsening of socioeconomic conditions, and increasing violence. Illegal armed organizations in rural and urban settings adopted new roles, which changed the dynamics of violence during the pandemic crisis. For instance, in some low-income neighbourhoods of different rural and urban municipalities, illegal armed organizations implemented curfews, distributed pamphlets, enforced social distancing measures, restricted mobility, administered the distribution of government aid, and delivered food and medical supplies. Many illegal armed organizations, like in the case of criminal gangs in La Loma, Antioquia, assumed the responsibility of enforcing emergency measures against the spread of the COVID-19 virus, which is ideally the responsibility of the Colombian government (Gomez, 2020, p. 13-14).

For this reason, Omar Carrasquilla (2021), reporter of *El Espectador*, argues that the pressures of the pandemic and the emergency measures have not stopped criminal organizations from expanding and exercising their power and influence in Colombia during the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, illegal armed organizations have adapted and expanded under the new circumstances and have exercised new roles in society. In Cartagena, as stated by Carrasquilla, Luis Buelvas, a CSG leader from the Nelson Mandela neighbourhood, says that illegal armed organizations during the pandemic crisis have intensified their criminal activities, persecuted CSGs leaders, and increased their presence in low-income neighbourhoods of the city.

In the case of Cauca, illegal armed organizations have also expanded during the pandemic and are now moving freely throughout the territory. Like in low-income neighborhoods in Cartagena in 2021, illegal armed organizations in Cauca have targeted CSGs and their leaders, especially in the northern municipalities of the department (state). During 2020 and 2021, CSGs mobilized against the emergency measures that the Duque administration imposed— the lockdowns restricted mobility and freedom, which affected the income of informal workers and deepened socioeconomic inequalities in rural and urban settings (see Pardo 2020)—and against the expansion of illegal armed organizations. Unfortunately, these local social mobilizations have not stopped guerrillas, drug cartels, and paramilitaries from committing multiple terrorist attacks against members and leaders of CSGs in the region (Sanchez 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic also brought a budget crisis in 2021 that forced the former President of Colombia, Ivan Duque, and the former Minister of Finance, Alberto Carrasquilla, to propose and pass—almost at all cost—a tax reform that many Colombians found detrimental against the poor and the middle class, which sparked a generalized discontent against the Duque administration across multiple regions in Colombia (BBC 2021). In Cali, nonetheless, episodes of civil unrest were more disruptive than in the rest of other cities in Colombia. During these episodes of civil unrest, protesters stopped goods from entering and leaving the city, forced local businesses to close, and engaged in disruptive forms of protesting for several weeks (Loaiza, 2021).

During these episodes of civil unrest in Cali, illegal armed organizations and law enforcement agencies of the state saw members and leaders of local CSGs as a threat and the source of civil disobedience (Garzon 2021). In multiple low-income neighbourhoods of the town, illegal armed organizations and law enforcement agencies of the state carried out “generalized” (Verdad Abierta, 2021) forms of repressive strategies that led to constant aggressions against CSGs and to the selective killings of many of their leaders. The emergency measures also made CSGs leaders more vulnerable, where most CSGs leaders were forced into their homes, like the entire population, which, as a result, made them an easy target for illegal armed organizations. Many CSG leaders were killed inside their own homes due to mobility restrictions. In many low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, local CSGs struggled to drive law enforcement agencies of the state and illegal armed organizations out of their communities. Lamentably, despite their efforts, CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods continued being targeted, persecuted, and stigmatized during these episodes of civil unrest and during the pandemic (BBC, 2021).

However, there is the question of how these new circumstances that emerged during the pandemic crisis affected the ability of members and leaders of CSGs to organize and mobilize their communities during the pandemic crisis. In other parts of the Global South, emergency measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus, such as lockdowns and quarantines, among other emergency measures, restricted the ability of local CSGs to "meet, organize, and advocate" (Brechenmacher et al 2020, p. 1-2). However, considering the history of resistance of CSGs in Colombia, which have historically shown a "series of practices" that have counterbalanced the negative effects of multiple crises for many decades regardless of the risks (Tobon, 2018, p. 163), this thesis wants to find out whether the challenges and constraints that the pandemic imposed diminished the ability of CSGs in Cali to organize and mobilize in times of crisis.

One can argue that CSGs in Colombia have successfully organized and mobilized in times of crisis on past occasions, especially in terms of countering the negative effects of violence through peaceful social mobilization. However, the unprecedented challenges that brought the pandemic crisis caught many societies off guard and imposed new obstacles upon low-income, marginalized communities (Brechenmacher et al 2020). For this reason, this thesis wants to test whether CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali were able to organize and mobilize during the pandemic crisis in the same way they have been doing so on past occasions.

In order to assess this question, we need to ask the following research question: Considering the unprecedented pressures and constraints of the pandemic crisis between 2020 and 2021, such as extended and strict lockdowns and quarantines, how did low-income neighbourhoods in Cali continue organizing and mobilizing, and how did they create/maintain solidarity and communal values during the pandemic?

1.4 Hypothesis

Although Colombia went through a process of political reorganization after the passing and implementation of the Constitution of 1991, which opened political channels of participation and permitted ethnic minorities and alternative political parties and associations to organize and mobilize more efficiently, this thesis will not focus on large social mobilizations like those of well-organized trade unions (Londono, 1997, p. 87-88). This is not to say that large social mobilizations are not important to understand social mobilizations in Colombia. Instead, and to answer the research question of this thesis directly, this research will pay special attention to those small social mobilizations that occurred within the boundaries of low-income communities and rarely caught the attention of outsiders. I decided to implement this approach because, unlike large social mobilizations, local social mobilizations are essential to understand the community building processes of low-income communities in Colombia (Serrano, 2017, p. 99-100; also see Flechas and Preciado).

CSGs in Colombia have mobilized against multiple crises regardless of the consequences for many decades (see Taylor, 2016; Fernandez et al, 2004). On the one hand, I need to consider that the pandemic crisis imposed new challenges and constraints that disrupted and limited the ability of CSGs worldwide to organize and mobilize (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2021, p. 13). On the other hand, I must acknowledge that the evidence in Colombia suggests that large CSGs mobilized actively during the pandemic, which is a good indication for the research question of this thesis. These large CSGs, such as university student associations and trade unions, mobilized multiple times during the pandemic against the Duque administration and the tax reform (Sanchez et al ,2021, p. 7-8). Therefore, even though this thesis is not focusing on large social mobilizations, the way university students and trade unions mobilized repeatedly during the pandemic crisis is a good indicator that civil society in Colombia was not static during the pandemic crisis of 2020 and 2021 (Rojas, 2021, p. 22-23).

Hypothesis:

For this reason, the hypothesis of this thesis suggests that: CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, which were the most susceptible during the pandemic crisis due to their vulnerable socioeconomic condition (Hurtado and Castillo, 2021, p. 45), did not stay motionless during the pandemic crisis, and instead, adapted their existing networks of solidarity and created new ones to survive the pressures and constraints that emerged between 2020 and 2021 in the same way they have adapted and survived past crises, especially when confronting widespread violence and material poverty (Bergquist, 1992, p. 107; Acuna 2021, p. 59).

However, the hypothesis of this thesis will also propose an “abductive” approach (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012, p. 167-168; Charmaz, 2009, p. 137–38), which will include other aspects and characteristics of these local social mobilizations that might emerge during fieldwork and that might go beyond the initial research question.

Therefore, in this thesis, we will seek to prove the following hypothesis: The hypothesis of this thesis formulates that low-income neighbourhoods in Cali though their community-based CSGs did not remain motionless during the pandemic crisis, and instead, this thesis anticipates that low-income neighbourhoods in Cali have created and maintained community-based strategies that allowed them to overcome the new realities, pressures, conditions, and constrains that the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and emergency measures imposed upon them.

CHAPTER 2

Research Design and Methodology and Ethnographic Context

2.1 Research Design and Methodology

According to Cesar Cisneros Puebla (2011, p. 22-23), interpretivism has resolved those practical issues (e.g., illiteracy, lack of credible state sources) that researchers must confront when conducting research in Latin America. This research methodology has offered researchers alternative research tools that are better equipped to grasp the local realities and human experiences of societies in the region, as well as to study social phenomena within its own local conditions (Guzman and Barnett 2019; also see Montero-Sieburth, 1992). For this reason, this research will use interpretivist and ethnographic research methods (semi-structured interviews and observations) that will offer leaders and members of CSGs a much larger role in the gathering and analysis of data, as well as in the production and framing of results. In such manner, this research will study networks of solidarity through the collective (combined) interpretation and analysis of participants and myself.

I decided to implement this methodology because I wanted to provide a research platform that was able to grasp those “counterhegemonic” and “narrative changer” discourses of members and leaders of CSGs in low-income communities in Cali. This methodology will provide more accurate data that will strengthen the voices of members and leaders of CSGs and that will explore networks of solidarity within their own sociological context (Guzman and Barnett 2019, p. 19-20; also see Anderson and Montero-Sieburth, 1998). In such manner, I will immerse myself within these low-income communities and thus be able to observe and understand how these community-based networks of solidarity operated during the pandemic crisis through the experiences of members and leaders of CSGs in Cali.

For this reason, I decided to use semi-structured interviews that will go in hand with the abductive nature of this research. During the interviews, members and leaders of CSGs in low-income communities in Cali will have the chance to discuss freely and openly their roles in the emergence and functioning of networks of solidarity during the pandemic crisis within their communities, as well as their personal experiences during such unprecedented times (Silverman 1998, p. 8; Blau and Schoenherr, 1971). These semi-structured interviews were either audio recorded or written down, depending on what interviewees decide. I chose semi-structured interviews because they generate data that will reflect the realities and human experiences of participants due to its flexibility and open-ended formatting (Guzman and Barnett 2019, p. 480).

This thesis will also use participatory observations, where I will conduct observations before and after the interviews have been performed. In this way, I will combine the individual and collective experiences of participants with the analysis of what I have observed in the field and thus reduce my own personal bias (Clark et al. 2009, p. 357). This methodology will also "re-evaluate" and contrast the information that I have gathered during the interviews against the data gathered during participatory observations (Clark et al. 2009, p. 356).

I adopted these interpretivist and ethnographic strategies and chose these points of data collection because I want to gather the individual and collective experiences of members and leaders of CSGs in low-income communities in Cali during fieldwork. I decided on this approach because these networks of solidarity have operated outside of the "legal and regulatory frameworks" of the state and society, which makes their study more difficult due to their informal nature (Loayza et al. 2009, p. 157). Therefore, to gather the information that I require for this research, the capturing of human experiences of members and leaders of CSGs in low-income communities in Cali is imperative to produce results that are accurate and true to the local realities.

Moreover, these methods and strategies will ensure that instead of bringing or imposing words from the outside, this methodology will allow me to incorporate terms, adjectives, narratives, and discourses that have emerged within the neighbourhoods where networks of solidarity have emerged and operated. Language has been a powerful tool that political and economic elites in Colombia have used to criminalize and stigmatize the poor (see Angel 2010). Therefore, giving participants the power to frame their own discourses and narratives during this ethnographic research will guarantee that I will be using a language that they approve. The methodology of this research goes as well in tune with the role that CSGs have played within the framework of the post-conflict era, where collaborative methods of discourse-building have taken the centre stage (see Cadavid 2019).

2.1.2. Conducting Research Within the Context of Violence

This thesis understands the complexity and the danger of working with members and leaders of CSGs in Colombia and collecting data within the context of "systemic violence" against members and leaders of CSGs in Cali (Turriago, 2022, p. 125). However, although I do recognize the constant danger of working in the field and collecting data within this context, I decided to use “interpretivist ethnography” (Brigden and Gohdes, 2020, p. 251) because these research methods will allow me to observe and analyze “individual- and groups-level information” (Brigden and Gohdes, 2020, p. 253) in the field and within their own realities, particularly through semi-structured interviews and participatory observations, which are effective research methods to observe and analyze the experiences of victims, bystanders, and perpetrators within the context of widespread violence.

I also decided to use interpretivist ethnographic methods for this thesis because, as I have mentioned above, these research methods are effective in the analysis of political and social phenomena through context-specificity (Thaler, 2021, p. 20), which will allow the proper gathering of individual and collective experiences of certain individuals and groups regarding the way they experience violence. This is very important for this thesis because although I am also from Cali—born and raised—, I have not experienced violence through the same experiences of members and leaders of CSGs in low-income communities in Cali, especially those of racialized groups. I do acknowledge my privileged socioeconomic position as a Colombian of Spanish ancestry, from a privileged area of the city, and who is forming himself academically abroad. Members and leaders of CSGs in low-income communities in Cali experience widespread violence and material poverty differently, and therefore, this thesis demands the use of research methods that can address the research question of this thesis without excluding their experiences during the pandemic crisis (Brigden and Gohdes, 2020, p. 253).

This “hermeneutical approach to qualitative-interpretivist research” has demonstrated to be effective in avoiding the imposition of “preconceived categories” in the analysis and interpretation of “local meaning-making” (Bliesemann and Furnari, 2020, p. 431). In other words, this methodology will make sure to isolate my local experiences when dealing with widespread violence and material poverty, recognizing that members and leaders of CSGs—either because of their socioeconomic condition, ethnicity, or political ideologies—experience these structural issues differently (Villar, 2016, p. 178). This thesis is therefore proposing this interpretivist and ethnographic approach to isolate the experiences of members and leaders of CSGs from my own experiences when dealing with widespread violence and material poverty in Cali, especially in times of crisis.

These research strategies are also the reason that I implemented rigorous ethical and safety guidelines to protect members and leaders of CSGs that participated in this research, as well as my own physical safety during the process of collecting data in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali. Although the "interpretivist paradigm" (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020, p. 43) and ethnographic research methods have allowed researchers to gather and analyze data through the experiences and perceptions of participants within their own local contexts, these research methods also expose the researcher and participants to certain risks that will vary depending on the nature of the research. For this reason, I followed a rigorous safety and ethical guidelines and during the collection of data in the field. De Menos a Mas Foundation, a local non-governmental organization, and its leader, Walter Paz, provided recommendations on safety protocols and ethical practices while conducting fieldwork research in low-income communities in Cali. I then added these recommendations to the ethics certification of this thesis.

These recommendations consisted in the following points: first, I was allowed to carry out participatory observations and interviews in low-income neighbourhoods only during day and never during the night, preferably in the morning. Second, I was not allowed to disclose personal information of members and leaders of CSGs, including their names, addresses, and the names of their organizations. Third, I was not allowed to carry personal information of participants in the field, such as notes or documents with their names, organizations, and addresses on them. This specific precaution emerged due to the selective killings of members and leaders of CSGs after the episodes of civil unrest during 2021 (Osorio, 2022, https://www.elespectador.com/judicial/tres-jovenes-vinculados-al-paro-nacional-en-cali-han-sido-asesinados-en-una-semana/). Forth, members and leaders of CSGs could stop the interviews at any time and could request their interviews to be removed from this thesis. Participants could also decide the extent of the topics that we discussed during interviews—meaning that participants had the absolute control over what topics we discussed during interviews and the length of these topics—.

I met with members and leaders of CSGs in local community centres or public parks when De Menos a Mas or the local CSGs were carrying out community activities. In this way, we used the community activity to deviate the attention of local gangs and other illegal armed organizations. I always interviewed members and leaders of CSGs in private, usually in empty offices inside community centres or far from other people when De Menos a Mas or the local CSG were carrying out an activity outside—we pretended to be taking a break, sometimes we were having lunch or having a snack, while carrying out the interview. These precautions emerged since members and leaders of CSGs announced their concerns regarding their safety. During our first contact through the phone, they expressed their willingness to cooperate, but they made sure I understood their safety concerns.

This resulted in all A members and leaders of CSGs refusing to be recorded and asking if I could take notes without including information that could lead to them. Therefore, I had to be cautious regarding the information I wrote while taking notes in the field and during interviews. I arrived in Cali two months after what locals called the National Strike, which were extended periods of civil unrest that took place between the summer of 2020 and July of 2021, which created a generalized sense of fear among the local population, especially on members and leaders of CSGs, which illegal armed organizations and law enforcement agencies of the state targeted for their participation in local community activities during these episodes of civil unrest (Aguilar, 2020, p. 29; Externado University, 2021, https://www.uexternado.edu.co/ciencias-sociales-y-humanas/sobre-el-paro-nacional-en-colombia-2021/). I will discuss further implications of violence while carrying semi-structured interviews and participatory observations in the field in chapter three, where I will discuss in more detail the data that I collected in the field within their own local contexts in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali.

2.2 Context of Questions and Questionnaire

One of the main goals of this thesis is to be able to gather and analyze data, as well as to generate academic knowledge, by crossing what locals in Cali call the “informality border” and thus understand the complexity of an always-changing society that is dominated by informality. The ability to cross that border is crucial to comprehend the livelihoods and community organization processes of low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, where informality has played a very important role for many years (see Tokman, 2011; Utzet, 2021; Martinez et al, 2017). Therefore, gathering information in the field and processing the experiences of members and leaders of CSGs were crucial to evaluate how CSGs in Cali organized and mobilized during the pandemic crisis.

In Colombia and in many other industrialized countries of the region, like Mexico and Brazil, informality has remained one of the most important strategies of survival for the unskilled, low-income population (Martinez and Short 2017, p. 35). Informality has allowed low-income communities in Latin America to propose effective solutions to their local problems, especially those related to unemployment and the lack of public goods and services. However, informality in Colombia can take many forms in these neighbourhoods, from labour informality or street vending (see Arango and Florez, 2021) to the informal organization and expansion of low-income neighbourhoods in urban and rural settings, especially in the periphery of large cities (see Cordoba and Perez, 2020).

Low-income neighbourhoods in the region have been historically the target of state repression, police brutality, and racial discrimination. The local population in some of these neighbourhoods, such as the case of favelas in Brazil, have maintained their communities as informal (illegible) spaces on purpose to keep law enforcement agencies of the state out of their communities. In this way, the lack of street names, street numbers, postal codes, paved roads, among other essential goods and service have obstructed the ability of the police and other law enforcement agencies of the state to surveillance, patrol, control, and terrorize people in low-income neighbourhoods (see Freeman, 2014). In some cases, police officers and public servants, such as mail carriers and government officials, require the assistance of people from the favelas to drive through these neighbourhoods due to their informal urban organization (Freeman, 2014, p. 10-11). Therefore, informality can also have a “camouflage value” that can protect low-income communities from these processes of “occupation and invasion” that law enforcement agencies of the state and illegal armed organizations have carried out in low-income communities in the region (Scott, 1998, p. 65; Dowdney, 2003, p. 57).

In the case of Cali, informality has also played multiple roles in society, especially in low-income communities and in the operations of local CSGs. Economic informality has remained as one of the easiest ways to generate income in Cali for the unskilled labour, where more than half of the labour force in the city engages in informal economic activities to earn a living due to the lack of formal jobs. Many of these informal workers who make a living through the dynamics of local informal economies are of African and Indigenous descent, who are disproportionally affected by unemployment and racial discrimination (Guayara, 2012, p. 8-9).

However, as in the case of favelas in Brazil, informality in Cali has also remained an important strategy for the physical survival of the poor, especially for members and leaders of CSGs who engage in social mobilization and become the target of law enforcement agencies and illegal armed organizations within their communities. According to the Center for Studies of Law, Justice, and Society (Lalinde, 2019), law enforcement agencies of the state in Colombia have systematically monitored, targeted, and repressed members and leaders of CSGs. The police and the army, for instance, have been subject to multiple investigations for human rights violations during episodes of popular mobilizations and for spying members and leaders of CSGs, as well as journalists and union leaders, that they consider enemies of the state and promoters of left-wing, subversive ideologies (Semana, 2020).

Therefore, the systemic violation of human rights that the armed forces and the police have perpetrated in Colombia have pushed members and leaders of CSGs to design unconventional mechanisms to protect their physical integrity, considering that the state is not providing guarantees for their physical protection and, on many occasions, is also the perpetrator. Protecting their identities by covering their faces during episodes of popular mobilizations and by not formalizing their CSGs and thus remaining informal (illegible) are real-world and practical examples of those unconventional mechanisms that members and leaders of CSGs have implemented to avoid being spied, monitored, targeted, and repressed by law enforcement agencies of the state and illegal armed organizations during episodes of social mobilization in times of crisis (see Lalinde 2019).

For this reason, I designed a methodology and a questionnaire that could extract and process the ways in which members and leaders of CSGs have organized and mobilized their communities during the pandemic within the context of informality, which makes more difficult the access and visibility of data in the field and through quantitative sources. The way that I asked and carried out my interviews, which was more of an open conversation rather than a rigid interrogation, allowed me to filter the emotional complexities of members and leaders of CSGs, where interviewees talked about very traumatic events that they went through during the pandemic crisis, the sacrifices that members and leaders of CSGs made to create and sustain their networks of solidarity, among other topics that were very emotional for them (Hoffman, 2007, p. 322-325). Consequently, the questions of my questionnaire wanted to find out through fieldwork how these networks of solidarity and strategies of members and leaders of CSGs emerged and operated within their own realities and context of informality, as well as what really pushed them to create these networks and the effects of these networks on their communities.

Since these low-income communities in Cali presented high rates of informality and those strategies that members and leaders of CSGs have carried out within their communities are most of the time invisible for outsiders (Lombard, 2012, p. 251-256), I used the following questionnaire, which is visible in Appendix 1, that allowed me to see, identify, and analyze these strategies, especially for me, as a student researcher who is an outsiders and lacks the local knowledge to identify, understand, and analyze these strategies.

This questionnaire was written in English and in Spanish and was submitted for ethics approval after two months of participatory observations in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, which facilitated the development of questions. The main questions also had secondary questions that allowed me to know in more detail the way members and leaders of CSGs organized and mobilize their communities during the pandemic, as well as other aspects of these networks and strategies that are only visible for those who participated in these community-based networks of solidarity and are from these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali. The challenge is now choosing specific locations for the gathering of data in Cali and introducing these points of data collection in low-income neighbourhoods, which I will introduce in the next section of this thesis.

2.3 Points of Data Collection: The Highlands and Potrero Grande

I decided to observe and study members and leaders of CSGs in the Highlands or what people in Cali call the "periphery" (see Tabares et al, 2020, p. 603)—which are those low-income neighbourhoods situated on the western mountains of the city—because I have been collaborating with members and leaders of CSGs in these communities for the past twelve years before starting this thesis. This long-lasting relationship that I already had with these communities made the ethnographic component of this research much easier in terms of connecting with the people from the community and gaining their trust, especially with the elders and CSG leaders, who are frequently in the frontline of the social, cultural, and political activities in these low-income neighbourhoods.

However, I could not do fieldwork in all the neighbourhoods situated on the Highlands of Cali due many logistical challenges, especially in terms of mobility and safety. These neighbourhoods cross the entire city from north to south and have severe problems of gang-related violence, as well as inadequate public infrastructure and public transportation (see Rodriguez et all, 2019), which limited my options and forced me to be more selective. This is when I decided that I would do fieldwork in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, and Polvorines, which are three neighbourhoods in the southwestern part of the mountains that I already had strong ties with. I started working with members and leaders of CSGs in these three neighbourhoods since 2011 and collaborated with local CSGs throughout multiple community processes, including in the construction the local school and the community centre. Moreover, I already had experience overcoming logistical and safety issues in these neighbourhoods, so it was evident that these three neighbourhoods were the best candidates for my ethnographic work.

I also wanted to expand beyond the Highlands and decided to include the Agua Blanca District into my ethnographic work, which is also one of the poorest areas of Cali with alarming rates of material poverty and violence (Martinez et al, 2019, p. 3). However, I could only choose one neighbourhood from the Agua Blanca District, Potrero Grande, due to safety concerns. This area of the city has been the epicenter of gang-related violence for many years, where 40% of total homicides between 2014 and 2018 in Cali occurred in this area of the city, which is a tendency that keeps getting worse throughout time (Arana, 2020, p. 83). For this reason, my options were very limited, and I could only provide effective logistics, ethical practices, and safety protocols in Potrero Grande.

I decided to choose Potrero Grande since many members and leaders of CSGs from the Highlands, as well as De Menos a Mas, have also worked with members and leaders of CSGs from Potrero Grande, which facilitated the logistics, the application of ethical guidelines, and the fulfillment of safety protocols for this fieldwork. With the help of De Menos a Mas and CSGs from the Highlands, I organized transportation, interviews, and participatory observations more efficiently in Potrero Grande, which helped me to perform semi-structured interviews and participatory observations without putting myself and others in danger, especially within the context of a neighbourhood that presents high rates of “micro-trafficking, gangs, and invisible borders” in Cali (Arana, 2020, p. 98). The challenge was now to find members and leaders of CSGs in these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali that were willing to participate in my thesis and find local networks of solidarity in operation that I could observe.

I also selected these areas of Cali to conduct ethnographic work because De Menos a Más has had an important presence in these areas of Cali since its foundation. I co-founded this organization with Walter Paz and Laura Zuluaga more than ten years ago. Although I was not part of this organization anymore, many of the locals and local community leaders knew me personally and were aware of my previous work at these communities when I used to live in Colombia. For this reason, communities in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca accepted me and decided to participate in this research despite the high risks. There was already a trust-based relationship between these low-income communities in Cali and me, which facilitated the collection of data in the field, as well as the participation of CSG leaders during the interviews. This trust-based relation that was built during my time in De Menos a Más, as well as when I was part of other social organizations that I worked with and that carried out social initiatives in these low-income areas of Cali, was a key factor in the reason why locals in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca opened the doors of their communities, and even the doors of their homes, to me and accepted me almost unconditionally within the intimacy of their communities.

2.4 Participants of The Study

The "multi-ethnic elements" (Giraldo, 2015, p. 103-104) of Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, and Polvorines are very complex since the Highlands of Cali have gone through multiple periods of migration throughout the twentieth century that have contributed to the ethnic diversity of these communities, where Afro-Colombians and Indigenous have played a major role in the foundation and expansion of these neighbourhoods in Cali. Therefore, I wanted to find members and leaders of CSGs that were willing to participate in this thesis that also belonged to these racialized groups in the city. However, this endeavour was not hard to accomplish since two leaders of CSGs that were willing to participate in my thesis were of Afro-Colombian and Indigenous descent. The other five female leaders of CSGs who were also willing to participate in my thesis were mestizas of mixed ethnicities.

In total, I interviewed five women and two men from the Highlands and Potrero Grande. These participants were all the leaders of their CSGs and occupied a position of authority within their communities for an extended period of time. These participants were between 35 and 50 years of age and had their permanent homes in the neighbourhoods or areas that their CSGs and networks of solidarity operated in. These CSGs were informal and carried out a diverse range of community and humanitarian programs that went from housing programs to daycare services for local families in conditions of marginalization and vulnerability. I will provide further discussions about the nature and work of these CSGs and their networks of solidarity in chapter three, where I will introduce the findings that emerged from my fieldwork.

These men and women exercised their community leadership on a full-time basis instead of being a volunteer activity. They would engage daily with different activities being carried out within their communities and they would also serve as a bridge between the community and non-governmental organizations. They would also lead local social initiatives and guide multiple local community processes, such as the maintenance of the local soccer field. These men and women are also informal workers, which is not strange in the Highlands since most people and the local economy rely on informal economic activities, such as street vending, construction, and domestic work (see Rodriguez, 2015; Saa, 2021). Only one participant had a formal job, but it is only temporary. The actual job of this participant is in the informal economy.

Although we used community centres for interviews and participatory observations, these women would offer, most of the time, their own homes as the centre of operations for many humanitarian and social initiatives within their communities. Sometimes, they would pay out of their own pocket some expenses for humanitarian and social projects, which is something that they frequently do due to the lack of funding. These sacrifices and hard work showed me that these women had the kind of "community leadership" that I was looking for (Pigg, 1999, p. 196), where the foundation of their legitimacy is not sustained by a "formal organization", and instead, relies on the relationships and networks these CSGs leaders have established and nourished with their own people.

Therefore, I decided to collaborate with these women since they have the legitimacy of their own communities and have worked hard to maintain those bonds, relationships, and network within their communities since I met them more than a decade ago. Finally, one of the main factors that pushed me to collaborate with these women is that they are also the creators and keepers of local knowledge, which is very important to navigate the social and cultural dynamics of these neighbourhoods (see Canagarajah, 2002; Warren and Rajasekaran, 1993, p. 8).

2.5 Socio-Historical Context

Cali is the third largest city in Colombia and one of the most important economic centres of the country due to its proximity to the seaport of Buenaventura and its strategic geographical location towards other major cities, such as Medellin and Bogota (Martinez, 2019, p. 164). This strategic location has helped the city to boost its economic growth throughout the past half of the twentieth century, which, in turn, also encouraged other Colombians from other regions to move to the city in search of a better quality of life and escaping from the internal armed conflict. However, Cali has also been the headquarters of powerful drug cartels, such as the Cali Cartel, due to its proximity to towns on the Pacific coast, mainly Buenaventura and Tumaco, where smuggling drugs out of the country is easier (Martinez, 2019, p. 164).

The intensification of the internal armed conflict and the large number of displaced persons in conditions of vulnerability that emigrated from rural areas to Cali in search of a better life for themselves and for their families resulted in the formation of extensive "subnormal settlements" that grew since the 1970s without any urban planning or proper state intervention (Martinez, 2019, p. 165). The negligence of the Colombian and the local government resulted in the uncontrolled expansion of these areas, which were presenting increasing rates of material poverty, social exclusion, and violence. Although members and leaders of local CSGs have organized and mobilized for many years to provide fundamental goods and service for people in need within the context of a weak state presence and widespread violence (Martinez, 2019, p. 166), these structural issues are still very much present nowadays in informal settlements or low-income neighbourhoods that started as informal settlements.

The Agua Blanca District, for example, has been the headquarters for field operations of drug cartels, gangs, and paramilitaries for more than three decades, which contributed to the increasing rates of phenomena related to violence, such as homicides, extorsion, and drug trafficking (see Ordonez, 2017; Martinez, 2019, p. 168). The reorganization of drug trafficking after the fall of the Cali Cartel and other major cartels in Colombia resulted in an atomization of illegal structures. These emerging criminal groups saw the Agua Blanca District as something that they could take in their advantage, so gangsters and minor drug lords started offering youngsters an opportunity to improve their quality of life through criminal activities. These factors of intergenerational violence, where different criminal organizations for the past three decades have used this low-income area of Cali as their epicenter for field operations, as well as the weak or intermittent presence of the state, resulted in overwhelming rates of violence and material poverty in the Agua Blanca District (see Martinez, 2019).

Pampas del Mirador, Polvorines, and Alto Jordan are neighbourhoods located on the southwestern side of the mountains, which is at the other side of the city from Potrero Grande. These neighbourhoods started after the foundation and expansion of Siloe, the oldest and most extensive neighbourhood on the western mountains, which constantly expanded throughout most of the twentieth century due to multiple phenomena related to the commercialization of coal during the early 1900s, the industrialization of the city during the 1950s, the "popular take overs" of land by displaced persons during the intensification of the internal armed conflict, and the constant arrival of migrants in conditions of vulnerability from other cities (Martinez and Bravo, 2018, p. 169-170; Vasquez, 1990, p. 25).

These low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands also have a similar history of violence as those neighbourhoods in the Agua Blanca District. Members and leaders of CSGs in the Highlands have organized and mobilized their communities for many years against the presence of paramilitaries, gangs, and other illegal armed organizations that operate and distribute drugs within their territories. This increasing number of illegal armed organizations have also led to staggering rates of widespread violence, which mostly affect innocent civilians. Moreover, due to their geographical location, these low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands are constantly exposed to natural disasters, such as landslides and the collapse of retaining walls (Bastidas and Perez, 2020, p. 90-91; Villa, 2020, p. 51).

In conclusion, these neighborhoods in the Highlands were founded and grew within a complete different natural environment than low-income neighbourhoods in the Agua Blanca District: Potrero Grande is in the flatlands on the eastern side of the city while Pampas del Mirador, Polvorines, and Alto Jordan are on the western mountains, where the climate, fauna, and flora are very different. However, this unique location brings constant challenges to the local population, especially in terms of landsides, the collapse of retaining walls, and other risks associated to living in hilly terrain (Villa, 2020, p. 7). These two neighbourhoods, nevertheless, share a similar history of violence despite their geographical differences. Drug cartels and gangs have also chosen Siloe and other Highland neighbourhoods as their centre for field operations, which has contributed for many years to staggering rates of gang violence, assault, and homicides (Martinez and Bravo, 2018, p. 169-170).

2.6 Community organization of CSGs in the Highlands and Agua Blanca

Although illegal armed organizations and drug cartels have terrorized and targeted these low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District for many decades (Moreno and Dornan, 2015, p. 91 and 104)—causing intergenerational issues that have reproduced staggering rates of violence and material poverty at an alarming speed—, Agua Blanca and the Highlands have also demonstrated to be the "epicenter of self-management efforts and community solidarity" in Cali for many years (Toro, 2013, p. 37). These community-based strategies that local

CSGs created to counterbalance the negative effects of material poverty, widespread violence, and the presence of illegal armed organizations within their territories have allowed them to build their houses and churches, provide public infrastructure, offer education to their children, and to offer other fundamental goods and services through "community organization" within the most adverse of circumstances (Toro, 2013, p. 39).

These low-income communities in Cali had no other choice but to organize their communities and thus propose sustainable solutions in the face of widespread violence, material poverty, and the absence of the Colombian and the local government (Toro, 2013, p. 40; see Arana, 2020). This research recognizes that the Colombian government has implemented multiple projects to reduce informality and to occupy those areas of the country that have been historically neglected. For example, the Chamber of Commerce and the Geographical Institute acknowledged the importance of the "multipurpose cadastre" that the government started implementing since 2019 (Chamber of Commerce 2022; Geographical Institute Agustin Codazzi 2022). This ambitious project consists in reducing informality on land ownership that today reaches 58% of the total land in Colombia. However, despite these ambitious initiatives, such as the multipurpose cadastre, the Colombia government has not been able to maintain effective and consistent control over certain territories and populations, which has led to high rates of informality, material poverty, and widespread violence in low-income communities in rural and urban settings (Holmes and Gutierrez, 2002 p. 373; see McLean 2002; Arana, 2020, p. 84).

For example, in many low-income areas of the Agua Blanca District in Cali, such as Charco Azul, Los Lagos, El Vergel, and Marroquin, local gangs have effectively maintained control over the territory and the population even though the Colombian and the local government have carried out significant investments and "soft governance strategies" to gain legitimacy and territorial control (Amparo et all, 2009 p. 9). However, the weak or intermittent presence of the Colombian and the local government in these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali has not helped public initiatives or initiatives that members and leaders of CSGs have implemented throughout these years to counterbalance the negative effects of widespread violence and material poverty. The most permanent presence of the Colombian and the local government have been through law enforcement agencies of the state, which has not proposed nor brought effective solutions to structural issues within these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali (Amparo et all, 2009 p. 9-10)

These multiple structural issues—from widespread violence to the weak presence of the state—obviously place pressures and constraints that affect the local population of low-income neighbourhoods in Cali. However, members and leaders of CSGs have demonstrated that their territories are also the epicenter of "self-management, organization, and community solidarity" (see Montoya, 2018, p. 31). Networks of solidarity have had the ability to produce the "societal and organization system" (Smith, 2009, p. 466) that has allowed disadvantage populations to organize and mobilize to provide local solutions for local problems. Therefore, although there is an impression that widespread violence governs these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, one can also argue that these areas of the city are also the epicenter of "family and community ties" that have maintained and nourished those community-based acts of resistance against widespread violence, material poverty, and other structural issues within their communities and societies (Anacona, 2020, p. 3-4 and 85)

The concerns that emerged in Colombia, as well as in other countries in the Global South during the past two decades, demanded the creation of "new social movements" that could propose effective solutions to those structural issues that emerged after the widespread implementation of neoliberal policies in the Global South (Waterman, 2004, p. 56), especially within the context of national and local governments that could not propose effective and immediate solutions to these problems. The reduction of poverty alleviation programs, the shrinking of the state, the increase on socioeconomic inequalities, the feminization of poverty, and the flexibilization of labor regulations demanded the creation of social organizations that could respond from the bottom up against those structural issues that disproportionally affected the most vulnerable in low-income neighbourhoods in the Global South (Waterman 2004, p. 56; Smith 2009, p. 462-3).

Consequently, networks of solidarity, unlike formal institutions of the state, have demonstrated to have an adaptive and responsive nature in their organizational structure, which, in turn, have allowed people in low-income neighbourhoods to propose effective and immediate solutions to these structural challenges and problems within the context of their communities and societies (Burt, 1992). For this reason, it was not strange that these networks of solidarity were also present in low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District in Cali despite the widespread violence and the presence of illegal armed organizations. These networks of solidarity in Cali have become in "strategies of resistance" (Munoz-Morales and Grill, 2022, p. 2) that have allowed disadvantaged communities in Cali to respond against those structural issues related to widespread violence and material poverty within the context of formal institutions of the state that have not proposed effective and immediate solutions to their local problems and needs.

2.7 Conclusion

Although these low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District have suffered from intergenerational issues related to widespread violence, material poverty, the presence of illegal armed organizations, and state absence for many years, they have also demonstrated that they can propose effective community-based solutions against these structural problems through “non-violent strategies of resistance” within the most adverse of circumstances (Olave et al, 2019, p. 19). One can propose the critique that these low-income communities have been governed through the dynamics of violence for these past decades, especially when analyzing the extent to which these manifestations of violence have become in permanent and structural issues that are still ongoing. While this argument is not wrong, one must also acknowledge that these low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District have also organized and mobilized their communities within the most adverse of circumstances for many years despite the risks and structural challenges that affect them daily (Betancourt, 2022).

For this reason, I proposed the analysis of members and leaders of CSGs in neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District. In this way, I can evaluate if these communities organized and mobilized during the pandemic crisis in the same way they have been doing so on past occasions when facing issues related to widespread violence and material poverty. I am now going to proceed to introduce and evaluate the findings and results of the fieldwork research of this thesis in the next chapter, which aims at finding whether (and how?) these networks of solidarity that members and leaders of CSGs in the low-income neighbourhoods that I selected from the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District organized and mobilized during the pandemic crisis, considering their history of resistance against structural issues within their communities.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Assessing the Research Question

Between 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis imposed multiple pressures and constraints upon the population in Cali, such as prolonged lockdowns and increasing rates of unemployment and mass hunger (Urrea-Giraldo, 2021, p. 43 and 167), which made me question the ability of members and leaders of CSGs in Cali to organize and mobilize in times of crisis. During that same period, Cali also presented staggering rates of violence and one of the highest homicide rates in Colombia, which increased my skepticism (Ibarra, 2021, p. 25). However, the participatory observations and semi-structured interviews of this thesis, as well as the academic works of Colombian scholars with a similar research focus (Padilla et all, 2020, p. 27-29; Duran et al, 2022, p. 21), confirmed that members and leaders of CSGs in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, Potrero Grande, and other low-income neighbourhoods in Cali organized and mobilized actively during the pandemic crisis of 2020 and 2021.

My semi-structured interviews and participatory observations corroborated that members and leaders of CSGs did not remain static during the pandemic crisis, and instead, organized and mobilized actively to propose community-based and effective solutions to those local problems that emerged in their neighbourhoods between 2020 and 2021. This argument and analysis, nonetheless, will also include other sources of pressures and constraints that I encountered in the field and that I will explain in the next section of this thesis, such as those challenges that emerged from what people in Colombia called the National Strike, which imposed new violent phenomena upon members and leaders of CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, challenges that they also overcame with active social mobilization, solidarity, and cooperation (Eugenia et all, 2021, p. 150; Gutierrez, 2021, chapter 2 and 202),

Therefore, those pressure and constraints that emerged during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike did not dimmish the ability of members and leaders of CSGs in these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali to organize and mobilize during such unprecedented times, as well to propose effective solutions against structural issues through solidarity and cooperation, especially among people from the same community (Padilla-Ospina et al, 2020, p. 27-29; see Andrade, 2022, p. 122). However, before confirming the hypothesis of this thesis, I will introduce the findings and data that I collected during my fieldwork, which helped me to address the research question of this thesis and allowed me to see new elements and effects of networks of solidarity in these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali.

3.2 First Impressions of Fieldwork in Cali

The first assessment of this fieldwork research emerged when the driver picked me up at the airport and I started to see the city through the car window, especially when considering the distance between the airport and my home, which is in a southern neighbourhood in Cali—the airport in Cali is in Palmira, another town in the northern outskirts of Cali, which forced me to drive the entire city from north to south—. This long trip of more than an hour allowed me to have a meaningful conversation with the driver and to appreciate the city through the car window. These early observations and the conversation that I held with the driver made me realize very quickly that what locals in Cali called the "National Strike" impacted people and the infrastructure of the city in ways that I never expected, which is another factor in the study of CSGs in low-income communities in Cali that I needed to include besides the pandemic crisis (see Gutierrez, 2021, chapter 2).

The 2021 National Strike consisted of multiple episodes of widespread protests in Colombia that started in April 2021 after the Duque government presented a tax and healthcare reform before Congress. The *Ley de Solidaridad Sostenible* (Sustainable Solidarity Bill), the backbone of the tax reform, and the structural changes on the General Social Security System sparked a generalized discontent among many Colombians who saw these reforms as detrimental to their well-being. However, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH) also clarifies that other factors helped fuel the frustrations of Colombians against the Duque administration and traditional politics, such as "increased levels of poverty, inequality and violence, coupled with an increase in the number of murders against human rights defenders, social leaders, representatives of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, and signatories of the Peace Agreement" (CIDH 2021, p. 10). The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights also argues that inequalities remained one of the pressing frustrations that pushed so many Colombians from different cities to take the streets in the spring of 2021 against the Duque government. The United Nations report says, for instance, that "almost half of the Colombian population (48%) was in a situation of food insecurity" during the first quarter of 2021 (HCHR 2021,).

During the subsequent weeks of April, different sectors of civil society got together to create a unified National Strike Committee, where the Unitary Workers' Union (CUT) , the National Labor Confederation (CGT), the Colombian Federation of Education Workers (Fecode), as well as university student movements, such as the Colombian Association of Student Representatives, played a key leadership role in gathering and bringing forward the demands of demonstrators before the Duque government (Valencia 2021[12]). The Committee assumed the challenge of initiating formal dialogues and negotiations with the Duque government, where members of this Committee presented a new set of demands that emerged from the challenges of the pandemic crisis, as well as gathered previous demands that civil society groups presented before the government during the widespread protests of 2019 (HCHR 2021[13]).

The Committee presented numerous proposal that tried to gather the widespread discontent of Colombians. Among those, the formalization of the labour force, the right to health and labor rights, anti-corruption reforms, comprehensive land reform policies, environmental protection laws, and the proper implementation of the Peace Agreements between FARC and the Colombian Government remained the most urgent demands. The Committee also demanded the Duque government to fulfill previous agreements negotiated with social movements and student movements within the framework of previous widespread protests in 2019 and 2020 (HCHR 2021[14]).

During the 2021 National Strike, the Duque administration opened official channels of communications with civil society to discuss issues at stake, such as when the Ministry of Internal Affairs opened *La Mesa Nacional de las Garantías para las Manifestaciones Públicas* (The National Roundtable on Guarantees for Public Demonstrations) that permitted the national government through local and regional governments to meet with Indigenous associations, student movements, and community leaders (CIDH 2021, p. 19). However, despite the Duque government presented themselves as being open to negotiations with social and political rivals, The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (2021, p. 47) reported "the high prevalence of violations of the rights to life and integrity of persons in the National Strike of 2021 by members of the security forces" (CIDH 2021, p. 47), which contradicts the image of diplomacy that the Duque administration pushed forward.

---

[12] https://colombia.as.com/colombia/2021/05/13/actualidad/1620927509_251411.html

[13] https://www.hchr.org.co/documentos/el-paro-nacional-2021-lecciones-aprendidas-para-el-ejercicio-del-derecho-de-reunion-pacifica-en-colombia/#_Toc89787113).

[14] https://www.hchr.org.co/documentos/el-paro-nacional-2021-lecciones-aprendidas-para-el-ejercicio-del-derecho-de-reunion-pacifica-en-colombia/#_Toc89787113

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights found that the legal forces of the state detained 3,546 demonstrators in 2021 through a questionable law called *Traslado por Protección* or Transfer for Protection in English. Most of these detentions were arbitrary and led to "forced disappearance of persons and sexual and physical assaults, violations of due process and torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment" against demonstrators (CIDH 2021, p. 46). The report also argues that 60 people were victims of "sexual violence" during the 2021 National Strike and 63 people were killed, from which 28 were directly liked to police brutality (CIDH 2021, p. 47). The findings of this investigation by the Commission also proved that "most of the deceased were young people, from poor and peripheral neighborhoods, sons and daughters of peasants, indigenous and Afro-descendant people, displaced people, informal traders, artists, athletes, and people who had dropped out of school" (CIDH 2021, p. 47).

Therefore, there are two elements that I must highlight about the 2021 National Strike, which occurred just months before my arrival to Cali. The first is that, as Colombian scholar Santiago Vargas Niño (2021, p. 63-64) argues, the state in complicity with armed civilian groups committed multiple human rights violations during the 2021 National Strike. His investigation shows that the police and the anti-riot police unit (ESMAD) used firearms to stop and deter the protests, organized armed civilians opened fire against unarmed demonstrators on multiple occasions, armed civilian groups operated in complicity with the police and the anti-riot police unit to attack demonstrators, and the police and armed civilians used motorcycles and trucks with tinted windows and no plates to intimidate and harass demonstrators.

Vargas Niño's investigation, which is based on public information from different state and non-state sources, says that there were 17 violent beatings by police that resulted in the death of one of the victims, more than 400 cases of forced disappearances, and more than 5 thousand cases of irregular detentions (Niño 2021, p. 86). In Cali, however, the degradation and intensification of state violence during the 2021 National Strike was significantly higher than in the rest of the country. During the National Strike, the police and other legal armed forces of the state targeted the poor, ethnic minorities, unions, and students. In Cali, "82 Afro-descendants between the ages of 13 and 60 were reportedly victims of repression by the security forces" (Niño 2021, p. 63).

In the Highlands of Cali, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights says that (2021, p. 84) there were multiple cases of torture and attempted forced disappearances, where the families of victims were re-victimized and lacked access to justice. The United Nations also documented the presence of death squads formed by armed civilians in Cali that shot unarmed demonstrators, as well as the presence of police officers with military rifles intimidating people in the Highlands (HCHR 2021, point 89). These squads, as the report says, operated with the complicity of the police and the riot police (HCHR 2021, point 45-46).

The second element is that the 2021 National Strike was preceded by multiple episodes of civil unrest that started in 2019, which is well-documented thanks to those cases of sexual violence that occurred within the contexts of those manifestations that took place in 2019 (Gutierrez 2021, p. 80), and where the government also responded with violence, especially irregular detentions and forced disappearances (HCHR 2021, point 140). These protests that started in 2019 emerged within the context of a widespread discontent and frustration that pushed many people in Latin America to take the streets against their governments. Andrea Munoz argues that "structural inequality and unanswered claims and demands have encouraged different social movements in the region" to mobilize against their governments (Muñoz 2020, p. 46), and Colombia was not the exception.

The 2021 National Strike, in the words of Hectors Diaz (2021, p. 631), showed the "unrestrained state violence" that demonstrators and civil society in general had to endure during these episodes of civil unrest. Cali, However, became in the "epicenter of manifestations and state violence" during the National Strike (Diaz 2021, p. 636). Cali, nevertheless, as Miguel Rojas and Laura Quintana argue (2022, p. 356), also became in the epicenter of peaceful social organization and mobilization, where multiple low-income communities, many criminalized and targeted by the police, became in "symbols of collectivity and solidarity". Despite the violence, low-income communities in Cali organized and mobilized their people to resist state violence and to provide efficient and sustainable solutions to the most vulnerable of their communities.

Although I read the news daily and I was well informed in Canada about these episodes of civil unrest that emerged in 2020 and that extended to 2021, I did not measure the extent and actual implications of how these episodes of civil unrest affected people and the infrastructure of Cali. Most of the streets that we took in northern neighborhoods, including Acopi and other important neighbourhoods that have important national and local industries, presented severe damages in their public and private infrastructure, especially in the network of traffic signs, traffic lights, and public lightening. There was not proper public lightning in most of these areas that we drove in northern neighbourhoods, which made me raise questions about the conditions of the public infrastructure in southern neighbourhoods, as well as those areas in Cali where I intended to do fieldwork.

As we approached downtown, I realized that other parts of the city also presented severe public infrastructure damages. Besides the lack of traffic lights and public lightening, I also noted that many bus stations on main avenues, such as those on the 5th avenue, were either burned down and covered in ashes or severely vandalized. I also noted while crossing downtown on my way to the south that bridges and important infrastructure had graffities denouncing police brutality with phrases like "stop the genocide" (El Cartel, 2021[15]). Zigzagging sticks, trash, buckets, and all the debris that clashes between the protesters and the riot police left behind gave me enough time to observe with detail these graffities and the severe damages to the public infrastructure.

When I finally reached the south of Cali, I observed that many of these neighbourhoods, particularly those situated on main avenues, suffered even more than those neighbourhoods in the north. Between Unicentro, one of the most exclusive shopping centres situated in a wealthy area in the south of Cali, and the Pichincha Military Base, the driver had to reduce the speed and use the high beams because the damages in the public lightening network and the public infrastructure were too severe. The infrastructure of this part of the city was almost in shatters, where debris expelling smoke was still present on main streets and sidewalks. These overwhelming images of barricades, graffities denouncing police brutality, graffities with the faces of those who were killed during the protests, debris, and ashes made me realize that Cali was going through a period of social tension that I overestimated (Gutierrez, 2021, p. 204).

This scenario of conflict was also going in hand with a scenario of large and open manifestations of civil disobedience that I also never expected—very similar to the concept of widespread civil disobedience that Sovacool and Dunlap (2020, p. 5) introduced in the analysis of social mobilizations and protests during the opposition against the Vietnam War in the United States. People were not respecting traffic lights, at least those that remained standing after the National Strike. People were not respecting other traffic regulations either, such as the wearing of helmets while driving a motorcycle. I remember that while crossing the intersection between the

---

[15] https://cartelurbano.com/historias/del-puente-para-alla-hay-censura-la-lucha-por-las-paredes-en-cali

13th street and the 100th avenue, the traffic lights were not working, so cars were going in all directions. When the driver and I finally passed the first lane of the 100th avenue, I saw a police officer and a traffic agent in all that chaos trying to contain and control the traffic without success. These generalized acts of civil disobedience against traffic regulations and law enforcement agencies of the state started to become more repetitive as we approached more crowded streets, where pedestrians, motorcyclists, drivers, and cyclists were ignoring the most fundamental traffic regulations.

This first impression aggravated throughout the following weeks, where I finally had the chance to walk and drive through multiple parts of the city, which allowed me to confirm the state of generalized fear and chaos Cali was in. During these episodes of civil unrest during the National Strike, there were multiple strange episodes of people breaking into houses and gated residencies in middle-class and upper-class neighbourhoods in the south of Cali, which caused a generalized sense of fear that is still very much present in society. These episodes of people breaking into houses and gated residencies created a generalized sense of fear that transcended to a widespread and very visible aporophobia in Cali. During these episodes of break-ins, people in middle-class and upper-class neighbourhoods shared on WhatsApp that people from low-income neighbourhoods were breaking into houses and gated residencies to steal and attack the population. These texts described people from lower-income areas of Cali as “poor, bad, and violent” (Bravo and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 151). However, these episodes of break-ins were more a strategy to spread fear on social media, which criminalized and stigmatized the poor, rather than actual events that occurred during the National Strike.

This generalized sense of fear and this grotesque online campaign against the poor made me understand and empathize with those concerns that emerged when I talked for the first time to members and leaders of CSGs during participatory observations. During this time, people in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali were afraid of what people from middle-class and upper-class areas of the city could do to them. This online campaign against the poor used fear tactics to describe people from the Agua Blanca District and the Highlands as violent, which turned this entire population into vermin and a target (Bravo and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 155). People in wealthy areas of Cali, such as Ciudad Jardin, went out with loaded guns and started shooting people who participated in peaceful social mobilizations during the National Strike with a clear anti-poor discourse, which targeted people from low-income areas of the city who were protesting against social exclusion and inequalities (Semana, 2021[16]; Pardo, 2021[17]).

This generalized sense of fear and social antagonism against the poor, as well as the severe damages in the public infrastructure of Cali, were not the only factors that made me worry about the ethnographic component of this thesis. Besides these challenges that I did not consider in Canada, I also had to include that throughout 2021, local authorities reported that Cali was going to hit record high homicides rates, especially when compared to 2020. Local authorities announced that Cali had three homicides per day in 2021, which meant that Cali reached a homicide rate of almost 60 per 100,000 inhabitants. The most violent months of the year were between May and June, which is when the National Strike took place. During these two months, 331 people were victims of homicides in the city, meaning that Cali had almost six homicides a day during these months (El Pais, 2022[18]). This staggering numbers of homicides throughout 2021, as well as this complicated context of constant social tensions in Cali and the severe public infrastructure damages, brought new challenges and considerations that I did not anticipate when I organized my fieldwork plan in Montreal.

For this reason, I had to reorganize the way I structured and organized the questionnaire and ethics application for this thesis. Luckily, I completed and submitted the ethics application and questionnaire of this thesis after these first evaluations in the field, which allowed me to accommodate the questions and ethical guidelines of this thesis rapidly before engaging with members and leaders of CSGs. One of those changes consisted in providing members and leaders of CSGs proper safety protocols to make sure that they felt safe and that they were always protected from the consequences that might emerge from participating in this thesis.

One of those first changes that I added to my ethics application and the questionnaire, which is a component of the semi-structured interviews, was that members and leaders of CSGs decided whether the interview could be audio recorded. I wanted to audio record the interviews and thus be able to go back to the audios in case I had a question or found a new discovery. However, this first question of the semi-structured interview demonstrated to be accurate and effective to those realities that participants and I faced in the field. This first question allowed participate to assess the danger that they might be exposed to in case someone heard their voices speaking about networks of solidarity in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali.

---

[16] https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/tension-en-cali-ciudadanos-de-ciudad-jardin-salen-en-sus-camionetas-a-enfrentar-a-los-manifestantes/202137/
[17] https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-57896658
[18] https://www.elpais.com.co/cali/cifra-de-homicidios-en-cerro-el-ano-pasado-por-encima-de-los-1-200.html

In the end, those leaders of CSGs in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District who participated in the semi-structured interviews, declined to be recorded out of fear of being targeted for their participation in networks of solidarity in low-income neighbourhoods. Participants stated that having their voices recorded represented a threat to them and their families, and therefore, asked me to take notes and use other names while gathering notes during the semi-structured interviews. All participants requested to limit the amount of personal information that could lead to them, such as names, location, name of the CSG, and neighbourhood.

While gathering notes in the field, I wrote down information without using names or specific locations. I would use ‘participant number one’ instead of the actual name as the tittle of the semi-structured interview. I also avoided to have the name and exact location of the CSGs and networks of solidarity that I observed in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District. In this way, I was able to collect information about leaders of CSGs and their networks of solidarity without exposing their identity, especially if a gang member or someone from an illegal armed organization, as well as a police officer, stopped me and went through my belongings—people from the community told me that this happens very often in these low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District—. These safety protocols and ethical practices in the field provided leaders of CSGs the proper preventive measures that safeguarded their lives, which, in turn, benefited this thesis since they participated and accepted to speak about their local networks of solidarity within the context of this generalized sense of fear and permanent social tension in Cali.

Their participation, nonetheless, also made me understand, which is also an argument that Melo suggested (2021, p. 62 and 30), that members and leaders of CSGs were aware of the context of violence and repression that they were trapped in, but they also showed that these fear tactics from the Colombian government and other sectors in society were not having those expected effects. Members and leaders took precautions, such as asking me to limit personal information, but their active community engagement and constant acts of resistance in their communities showed that these fear tactics were not enough to stop members and leaders of CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali from mobilizing during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike (Melo, 2021, p. 148).

The abductive nature of this research, which I previously discussed and justified, helped me to adjust my research methods, safety protocols, and ethical guidelines to these new challenges and realities that I encountered in the field. This methodological flexibility provided me with the opportunity to offer effective solutions to these new challenges that I encouraged after doing participatory observations in Cali. This abductive approach also allowed me to confirm that members and leaders of CSGs in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Potrero Grande, and Polvorines organized and mobilized their communities while facing challenges that were more complicated than I anticipated. Members and leaders of CSGs mobilized to propose solutions to those pressures and constraints that emerged from the pandemic crisis while also facing an environment of fear, violence, and repression during the National Strike.

3.3 Participatory Observations

The findings of participatory observations confirmed that multiple networks of solidarity were operating in Potrero Grande, Alto Jordan, Pampas del Mirador, and Polvorines. However, these networks were not easy to define, which was one of the main purposes of this thesis. Contrary to what I expected, these networks of solidarity showed that they could produce a very flexible organizational structure that allowed members and leaders of CSGs to accommodate their strategies of survival and thus offer multiple solutions to local needs. These networks provided food for people in need, the construction of public infrastructure, daycare services, transportation services, and many other services that the community needed. During participatory observations, I observed that these networks of solidarity were constantly identifying and addressing local issues instead of focusing on just one sole problem.

However, there was one activity that really caught my attention due to its widespread presence in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali: community kitchens (*ollas comunitarias*). I observed that members and leaders of CSGs established goals and deadlines to assess multiple issues within their communities (e.g., improving a local retention wall on Monday, painting the local school on Thursday, bringing a medical mission to the community on Saturday), but they held community kitchens almost every day. I noticed that these community kitchens represented one of the most important and visible forms of what Forero calls “community self-management” (*52autogestion comunitaria*) in those low-income neighbourhoods where I carried out participatory observations (Forero, 2022, p. 11)

In low-income parts of Cali, most people are informal workers who relied on their daily informal economic activities to survive and to generate income for their families. When the pandemic became a public health issue in Colombia and the government started to implement lockdowns and other emergency measures, people in low-income neighbourhoods were very affected, especially when they were forced to stay at home without any source of income for all those months of lockdowns and quarantines. In Potrero Grande, for example, 67% of the population relied on informal economies to survive (Padilla et all, 2020, p. 27-29). For this reason, people in Potrero Grande and low-income areas of Cali started to use community kitchens as a local strategy to survive during those hard months of the pandemic crisis. I confirmed from participatory observations and previous publications regarding strategies of survival in Cali that these community kitchens started operating in 2020 and continued operating throughout the whole pandemic crisis and the National Strike (Padilla et all, 2020, p. 27-29).

I also observed that these community kitchens in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District operated thanks to a well-organized strategy of self-management and self-sufficiency that members and leaders of CSGs developed and maintained despite the challenges. Due to the amount of food that I observed members and leaders of CSGs preparing and cooking every day, I expected to see the arrival of big trucks dropping food off. I also expected a big donor, such as the government or a large organization, dropping food off at some point. However, I observed that these community kitchens ran thanks to the contributions of people from the community, local foundations, small companies, and outside donors (e.g., people from wealthy areas that wanted to contribute). These community kitchens, as John Arboleda also claimed (2022, p. 40), were community-based initiatives that people in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali started off and maintained themselves thanks to their self-management skills.

In the morning, people would start gathering and creating a whole environment of solidarity, affection, and friendship. Members and leaders of CSGs always asked each other “how are you?” and greeted each other with affection when arriving and gathering at community kitchens. Then, after this whole process of creating and nourishing affectionate bonds among participants of community kitchens, people from the community would start bringing food and other supplies, such as beverages, plates, and firewood. I noticed that members and leaders of CSGs used that exchange of resources with people from within and outside the community as a moment to catch up and talk about their families and their lives. These exchanges also involved short conversations that members and leaders of CSGs used to inquire about someone in the community who might need more help. After these exchanges of resources, members and leaders of CSGs would start bringing bricks and firewood to start the firepit.

Then, close to 11 a.m., members and leaders of CSGs would start preparing and cooking all the ingredients to have everything ready for lunch. Finally, around 12:30 p.m., participants in charge of serving and distributing the food would start organizing the plates and asking people who were already waiting to line up. Usually, beneficiaries went to these community kitchens if they needed food. However, members and leaders of CSGs would also fix plates for seniors and people with restricted mobility. In this case, participants would ask a kid to have the plate delivered to their homes, which is usually not very far from the community kitchen.

For this reason, I confirm through participatory observations that these community kitchens, despite their small size, required a "large-scale mobilization" within the neighborhood to propose an "articulated" and "practical" solution to local issues (Cantat and Feischmidt, 2019 p. 380-381). On the one hand, one might argue that community kitchens are simple and small-scale strategies that people in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali used to survive, but, on the other hand, I observed that these community kitchens required a significant number of people in the neighborhood to come together and collaborate for community kitchens to be sustainable and efficient. Therefore, networks of solidarity might prematurely seem unsophisticated and plain, but these networks require a complex social organization and mobilization.

During my observations, I also noted that networks of solidarity in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali had an "informal organizational culture" that made them for efficient than state bureaucracies (Pyoria, 2007 p. 17). Leaders of CSGs distinguished the individual aptitudes of their neighbors, knew well the availability of local resources, and possessed local knowledge that helped them propose fast and efficient solutions to local problems. These abilities helped leaders of CSGs to organize their local networks of solidarity with efficiency.

Nevertheless, what I found relevant during these exchanges is the collective sense of solidarity that really maintained and nourished these bonds among participants and the engagement of their community despite the widespread violence and material poverty that emerged during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike, which is also an argument that Duran et al made from similar observations in community kitchens during the National Strike (Duran et al, 2022, p. 21). I observed that these community kitchens were more than strategies of survival for people in low-income neighbourhoods. These community kitchens were also spaces that provided members and leaders of CSGs the platform to connect with themselves and with the community. All the interactions that I observed worked towards the strengthening of bonds among members and leaders of CSGs, people from the community, and outside donors.

I also noticed that the construction of these bonds was based on discussion about the general well-being of these territories and their people. Members and leaders of CSGs engaged in conversations that went beyond than feeding people through their local network of solidarity. They engaged, for instance, in discussion on social exclusion, inequality, cultural heritage, the local culture, among other topics while they were either preparing or cooking the food. These networks operated as something more than a strategy to feed people in need in times of crisis, which is also important to highlight. All these discussions made me realize that these networks of solidarity functioned as something more profound and long-lasting.

I observed a community kitchen in Potrero Grande where the leader and many of its members belonged to ethnic minorities, and they engaged in these deep conversations of cultural heritage and the importance of preserving the cultural codes of ethnic minorities in large cities like Cali, as well as in other regions of Colombia, while preparing and cooking the food. What I observed in this community kitchen in Potrero Grande, borrowing the words of Olga Sorzano (2022, p. 658), is a "cultural explosion". While discussing about the importance of cultural codes of ethnic minorities in Cali, participants brought portable speakers and played music associated to ethnic minorities in Colombia, and they danced and sang while preparing, cooking, and distributing the food.

When I saw people dancing, greeting with affection while asking about their families, and engaging in these deep discussions about cultural heritage, I realized that these networks of solidarity went beyond of what I expected, and instead, promoted what locals in low-income neighbourhoods in Colombia call "solidarity gathering" (*juntanza comunitaria)* and "living with pleasure" (*vivir sabroso*) (Sorzano, 2022, p. 658) — the phrase of *living with pleasure* might take different definitions according to local cultural codes, however, within the Afro-Colombian culture from the Pacific coast, living with pleasure is a rhetorical device that evokes the ancestral times when people were connected with the "environment, with nature and with people" and thus achieve the highest degree of individual and collective well-being (Lozano and Arcadio, 2019m p. 50-51). These networks of solidarity operated to feed people in need in low-income neighbourhoods and it fulfilled a very important role in the community by providing people with the platform to organize and mobilize and thus provide fundamental goods and services in times of crisis, especially when people were hungry and lacked the resources to feed themselves and their families. However, networks of solidarity went beyond that fundamental purpose and engaged in much deeper discussions about the role of cultural codes of ethnic minorities in large cities like Cali.

I also observed that the leader of this CSG and other elders used orality and culturally oriented discussions with participants and beneficiaries regardless of their ethnicity. During these discussions, the leader and other elders talked about discrimination, racism, and the importance of maintaining cultural codes for the social, cultural, and economic advancement of Cali. These discussions became in an “intellectual sandbox” that helped participants and beneficiaries to engage with these discussions more easily and to develop a sense of “familiarity” and “ownership” (Shawn et al, 2021, p. 925-926). These discussions at community kitchens allowed participants and beneficiaries to understand and discuss these topics through oral interactions, which made these discussions easy to engage with.

These cultural discussions were also present when I observed networks of solidarity in the Highlands. I confirmed with interviews that Maria Andrade (2021) carried out during the pandemic that these community kitchens operated in the Highlands during the pandemic crisis, and many remained after 2020, especially in those areas that were disproportionally affected by unemployment and malnutrition in children. Participants also used the exchanges between participants and donors from within and outside the community to discuss about politics, social exclusion, and the current economic situation. These conversations, as Duran et al also encountered during their ethnographic observations during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike (2022, p. 21), were also based on how solidarity maintained social bonds within their communities and how these bonds united people to organize and mobilize to promote the well-being of their people, as well as to promote small acts of resistance.

This is when the research focus of this thesis starts to play an important role in the understanding of how members and leaders of CSGs organize and mobilize their communities during the pandemic crisis. I expected after a month of participatory observations in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District to see at some point consistent forms of large social mobilizations that could explain the survival of the poor in the city, such as those large protests during the National Strike in 2020 and 2021.

However, after participatory observations, I noticed that these small networks of solidarity, following the ideas of Alejandro Sanmiguel (2022, p. 16), were the real engine of social organization and social mobilization in low-income neighbourhoods in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande. Every time that I visited these neighbourhoods, the community kitchen was open and running and other forms of local networks of solidarity were operating, such as daycares and fundraising campaigns (e.g., flea markets, bingos). During participatory observations, I confirmed CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali mobilized actively through these small networks of solidarity instead of large forms of social mobilizations.

3.3.1 Conclusion of Participatory Observations

The participatory observations of this thesis, as well as the works of Colombian scholars with a similar research focus (Cortazar and Mosquera, 2019, p. 19), confirmed the hypothesis of this thesis. As a first part of the hypothesis' verification, the findings of these participatory observations confirmed that low-income communities in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District organized and mobilized actively during the pandemic crisis, especially in the forms of community kitchens, which addressed increasing and concerning rates of hunger in these low-income areas of Cali. I observed that these community-based networks of solidarity were the only permanent form of organization that helped the community on a permanent basis during such unprecedented times.

"[T]he identity of these neighbourhoods [in Cali] is translated to self-management and solidarity" (Del Rio and Quintero, 2022, p. 69), and therefore, networks of solidarity—as clear manifestations of community self-management and solidarity—are an excellent indicator to demonstrate that members and leaders of CSGs in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande organized and mobilized actively during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike. For this reason, the participatory observations of this thesis confirm that these "acts of solidarity" (Del Rio and Quintero, 2022, p. 61), which "collectively seek solutions to shared needs" in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, are the best evidence to argue that members and leaders of CSGs organized and mobilized actively between 2020 and 2021 despite the challenges, pressures, dangers, and constraints that emerged during the pandemic and the National Strike.

I will now proceed to assess whether the findings from the interviews also confirm the hypothesis, and to what extent.

3.4 Interviews

Discrimination is one of those structural challenges that members and leaders of CSGs face in Cali on a permanent basis. Leaders of CSGs who participated in the semi-structured interviews highlighted the marginalization and vulnerability that their communities face due to these structural challenges related to the way people from well-off areas of Cali and the local government have perceived people from low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District. Local elites have stigmatized and criminalized people from ethnic minorities that reside in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, accusing people from these neighbourhoods of being loud, lazy, undesirable, and violent (Vargas Gallego, 2015, p. 67; Restrepo, 1999 p. 185). For this reason, one can say that socioeconomic status and ethnicity go together in Cali and discrimination is a structural issue that affects people in low-income neighbourhoods disproportionally (Lopez, 2006 p. 39-40).

Leaders of CSGs claimed that there are misconceptions and narratives that have created negative discourses about these communities, which, in turn, have created false discourses that stigmatized and criminalized the poor. Participants also expressed great concerns regarding how these false narratives, as well as the criminalization and stigmatization of the poor, have separated people in Cali according to their socioeconomic status—instead of unifying the population, these discourses have segregated society, where the rich and poor never interact—. Participants claimed that people, including government officials and people from well-off areas, should go to the Highlands and the Agua Blanca District and thus see the territory for what it really is: an epicenter of solidarity and cooperation, instead of violence and crime.

These discussions about the perceptions of people from well-off areas in Cali and the local government about people in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District led me to ask about the role of the state when members and leaders of CSGs were carrying out community kitchens and other networks of solidarity to help their people during the pandemic crisis. I found that Jorge Ivan Ospina, the mayor of the city during the pandemic crisis, claimed that he prioritized the problem of hunger between 2020 and 2021. He assigned more than 130 million USD for the purchasing and distribution of bundles of food for the most vulnerable in Cali (Soto 2020; Payan 2021). However, all participants claimed that the distribution of food in their neighbourhoods was deficient. In those neighbourhoods where I conducted research, the local government only distributed food once and then government officials never showed up again. This was a constant statement that participants maintained during our interviews.

This historical negligence of the local government, the Colombian government, and people in positions of authority in Cali is the reflection of the apathy that CSG leaders talked about when discussing perceptions about poor people in Cali, which resembles the evidence presented by other local authors regarding the role of the Colombian state in these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali (Fundación Paz, 2016, p. 29; Poveda 2021, p. 29). However, CSG leaders mentioned that the weak presence of the Colombian state during the pandemic crisis is not something new. CSG leaders held that neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca have administered one crisis after another one for many decades, where neither the Colombian state nor the local elite have come to their rescue. For this reason, as CSG leaders argued, solidarity and cooperation among members of their community has been crucial for the survival of people in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District. All participants highlighted the importance of these local networks of solidarity to supply those fundamental goods and service that the Colombian and the local government were not providing, especially within the context of communities that live in constant marginalization and vulnerability.

CSG leaders confirmed during our interviews that networks of solidarity (e.g., community kitchens) are not new. These networks have existed for a long time, but people in Cali started to notice them more during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike due to increasing rates of hunger and the role that community kitchens had during the National Strike. Therefore, CSG leaders confirmed that low-income neighbourhoods in Cali have organized and mobilized actively during previous crises in Cali and that local networks of solidarity have played a major role in the survival and organization processes of low-income communities.

CSG leaders also argued that people in the Highlands and in the Agua Blanca District have placed high expectations upon their members regarding solidarity and cooperation. I noted that participants have a high sense of solidarity and expected other members of their neighborhoods to be solidary too during the pandemic crisis. I observed that participants, who also happen to have a position of authority within their community and local CSGs, understood that it is through solidarity and cooperation that they are going to be able to survive—they are well aware that neither the Colombian government nor the local government will come to help—. For this reason, participants emphasized social mobilization for the greater good. I analyzed all these processes of solidarity and cooperation through what we discussed during interviews and participatory observations, which led me to the argument that solidarity and cooperation promote “social and psychological transformation” that shapes the identity, culture, and leadership of low-income neighbourhoods in Cali (Martinez and Bravo, 2018 p. 165; Montero, 2006 p. 144).

During our interviews, CSG leaders and I discussed the role of volunteers from private universities and well-off areas of Cali, such as Ciudad Jardin, Pance, and El Ingenio. CSG leaders argued that the active participation and social engagement of university students from wealthy areas of Cali is a sign that those communal values that emerged within low-income neighbourhoods in Cali are reaching people from outside of the community, which is very positive. CSG leaders argued that networks of solidarity have worked as a platform where people from different areas of Cali, regardless of their socioeconomic status, gather and have meaningful exchanges.

CSG leaders explained to me that networks of solidarity have also worked as spaces for the gathering and promotion of community knowledge, which, for instance, have gathered all the empirical knowledge of the community on how to develop community projects over decades. CSG leaders told me that it is through networks of solidarity that elders and experienced CSG leaders passed their knowledge from generation to generation. This knowledge is nowadays being passed to newer generation of local leaders, as well as to university students from well-off areas of the city, who are understanding the realities of low-income areas of Cali through their actual social engagement. During the interviews, CSG leaders criticized local politicians because they lack “local knowledge” (Participant 1) and showed great appreciation when students from well-off areas of the city engaged with their communities. In this way, these students understood the realities of low-income neighbourhoods through actual local interactions, gaining local knowledge through their participation in networks of solidarity.

The first similarity between participatory observations and interviews with CSG leaders is the process through which discourses and narratives of solidarity transform into tangible, daily acts of resistance that have a profound and long-lasting effect in the daily lives of families in low-income communities where networks of solidarity operate. During our conversations, CSG leaders argued that these small acts of resistance—referring to networks of solidarity in their neighbourhoods—in the Highlands and in Potrero Grande were essential to understand how solidarity and communal values have transformed into actual solutions that helped the community during the pandemic.

CSG leaders from the Highlands and Agua Blanca mentioned that people in their communities have brought solidarity and communal values from their places of origin and these values and social norms have sustained and strengthened over time in low-income neighbourhoods, which resembles the arguments that Alexander Prado also presented in the study of victims of forced displacement and the Pacific diaspora in Cali (2020, p. 112). These solidarity and communal values have nourished local "mechanisms of survival" where family and neighbour networks have played a protagonist role. During our interviews, CSG leaders brought multiple times the concept of solidarity and placed communal values at the heart of their social engagement. They claimed that it was important to provide goods and services that people needed in times of crisis, but they also claimed that solidarity should be the force that puts in motion local processes of organization and mobilization. One CSG leader said, for instance, that "we are all born naked, toothless, and bald, so solidarity and giving to others is the only things that's going to endure forever and go after life" (Participant 4).

One of the main characteristics of the CSG leaders that participated in this research is that they live in the Highlands and in Potrero Grande — most of them have lived their entire lives in these neighbourhoods. They are not in a better socioeconomic condition than the rest of the people in their communities and face the same obstacles in the acquisition of basic goods and services. However, they said that they spend many hours a day working with the community, providing leadership in local community processes despite also having full-time jobs and not getting paid for their social leadership within their communities. We talked about the fact that they sacrifice time that they could have spent with their families. They also could have spent more hours working and thus be able to bring more money to their families. Instead, they all said that they were willing to make these sacrifices to provide social leadership in their communities. They all showed great satisfaction and happiness in providing their leadership to their communities, so social initiatives continued flourishing and helping the community.

In Potrero Grande, for instance, the CSG leader hosted multiple times a whole team of local and outside volunteers at her home during the weekends, especially in December, where local businesses and people from wealthy areas tend to donate toys and food for Christmas activities. She told me that she also works full-time at a local recreational centre and that spending time during the weekends leading local community processes is not easy and sometimes take too much of her energy. However, she said that this is something that she does because she loves her community and wants to see her neighbours progress and have a better quality of life. Although she said multiple times that she is not getting paid for her social leadership, she expressed her happiness in helping others and her community. During the weekend during which we carried out our interview, she hosted a whole team of volunteers at her home, including myself, where she contributed financially to feed the whole crew of volunteers and local helpers.

When I interviewed the leader of Pampas del Mirador, she also mentioned that helping others was essential for her. This concept of solidarity also played an important role during our conversation and this word came up multiple times when she provided a justification for her social engagement, leadership, and commitment. In the same way the CSG leader from Potrero Grande helped local and outside volunteers, she also used her own home to host all volunteers and cooked food for everyone participating in the network of solidarity. She did not allow me to go home without a big plate of *caldo*. She took great pride when we talked about how these local acts of resistance, justified in solidarity and communal values, were not just shallow narratives and discourses without clear actions. Instead, as she claimed, solidarity is manifested through these actions that have value and meaning for her and for people within her community. I was hearing the word solidarity a lot while also *feeling* solidarity through these acts of resistance happening around me.

When I interviewed the CSG leader from Polvorines, who has been providing guidance and leadership on local community processes for fifteen years, I mentioned the participation of university students from well-off areas of Cali during community-based activities in Polvorines and in the Highlands. I mentioned that I was personally surprised for the active participation of these university students often from private universities located in the wealthiest areas of the south of Cali, such as Pance and Ciudad Jardin. When I expressed my surprise, she mentioned that students learned new values that her community learned many years ago: “if you are not good for sharing, you are not good for living” (Participant number 3). She argued that I should not be surprised about the participation of these students in her community since solidarity would encourage people to help others regardless of their socioeconomic status. She said that solidarity is a value that she would practice even if she had nothing to share, which showed me how important this value was for her and her community.

I also spent a significant part of my interview with the CSG leader from Alto Jordan discussing the concept of solidarity. She told me that she does not understand why people from well-off areas of Cali do not share when people in her community share all the time even though they have very little to share — she said, “you can always add more water to the cooking pot”, making a reference to what people in Colombia do when they are running out of soup and you have more people to feed (Participant 3). The day of our interview, she was leading a collective project that students from private universities and well-off areas of Cali were carrying out at the local communal school in collaboration with local volunteers from the Highlands. During our interview, we talked about the food that she prepared for her family and all the volunteer that participated at the communal school. I noticed, for instance, that she first made sure that all volunteers had eaten before she and her family ate. When she was running out of *sancocho*, she added more water to the cooking pot, which I found interesting since she used this same example of sharing during our interview. When I asked about this act of solidarity, she responded that people from well-off areas of Cali should learn more from her community because sharing is the way they live and strengthen neighbour relations.

During our interviews, all CSG leaders from the Highlands and Potrero Grande that participated in this research justified through solidarity and communal values their personal sacrifices and the efforts of their communities to nourish and sustain local networks of solidarity. Although these CSG leaders were not aware of the participation of other CSG leaders from Cali and the topics that I proposed for the interviews, they all coincidentally justified their work through solidarity and communal values, and I noticed that they expressed great happiness and satisfaction when promoting and putting into practice these important values.

All CSG leaders emphasized the intrinsic connection between solidarity and their local networks of solidarity, where CSG leader expressed that both nourished and strengthened each other to make their neighbourhoods a better place despite the local challenges. During the interview with my first participant, this CSG leader said something that helped me understand better the connection between CSG leaders, solidarity, and networks of solidarity. According to her, these three elements worked as “weavers” that maintained the community interlaced and connected, resembling the fabric of a hand-made wool scarf. CSG leaders argued that networks of solidarity are the place where the whole community really gets together and share a common space, finding opportunities for cooperation, networking, and organization. As CSG leaders claimed, networks of solidarity work as the magnet that brings all the pieces of their neighbourhoods together, solidarity is the engine that pushes people to cooperate and help, and CSG leaders provide their knowledge and leadership. However, in the end, they all claimed that nothing would work if we took away solidarity and those communal values that their communities have nourished and maintained for so many years.

Despite these contributing answers, CSG leaders emphasized that the 2021 National Strike increased their concerns regarding the safety of doing community work in Cali, especially in areas where the presence of the state is weaker, such as the Highlands and Agua Blanca. In these areas of Cali, as they mentioned, CSG leaders are more exposed to illegal armed organizations and local gangs related to the micro-trafficking of drugs. For this reason, CSG leaders had improved their safety protocols and acted with more cautiousness when interacting with their communities and carrying out a community projects. During our interviews, for example, CSG leaders refused to be recorded and cautioned me multiple times that locals could identify that I was not from the Highlands or from Agua Blanca, which could bring problems to me, especially if gang members stopped me to ask questions regarding my work in these communities – CSG leaders recommended me not to say that I was a university student doing research since researcher, scholars, and university professors are sometimes seen as leftists, which could turn me into a target.

CSG leaders expressed that the 2021 National Strike changed the dynamics through which community work operated in Cali because, as CSG leaders say, "*criminals y bandidos pescan en rio revuelto*" (criminals and bandits like to fish in troubled waters). This means that criminals use in their advantage the chaos that the 2021 National Strike brought to Cali society and thus can carry out their criminal activities in impunity. 2021 National Strike brought chaos to the city in an unprecedented manner. They repeated multiple times that in these times of chaos and instability, we should act prudently and remain vigilant. When I stopped in Agua Blanca to buy a bottle of water at the local convenience store, there was a man in his late 40s or early 50s drinking a *refajo*, which is a mix of soda and beer, and we started a conversation. The man was not aggressive, but started to ask questions about my presence in the neighbourhood since I did not look like a local according to him. When I was about to leave the convenience store, he recommended me to be careful since making a guy like me disappear was not that hard. This comment made me think that I should take the recommendations of CSG leaders seriously.

3.4.1 Conclusion of Interviews

I concluded after these semi-structured interviews that the hypothesis for this thesis is right: leaders of CSGs in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande organized and mobilized actively during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike. I also confirmed through these interviews that solidarity and cooperation played an important role in the way these low-income communities in Cali engaged in community processes and thus proposed effective solutions to local problems. These discussions of solidarity and cooperation were crucial to understand the reasons behind why these communities organized and mobilized to help each other.

I also noted during the interviews that these networks of solidarity functioned as an instrument to fight the "vertical notion of power" that the local elite has imposed upon them, where the socioeconomic status of people dictates the "social other" (Martinez and Bravo, 2018 p. 166; Weber, 1925/1984, page 228). Participants highlighted the importance of not creating false narratives and divisions. Participants underlined the importance of knowing the territory from the territory and not from afar. They were always open to the idea of receiving people from well-off areas in Cali into their homes, so they could see the other Cali. Therefore, I saw that these "participatory actions" were important strategies to change those negative and noxious narratives against the poor in Cali (Hernández, 1995).

I observed that these networks of solidarity worked as platforms where people in low-income areas of Cali got together and proposed collective solutions against local problems. However, these networks also served as spaces that kept the community together during times of crisis, thriving and growing despite many of the challenges that they faced daily, from widespread violence to material poverty and state absence. Therefore, I propose to understand networks of solidarity as something more than mechanisms of survival in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali. I observed and concluded that these networks maintained the community together, allowing communities facing vulnerability and marginalization to organize and mobilize within adverse challenges and circumstances in low-income areas of Cali.

These networks of solidarity, in other words, allowed people in Potrero Grande, Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, and Polvorines to generate effective local solutions during the pandemic through collective work, where local groups assisted their communities through these networks and permitted low-income communities to survive and thrive in times of crisis. These networks should be understood as efficient platforms that can generate from community kitchens to feed families without the financial resources to buy food to promote the culture and identity of disadvantaged populations in Cali. These networks, consequently, should not be disregarded because of their small size and local reach. Instead, these networks demonstrated during my research that despite their small size and local nature, they can be effective vehicles that improved the quality of life of low-income families in Cali by proposing solutions based on local knowledge, collective work, and solidarity.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 Neighbourhood-based Solution and Communal Values

Throughout this thesis and based on my demonstration chapters (chap. 2 and 3), I have not suggested that large social mobilizations were not important in the understanding and analysis of how civil society in Colombia has organized and mobilized in times of crisis. Indeed, my argument and approach suggest that Colombia possesses such a diverse and rich network of neighbourhood-based organizations, particularly in low-income communities in urban and rural settings, that their inclusion and analysis in the study of social mobilization in Colombia becomes therefore imperative (Barrera, 2015, p. 69-70). For this reason, I decided to prioritize neighbourhood-based groups in low-income neighborhoods in Cali and thus be able to analyze how low-income neighbourhoods organized and mobilized in times of crisis during the pandemic, especially in those areas of Cali that suffered the most during such unprecedented times.

After the presentation of participatory observations and interviews, my approach demonstrated to be effective in the analysis of social mobilization in Cali during the pandemic crisis—community-based networks of solidarity showed to be an excellent example of social organization and social mobilization in low-income communities in Cali during the pandemic crisis and the 2021 National Strike. The inclusion and prioritization of neighbourhood-based CSGs and networks of solidarity in Alto Jordan, Pampas del Mirador, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande effectively demonstrated that civil society in Cali remained active during the pandemic crisis despite the pressures and constraints that emerged between 2020 and 2021, such as the widespread implementation of emergency measures (e.g., lockdowns, quarantines, social distancing) and staggering rates of hunger and unemployment.

The presentation of these ethnographic results proved, in other words, that those pressures and constraints that emerged between 2020 and 2021 did not dimmish the ability of low-income neighbourhoods in Cali to organize and mobilize to overcome local obstacles and issues, such as widespread violence, material poverty, and hunger. Instead, CSGs in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande organized and mobilized actively to propose effective solutions to many of the social issues that affected them, especially through the creation and expansion of community kitchens, which remained the most visible form of networks of solidarity during the ethnographic component of this research in 2021. These community kitchens attended rapidly and effectively issues related to hunger and malnutrition that increased in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca during the pandemic crisis and the 2021 National Strike.

The creation and expansion of community kitchens between 2020 and 2021 in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande demonstrated that civil society in low-income neighbourhoods Cali did not stay motionless during the pandemic crisis. Low-income communities in Cali demonstrated that they could adapt to those new challenges and obstacles that emerged during the pandemic crisis and the 2021 National Strike, demonstrating their resilience and ability to propose effective and rapid community-based solutions through solidarity and self-management. The research of Claudia Pena (2010, p. 7 and 9) and Monica Velasquez show (2007) that community kitchens are also a good example of those community-based strategies that existed during pre-pandemic times in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca and that expanded and adapted to attend the problems that emerged during the pandemic crisis in vulnerable communities in Cali, such as higher rates of hunger and malnutrition.

The results of this research also showed that despite their small nature, neighbourhood-based networks of solidarity required a complex logistical coordination to function properly. The active participation of members and leaders of CSG, as well as of local volunteers from Highlands and Agua Blanca and volunteers from well-off areas of Cali, remained essential to guarantee the proper delivery of services, such as the provision of food to people in need in the community. In the case of community kitchens, for instance, local CSGs in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca required the daily provision of large quantities of food, which required the active involvement of the whole community to make sure enough donations and food were being gathered.

Community kitchens are, therefore, also a good example of how low-income neighbourhoods in Cali sustained solidarity and communal values throughout the pandemic crisis. John Arboleda (2022, p.40) says that community kitchens “represented solidarity and food sovereignty” during the pandemic crisis, where marginalized and vulnerable communities used community kitchens as shared spaces for sharing, collaborating, and helping each other.

These networks of solidarity also required a complex distribution of resources and tasks to achieve the goals that the local CSG had set. Beyond the gathering of large amounts of food, networks of solidarity also required the proper administration of resources and staff. CSG leaders needed to make sure they had enough volunteers for the day, administer ingredients and food according to the demand of the day to avoid waste or leaving people without food, assign tasks to volunteers according to their skills and past performance, and guarantee the proper delivery of food. This complex coordination and logistical process showed that networks of solidarity in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali required the proper application of self-management and logistical skills despite their small nature.

The results of this research proved that community-based networks of solidarity helped low-income communities to legitimize their social mobilization and thus centralize donations and local community efforts. If people from the Highlands, Agua Blanca, and well-off areas of Cali wanted to donate, the community would do so at the local network of solidarity, which people considered as the legitimate and appropriate community-based organization for the gathering, distribution, and provision of resources. This helped local CSGs to centralize donations and thus gather enough resources for their local operations. Networks of solidarity also helped to centralize the participation of volunteers in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca, which allowed local CSGs to focalize community efforts and to have enough staff for their daily operations.

However, the results of this research also suggest that solidarity—explained in this research as those "everyday relations" (D'Auria et all, 2019 p. 80-81) among members of low-income communities that can transform caring acts into "low-key, small scaled" yet effective forms of social mobilizations that sustain themselves through the desire of members to take care of each other (Jacobson and Korolczuk, 2020 p. 139; Koobak et al. 2021, p. 126)—played a protagonist role in explaining why people in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande organized and mobilized during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike to protect their communities. Therefore, following the arguments of Espinosa, who argues that solidarity and acts of resistance go together in the Indigenous Peoples of Misak, Nasa, and Pijao in Colombia (2007, p. 63-64), this thesis holds that this concept of solidarity played an important role in the creation and maintenance of networks of solidarity in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike. These mechanisms and strategies of survival that I observed in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca were sustained during such challenging times thanks to the communal values and solidarity of CSG members and leaders. The desire of helping each other and collaborating, as all CSG leaders confirmed, is what really pushed people in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali to organize and mobilize themselves to overcome those challenges that emerged between 2020 and 2021.

Low-income communities in Cali were able to survive during the pandemic crisis thanks to those communal values and solidarity, which pushed low-income families to help each other during such challenges times despite the constraints and pressures that emerged between 2020 and 2021. The results of this thesis, therefore, suggests that low-income communities were able to overcome those challenges related to increasing rates of hunger, widespread violence, and material poverty during the pandemic thanks to those small, community-based networks of solidarity where neighbours in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande showed their incredible ability to share, take care of each other, and promote communal values despite the circumstances. In the same way other authors that studied civil society in Cali during the pandemic suggested, solidarity played a major role in those community-based strategies and mechanisms of survival that emerged and expanded throughout low-income neighbourhoods in Cali between 2020 and 2021 (Aguado and Revelo, 2018, p. 19; Arboleda, 2022, p. 40).

These local networks, in other words, should not be regarded as a lesser form of social mobilization—especially when compared to those larger forms of social mobilization in Colombia, such as anti-FARC manifestations in 2008 that mobilized Colombian society, Colombians abroad, and engaged Colombians actively on social media platforms (see Vasquez, 2018). These networks, as the results of this thesis suggest, can show how solidarity and communal values in low-income neighbourhoods have materialized into small yet meaningful acts of resistance in low-income areas of Cali, which, despite their small size, may lead to larger effects in society. For example, in times when low-income families in Cali were facing increasing rates of hunger, widespread violence, state negligence, state repression, and staggering rates of unemployment, solidarity among the members of these marginalized areas of Cali transformed into effective networks of solidarity that helped countless low-income families during challenging times (Saavedra et al, 2022, p. 21).

Although low-income communities in Cali were facing severe pressures and constraints (e.g., state repression, material poverty, hunger) during the pandemic crisis and during the National Strike, solidarity and communal values maintained the community together, which, in turn, these values encouraged people to create and strengthen community-based networks of solidarity. Amid all this chaos between 2020 and 2021, people in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali remained strong and continued to protect their communities through these local networks of solidarity. Even within the context of the widespread violence and state repression that these communities went through during the National Strike, solidarity brought the community together, making low-income communities in Cali the epicenter of “self-management and community learning” (Duran Saavedra et al, 2022, p. 21).

Participatory observations and interviews also confirmed that these networks of solidarity in Cali, which were based on solidarity and cooperation, had cultural effects that went beyond the boundaries of their own communities. The results of this thesis showed that solidarity and communal values that were prevalent in Pampas del Mirador, Polvorines, Alto Jordan, and Potrero Grande also reached other neighbourhoods of the city. The participation of volunteers from private universities and well-off areas showed that networks of solidarity have the power to transform culture and to project larger effects in society, reaching beyond the geographical boundaries of their communities. Changing the culture of well-off areas of Cali and making wealthy families understand the importance of solidarity and communal values is an excellent example of the reach and power that networks of solidarity in low-income neighbourhoods have.

These larger effects of networks of solidarity in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali demonstrated to have profound and long-lasting effects in society, which resembles the ideas that Valencia offered when she argued that networks of solidarity during the National Strike in Cali “built a new country” through neighbourhood-based acts of resistance, calling these networks a “transformative entrance” to a new society (2022, p. 2-4). Making people, especially students, from well-off areas of Cali adopt and engage with these values that are so inherent in the culture of low-income communities in Cali is an excellent example of how networks of solidarity may transform and influence the culture of the city. This process of cultural transformation has led to the constant participation of students and volunteers from wealthy areas of Cali in local networks of solidarity, which is spreading solidarity and communal values across multiple neighbourhoods of the city regardless of their socioeconomic status. This has led to the adoption and increasing practice of communal values and solidarity in Cali during the pandemic crisis.

During our interviews, CSG leaders argued that low-income communities in Cali have experienced difficult challenges since their foundation, which resembles the arguments presented by Amparo et al regarding the “brutal combination” (2021, p. 9) of racism, discrimination, widespread violence, and the intermittent presence of the state in these marginalized areas of Cali. These areas of Cali have historically experienced staggering rates of gang-related violence, homicide rates, material poverty, social exclusion, vulnerability, and labour exclusion. For all these reasons, CSG leaders argued that the current narrative and discourses that the Colombian government and the media are using might project the idea that these low-income communities in Cali were facing an unprecedented crisis between 2020 and 2021. CSG leaders recognized that the pressures and constraints that emerged during the pandemic and the National Strike made community processes harder, especially when strict emergency pressures were implemented. However, as they told me, these communities have been in a constant state of crisis. The pandemic is just another crisis that these low-income communities in Cali needed to face.

CSG leader said that this mistaken narrative of an unprecedented crisis became more visible when low-income families in Cali started to hang red rags on their window frames and doors because of increasing rates of unemployment and hunger in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, which is an argument that Amaya also presents when he said that "food insecurity" in Cali was marked by the hanging of red rags on window frames (2022, p. 14). However, CSG leaders and local scholars argue that the fact that most people in these low-income areas of Cali are Afro-Colombians who belong to the lowest socioeconomic classification and who experience high rates of social exclusion and marginalization is not a mere coincidence or the result of a short-lived crisis (Monsalvo, 2014, p. 122). Instead, CSG leaders argued that the current state of low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca, is the result of a long, well-established crisis that comes from decades of state negligence, widespread violence, and material poverty. This is also is also an argument that Diana Martinez presents (2019, p. 181), as the author says that the Colombian government and the local elite have historically considered Agua Blanca as an "empty" and "devaluated" space, which has justified "police repression" and "state negligence" against their residents.

For this reason, CSG leaders argued that solidarity has been an excellent engine of social organizations and mobilizations in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, which has pushed low-income families to find effective mechanisms to overcome local challenges. This argument is also presented by Toro (2013, p. 37), who argued that these marginalized areas of the Highlands and Agua Blanca have become in an "epicenter of self-management efforts and community solidarity" despite the challenges that these communities have faced for so many years. Helping each other, as expressed by CSG leaders, have been the main mechanism through which low-income families in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca have found effective and rapid solutions to issues related to hunger, unemployment, material poverty, social exclusion, and gang-related violence.

During the interviews, the CSG leaders and I discussed that solidarity and networks of solidarity have existed and have helped low-income neighbourhoods in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca throughout multiple crises and during adverse circumstances, which is a similar argument that Martinez presented in the analysis on how the Pacific diaspora have intergenerationally survived in Cali and their struggles to preserve their "solidarity" and "the good living" (*el buen vivir*) of rural Black communities (Martinez, 2023, p. 70). For this reason, small and local CSGs with their networks of solidarity, as well as the concept of solidarity itself, are essential in the understanding of social mobilization in Cali. During participatory observations and interviews, these small forms of social mobilization showed how low-income neighbourhoods in Cali organized and mobilized between 2020 and 2021.

Testing the ability of low-income populations in Cali to organize and mobilize during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike through the analysis of community-based CSGs and their local networks of solidarity demonstrated that those pressures and constraints that emerged during the pandemic and the National Strike did not diminish the ability of civil society in Cali to organize and mobilize in times of crisis. Instead, proposing the analysis of these community-based CSGs and their mechanisms and strategies of survival, as well as proposing the analysis of their communal values, showed that civil society in Cali adapted to those challenges and obstacles that emerged between 2020 and 2021. Civil society in Cali, therefore, did not remain motionless between the first two years of the pandemic and showed great resilience in proposing effective and rapid solutions to local problems during challenging times.

4.2 The Expansion of Solidarity

The networks of solidarity that operated in Pampas del Mirador, Potrero Grande, Alto Jordan, and Polvorines served as an important platform where people from low-income neighbourhoods and people from well-off areas of the city gathered and had meaningful exchanges during the pandemic crisis and the National Strike. These networks of solidarity allowed people from other areas of Cali to have a common space for meaningful interactions and exchanges. In other words, networks of solidarity functioned as a bridge during the pandemic crisis that allowed people to connect in Cali regardless of their socioeconomic status. Interviews with CSG leaders confirmed, for instance, that solidarity and communal values, which are so embedded and natural within the culture of low-income neighbourhoods, have expanded throughout the city thanks to those bridges that networks of solidarity built between the rich and the poor during the pandemic.

The active engagement of university students from well-off areas in networks of solidarity located in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca are an excellent example that shows how networks of solidarity have a transformative, large, and long-lasting effects in the culture of the city. Those values that pushed people to help each other and to be solidary are now reaching neighbourhoods beyond the geographical and urban boundaries of the Highlands and Agua Blanca thanks to those interactions and transactions that occurred in networks of solidarity. CSG leaders showed great satisfaction in the participation of university students in local networks of solidarity, especially because CSG leaders understand—in the same way they recognize the sacrifices of their own communities—the individual effort that these university students must go through to participate in networks of solidarity in low-income areas of Cali.

Many of these university students are exposed to multiple challenges that they have never experienced in their lives, such as taking a *pirata* (informal taxis) or *motoratón* (motorcycle taxi), walking through unpaved roads under the sun for hours, eat what is available and not what they want, and do physical labour (e.g., carry bundles of food and firewood, cleaning, fixing and delivering plates). The willingness of university students from well-off areas of Cali to help these low-income communities is an excellent example of how networks of solidarity have transformed and keeps transforming the culture of the city towards a more solidary population.

The networks of solidarity in these low-income neighbourhoods have created a bond between two socioeconomic groups of Cali that could overcome the geographical and urbanistic segregation of Cali, where low-income areas of the city have historically remained isolated from wealthy neighbourhoods and important areas of Cali for work and life opportunities, as Pelaez explains referring to the case of Llano Verde and other neighbourhoods in Agua Blanca (2021, p. 1-2). The results of this research then suggest that networks of solidarity in the Highlands and Agua Blanca produce larger effects in the city that can dismantle the "structural racism" and historical divide between the rich and the poor that Cortes have proposed in the study of those oppressive social structures in the city that disproportionally affect low-income families in Cali (Cortes, 2023, p. 250)

Following this, first, the results of this research proved that networks of solidarity have a unifying effect among members of CSGs in Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and

Potrero Grande. These networks of solidarity worked as a magnet that brought low-income families together to work for the greater good, where solidarity and communal values played a protagonist role in the development and maintenance of these community-based strategies and mechanisms of survival and cooperation. Second, the result of this thesis show that networks of solidarity have also produced an effect that extended beyond the geographical and urbanistic boundaries of low-income communities in Cali. The participation of university students from well-off areas of Cali proved that networks of solidarity can have larger effects in society and not only within the boundaries of the community. Those solidarity and communal values that grow so naturally and are widely practiced within the boundaries of low-income communities are nowadays spreading through the city thanks to the role of networks of solidarity in serving as a platform for meaningful interactions and exchanges between two socioeconomic groups that have been historically separated.

4.3 Local Knowledge

The results of this research also suggest that networks of solidarity were crucial in the gathering, increasing sophistication, and preservation of community knowledge, which is all this empirical knowledge that low-income communities in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca have gathered over decades of developing and implementing neighbourhood-based social initiatives. Each neighbourhood in Cali, especially those in conditions of marginization and vulnerability, have structural challenges that are sometimes unique to that community. Therefore, the gathering of community knowledge for the proper developing and maintenance of strategies and mechanisms of survival is crucial for the survival of the community. Without this knowledge, low-income communities in Cali would not have a foundation to build upon when creating and maintaining networks of solidarity. These networks have gathered decades of successes and failures of communities, which have helped CSG leaders and members to adjust and sophisticate their neighbourhood-based strategies against material poverty, widespread violence, and state negligence.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 Conclusion

The participatory observations and interviews of this research confirmed that the pressures and constraints that emerged during the pandemic crisis in Cali, Colombia, between 2020 and 2021, such as the widespread implementation of emergency measures to contain the spread of the virus (e.g., lockdowns, quarantines, social distancing) and the emergence of new violent phenomena, did not dimmish the ability of civil society in Cali to organize and mobilize in times of crisis. The results of this research showed that CSGs in the Highlands and Agua Blanca adjusted to these new realities that had arisen within the context of the pandemic crisis and the 2021 National Strike. This research found that, instead of remaining motionless due to strict emergency measures and the arrival of new violent phenomena, CSGs in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca organized and mobilized actively during the first two years of the pandemic crisis to propose effective and rapid solutions to many of the local problems that appeared between 2020 and 2021. Community kitchens remained during the ethnographic component of this thesis the most visible form of social organization and mobilization in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca. Community kitchens also were also an effective strategy through which communities maintained solidarity and communal values throughout the pandemic crisis, remaining in important spaces for sharing, collaborating, and helping each other during such unprecedented times.

The analysis of the results of this research and the works of local scholars also confirmed that civil society in Cali organized and mobilized during the pandemic crisis in other low-income neighbourhoods of the Highlands and Agua Blanca (Padilla et all, 2020, p. 27-29; Duran et al, 2022, p. 21), which demonstrated the active mobilization of Cali society in times of crisis. Social mobilization, in other words, was not limited to those neighbourhoods that were included in this research, and instead, the presence of networks of solidarity were also present in other low-income neighbourhoods in Cali.

This thesis found that the presence and expansion of community kitchens across Pampas del Mirador, Alto Jordan, Polvorines, and Potrero Grande remained the most visible example of how local CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali addressed one of the most concerning and increasing challenges during the pandemic crisis: staggering rates of hunger. CSGs in these low-income neighbourhoods in Cali sustained and expanded and thus provided low-income families within their communities with proper nutrition during times where 86% of families with dependants did not have access to the most basic goods and services (DANE, 2022, p. 19), especially food and clothing. In the face of this chaos, CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali stepped in and demonstrated their resilience, solidarity, and creativity to respond to these unprecedented challenges that emerged during the first two years of the pandemic.

After the careful evaluation of the results, this thesis confirms that civil society in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali organized and mobilized during the pandemic crisis despite the risks of mobilization and the increasing pressures from other factors, such as state negligence, state repression, widespread violence, discrimination, and material poverty.

This thesis also showed that solidarity and communal values in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali played an important role in the creation, maintenance, and expansion of networks of solidarity during the first two years of the pandemic crisis. The observations and interviews of this research confirmed that solidarity and communal values are embedded within the culture of low-income communities in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca, which, in turn, pushed local CSGs to develop community-based strategies and mechanisms of survival to take care of each other in times of crisis. These local networks of solidarity allowed these marginalized communities to address local issues, such as widespread violence, material poverty, and state negligence. Beyond the desire for physical survival, the concept of solidarity has been the true engine of social mobilization in Cali, pushing low-income communities to take care of each other through remarkable community processes “self-management efforts and community solidarity” in Cali (Toro, 2013, p. 37).

5.1 Missing Elements

Although this thesis showed the resilience of CSGs in low-income communities in Cali and tested their ability to organize and mobilize during such unprecedented times, this research did not address the role of these local CSGs in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca in terms of sustaining the culture and traditions of ethnic and social minorities in Cali during times of crisis. Many of these local networks of solidarity in the Highlands and in Agua Blanca engaged in cultural, ethnic, and identity discussions that this thesis could not explore due to its limitations.

Cali has experienced the constant arrival of people from the Pacific coast for the past 50 years, contributing to the strengthening of the Pacific diaspora in the city and their relevance in the culture and identity of Cali and the Valle del Cauca (Valencia and Abadia, 2019, p. 1 and 95).

However, the thesis did not address the role of local CSGs and their networks of solidarity in the promotion and protection of those identities that have historically remained excluded at the margins of society, such as those identities related to the Black diaspora from the Pacific, Indigenous diaspora from Cauca and other rural regions of Colombia, as well as those identities associated to gender and language minorities.

This important processes of "identity building" and "cultural differences" (Gonzalez, 2020, p. 6) in low-income neighbourhoods that have large Afro-Colombian communities from the Pacific in Cali are not discussed in this thesis, especially in relation to the role of local community processes that touch upon the promotion and preservation of the Black culture and identity in Cali. This research is therefore missing an important element of culture and identity that could have been explored further through the analysis of how local CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali promote and defend the culture and identity of social and ethnic minorities against hegemonic narratives and oppressive local social structures.

5.2 Further Research and Analysis

Barrera argues that Colombia counts with a "great wealth of communal organizations" (2015, p. 69-70), and therefore, testing the ability of civil society to organize and mobilize within different local contexts and realities is a topic for further analysis. For instance, future research can explore how low-income communities in rural and urban settings have responded to their local pressures and constraints in times of crisis. In this way, researchers can find those similarities and differences in terms of social organization and social mobilization between low-income communities in large cities and small villages, especially when new phenomena have emerged during the post-conflict era, affecting urban and rural communities differently.

The intensification of deforestations, the expansion of illegal armed organizations, and the diversification of the portfolio of illegal economies during the post-conflict era (Pirela et al, 2023, p. 1-2) have led to the emergence of new pressures and constraints in rural settings, particularly those with strategic value. Therefore, studying and testing the ability of CSGs to organize and mobilize within these challenging and new contexts in rural Colombia is a new topic for further discussion, especially those areas that sadly remain geographically and politically isolated from the rest of the country.

The emergence of new violent phenomena in the Colombo-Venezuelan border is also a topic that can lead to new studies in terms of social organization and mobilization within the context of widespread violence. The intensification of violence, where rural communities have experienced staggering numbers of homicides, forced disappearances, illegal recruitments and the use of children in the conflict, the expansion of the National Liberation Army (ELN), and increasing rates of forced displacement in the Colombo-Venezuelan border have posed new challenges to communities located in Arauca and other regions in the northeast of Colombia (HRW, 2022[19]). Hence, analyzing the ability of CSGs in this large area of Colombia and Venezuela to organize and mobilize in the face of such dangerous circumstances is also a topic that requires further discussion.

The presence of illegal armed organizations from Mexico and Venezuela and their current expansion throughout the Highlands and Agua Blanca is also another topic that can serve for future researchers in the study of processes of social organizations and mobilization in Cali (Trujillo, 2023[20]). The presence of international cartels imposes new challenges that might affect the ability of local CSGs in low-income neighbourhoods in Cali to organize and mobilize.

The emergence of this violence phenomena led me to the following questions, does solidarity work the same way within the context of rural and urban settings? If so, what are the main differences and what are the sources of these discrepancies? The comparative analysis of how different CSGs within different urban and rural contexts have organized and mobilized during the pandemic crisis is also a topic that can be analyzed further. Does CSGs in low-income communities in Cali and in Bogota have the same degree of social organizations and mobilization? Do we see the same degree of solidarity in low-income neighbourhoods between these two large Colombian cities?

---

[19] https://www.hrw.org/es/news/2022/03/28/colombia/venezuela-abusos-de-grupos-armados-en-zona-fronteriza
[20] https://www.elpais.com.co/judicial/lo-que-hay-detras-de-la-presencia-del-tren-de-aragua-y-carteles-mexicanos-de-la-droga-en-cali.html

Works Cited

Acuña, Yon Edgar Ordoñez. "La violencia urbana, una mirada desde la salud pública en la experiencia “CURE VIOLENCE” aplicada en Cali-Valle del Cauca." *Espacio Sociológico* 1, no. 1 (2021): 53-67.

Acuña, Yon Edgar Ordoñez. "La violencia urbana, una mirada desde la salud pública en la experiencia “CURE VIOLENCE” aplicada en Cali-Valle del Cauca." *Espacio Sociológico* 1, no. 1 (2021): 53-67.

Adams, T.M., 2017. How chronic violence affects human development, social relations, and the practice of citizenship: A systemic framework for action. *Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.*

Aguado, Rafael, Natalia Manyoma, and Leidy Revelo. "Sistematización de la experiencia del proceso de transición de funcionamiento en un comedor comunitario en Santiago de Cali." (2018).

Aguilar-Forero, Nicolás. "Las cuatro co de la acción colectiva juvenil: el caso del paro nacional de Colombia (noviembre 2019-enero 2020)." *Análisis Político* 33, no. 98 (2020): 26-43.

Ahedo, Manuel. "Más allá de la seguridad y la resiliencia. Hacia la intervención civil y el empoderamiento autógeno de las sociedades para construir su paz y su prosperidad." *Relaciones Internacionales* 43 (2020): 49-67.

Alcaldia de Cali. “Cali, Segunda Ciudad Con Mayor Población Afrodescendiente En El PaísA,” May 2013. https://www.cali.gov.co/bienestar/publicaciones/51642/cali_segunda_ciudad_con_mayor_poblacin_afrodescendiente_en_el_pas/.

Alharahsheh, Husam Helmi, and Abraham Pius. "A review of key paradigms: Positivism VS interpretivism." *Global Academic Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 3 (2020): 39-43.

Alvarado Mendoza, Arturo. "Violencia política y electoral en las elecciones de 2018." *Alteridades* 29, no. 57 (2019): 59-73

Álvarez, Carolina, and Carlos González. "Análisis espacial de la violencia homicida en el pacífico colombiano." *Revista de Economía & Administración E-ISSN 2463-1035 ISSN 1794-7561* 9, no. 1 (2012).

Amaya Salazar, Elvia Lucia. "Rojo. Sembrando afectos en el territorio." PhD diss., Universidad Nacional de Colombia.(2022).

Amaya, Juan Sebastián. "La pobreza en Colombia va a alcanzar un nivel de entre 47% y 49% por la pandemia del covid." *La República* (2020).

Amparo Alves, Jaime, Vicenta Moreno, and Brenda Ramos. "Notas preliminares para un análisis interseccional de la violencia en el Distrito de Aguablanca (Cali-Colombia)." (2014).

Amparo Alves, Jaime, Vicenta Moreno, and Brenda Ramos. "Notas preliminares para un análisis interseccional de la violencia en el Distrito de Aguablanca (Cali-Colombia)." (2014).

Anacona Muñoz, Adriana. "Memoria del proceso de empoderamiento pacifista de las mujeres del cabildo indígena Yanakuna Santiago de Cali 1999 a 2014." (2020).

Anderson, G. L., & Montero-Sieburth, M. (editors) (1998). Educational qualitative research in Latin America: The strug- gle for a new paradigm. New York and London: Routledge.

ANDI. "'La Reactivación Económica Fue El Gran Logro Del País En El 2021': ANDI," January 2022. https://www.andi.com.co/Home/Noticia/17172-la-reactivacion-economica-fue-el-gran-l.

Andrade Viuche, María Antonia. "Proyecto Tierra Blanca: acciones sociales que por medio del juego y las artes transforman vidas y generan sentido de comunidad en la comuna 20 de Cali." 2022.

Angel, Martha Herrera. "El arrochelamiento: nominar para criminalizar." *El Taller de la Historia* 2, no. 2 (2010): 11-46.

Arboleda, Jhon Jaime Velasco. "Aproximación a los recursos recreativos de la protesta durante el estallido social en Cali." *Educación y Ciudad* 42 (2022): 29-46.

Arana-Castañeda, Carlos Andrés. "Ausencia y presencia estatal como forma de reproducción de la violencia urbana en el distrito de Aguablanca (Cali, Colombia)." *CS* 32 (2020): 77-102.

Arango, Luis E., and Luz A. Flórez. "Regional Labour Informality in Colombia and a Proposal for a Differential Minimum Wage." *The Journal of Development Studies* 57, no. 6 (2021): 1016–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2020.1841170.

Arboleda, Jhon Jaime Velasco. "Aproximación a los recursos recreativos de la protesta durante el estallido social en Cali." *Educación y Ciudad* 42 (2022): 29-46.

Ariza-Sosa, Gladys Rocío, Juan Jacobo Agudelo-Galeano, Luisa Alejandra Saldarriaga-Quintero, María Camila Ortega-Mosquera, and Dora Cecilia. "Crisis humanitaria de emergencia en Colombia por violencia contra las mujeres durante la pandemia de COVID-19." *Revista de la Facultad de Derecho y Ciencias Políticas* 51, no. 134 (2021): 125-150.

Atwood, J. Brian. "The link between poverty and violent conflict." *New England Journal of Public Policy* 19, no. 1 (2003): 10.

Ávila, Ariel. "Detrás de la guerra en Colombia." *Bogotá: Editorial Planeta Colombiana* (2019).

Balcells, Laia, Spencer Dorsey, and Juan F. Tellez. “Repression and Dissent in Contemporary Catalonia.” *British Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 4 (2021): 1742–50. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123420000307.

Barrera, Víctor. "Sociedad civil y paz territorial. Aprendizaje social, movilización ciudadana y gobernabilidad local." *Estrategias para la construcción de paz territorial en Colombia. Elementos para la discusión* (2015): 62-87.

Bastidas, Eliana Donneys, and Sara Natalia Pérez. "La toma militar en Siloé: memoria colectiva e identidad política." *Trans-pasando Fronteras* 15 (2020).

Bautista Bautista, Sandra Carolina. "Alternativas analíticas en el campo de la movilización social en Colombia: la acción colectiva de alto riesgo. Lecturas a propósito de la protesta campesina en el Tolima." *Estudios Políticos* 41 (2012): 57-79.

Bergquist, Charles. "Violence in Colombia: the contemporary crisis in historical perspective." *Análisis Político* 17 (1992): 106-108.

Bergquist, Charles. "Violence in Colombia: the contemporary crisis in historical perspective." *Análisis Político* 17 (1992): 106-108.

Berrio-Calle, Juan Esteban, and Lemy Bran-Piedrahita. "Determinantes de la informalidad laboral en Colombia para el período 2008-2017 (Determinants of the Labor Informality in Colombia for the 2008-2017 period)." *Revista CEA* 5, no. 9 (2019).

Betancourt Madrid, Alejandra Maria. "La imagen y la narrativa como herramientas para el abordaje psicosocial en escenarios de violencia. Santiago de Cali." 2022.

Biggs, Michael. “Size Matters: Quantifying Protest by Counting Participants.” *Sociological Methods & Research* 47, no. 3 (2018): 351–83. https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124116629166.

Blau, P. & Schoenherr, R. (1971) *The Structure of Organizations*. Basic Books, New York.

Bliesemann de Guevara, B., Furnari, E. and Julian, R., 2020. Researching with ‘local’associates: Power, trust and data in an interpretive project on communities’ conflict knowledge in Myanmar. *Civil Wars*, *22*(4), pp.427-452.

Blofield, Merike, Nora Lustig, and Mart Trasberg. "La protección social durante la pandemia: los casos de Argentina, Brasil, Colombia y México." *Pensamiento iberoamericano* 10 (2021): 108-122.

Botello, H.A., 2014. Inequidad, violencia y pobreza en los municipios de Colombia. *Perfil de Coyuntura Económica*, (24), pp.33-48.

Bravo Martínez, Luz Adriana, Yudy Anisley Melo Obando, and Eugenia Montaño Banguera. "Sistematización de la experiencia de un grupo mujeres lideresas con incidencia política feminista de la ruta Pacífica de las mujeres en Cali." (2021).

Bravo, Omar Alejandro, and Enrique Rodríguez Caporalli. "El miedo en Cali." (2021).

Brechenmacher, Saskia, Thomas Carothers, and Richard Youngs. "Civil society and the coronavirus: dynamism despite disruption." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Retrieved July* 10 (2020): 2020.

Brigden, Noelle K, and Anita R Gohdes. "The Politics of Data Access in Studying Violence Across Methodological Boundaries: What We Can Learn from Each Other?" *International Studies Review* 22, no. 2 (2020): 250–67. https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viaa017.

Bromley, Ray. "Municipal versus spontaneous markets? A case study of urban planning in Cali, Colombia." *Third World Planning Review* 2, no. 2 (1980): 205.

Buitrago Rojas, Andrea Paola, Yate Yara, Marco Tulio, Marcelina Cundumí Díaz, and Lilia Yaya. *La paz desde abajo: breve historia, impacto y participación de los movimientos sociales en Colombia*. Ediciones USTA, 2018.

Burt, R.S. (1992), Structural Holes. The Social Structure of Competition, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Bustillo-Castillejo, María C., Yesid De La Espriella-Mendoza, and Jhorquis Machado-Licona. "Pertenencia ciudadana: estudio de caso de las comunidades afro de la ciudad de Cartagena de Indias, Colombia." *Información tecnológica* 32, no. 4 (2021): 23-30.

Cadavid, John Jaime Hurtado. "El papel de la verdad en los procesos de resubjetivación de las víctimas en Colombia." *Análisis Político* 32, no. 95 (2019): 62-81.
Cadena Chasoy, Karla LIiseth. "Proceso de organización comunitaria y capacidad de agencia de las mujeres del cabildo Inga de Santiago de Cali durante el año 2018." (2020).

Camara de Comercio. "El Catastro Multipropósito Herramienta Fundamental Del PND Para Ordenar El Territorio: Nieto Escalante," 2017. https://www.camara.gov.co/sites/default/files/2017-10/El+catastro+multipropósito+herramienta+fundamental+del+PND+para+ordenar+el+territorio+Nieto+Escalante.docx.pdf.

Canagarajah, Suresh. "Reconstructing Local Knowledge." *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 1, no. 4 (2002): 243–59. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327701JLIE0104_1.

Cantat, Celine, and Margit Feischmidt. "Conclusion: Civil involvement in refugee protection—Reconfiguring humanitarianism and solidarity in Europe." In *Refugee protection and civil society in Europe*, pp. 379-399. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2019.

CIDH. *Seguimiento de recomendaciones: Visita de trabajo a Colombia 2021*, 2021.

Caro, Diana Nocua. "Violencia sociopolítica contra líderes sociales y defensores de derechos humanos en el postconflicto: Dificultades y retos para la implementación de una paz estable y duradera en colombia." *Revista Latinoamericana de Derechos Humanos* 30, no. 1 (2019): 149-170.
Castro, Carolina, Maria Lopez Uribe, Fernando Posada, Bhavani Castro, and Roudabeh Kishi. "¿ Cómo entender la ola de asesinatos de líderes sociales en Colombia durante la pandemia." *LSE Latin America and Caribbean Blog* (2020).

Ccama, Juan Casazola. "La salud y sus determinantes: crisis socioambiental y relaciones sociales de discriminación." *Revista Pacha: Derecho y visiones* 2, no. 2 (2021): 33-40.

Cisneros-Puebla, C. (2011). Investigacion cualitativa y globalizacion de la academia: perspectivas desde Latinoamerica (Qualitative research and globalization in the academia: perspectives from Latin America). In M. Rodigou Nocetti & H. Paulın, (editors). Coloquios de investigacion cualitativa. Subjetividades y procesos sociales (Colloquium on qualitative research. Subjectivities and social processes) (p. 15–27). Cordoba: Universidad Nacional de Cordoba.

Muñoz, Andrea Carolina Velasco. "Represión estatal y repertorios de acción colectiva: movimiento social del "paro nacional", Bogotá 2019-2020." *Criterios* 13, no. 2 (2020): 43-68.

Clark, Andrew, Caroline Holland, Jeanne Katz, and Sheila Peace. "Learning to see: lessons from a participatory observation research project in public spaces." *International journal of social research methodology* 12, no. 4 (2009): 345-360.

Córdoba Hernández, Rafael, and Alfonso Pérez García-Burgos. "Urbanización inclusiva y resiliente en asentamientos informales. Ejemplificación en Latinoamérica y Caribe." *Bitácora Urbano Territorial* 30, no. 2 (2020): 61-74.

CORTÁZAR, SARA RANKIN, and ERIKA ELIANA MOSQUERA. "Agricultura urbana,¿ mucho más que producción de comida?." *Agricultura urbana en América Latina* (2019): 19.

Cortés, Verónica. "Racismo, blanquidad y privilegios raciales como categorías en disputa durante la coyuntura del paro nacional 2021, Colombia." *Tabula Rasa* 45 (2023): 243-270.

d'Auria, Viviana, Racha Daher, and Katharina Rohde. "From integration to solidarity: Insights from civil society organisations in three European cities." *Urban Planning* 3, no. 4 (2018): 79-90.
Díaz Guevara, Héctor Hernán. "Comentarios para una historia crítica del presente: el Paro Nacional de abril de 2021 en Colombia como acontecimiento (Comments for a Critical History of the Present: The National Strike of April 2021 in Colombia as an Event)." *Cambios y Permanencias* (2021).

DANE. "Empleo Informal y Seguridad Social." Gobierno Nacional, 2023. https://www.dane.gov.co/index.php/estadisticas-por-tema/mercado-laboral/empleo-informal-y-seguridad-social.

DANE. "LA INFORMACIÓN DEL DANE EN LA TOMA DE DECISIONES DE LOS MUNICIPIOS DEL PAÍS." Government of Colombia , March 2020.

https://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/planes-desarrollo-territorial/100320-Info-Alcaldia-Buenaventura.pdf.

DANE. “POBLACIÓN NEGRA, AFROCOLOMBIANA, RAIZAL Y PALENQUERA.” Gobierno Nacional , November 2019. https://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/boletines/grupos-etnicos/presentacion-grupos-etnicos-poblacion-NARP-2019.pdf.

DANE. “Situación De Las Familias Con Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes En Colombia En Medio De La Crisis Por COVID-19.” Government of Colombia, 2022. Situación de las familias con niños, niñas y adolescentes en Colombia en medio de la crisis por COVID-19.

DANE. (2019b). Medición de empleo informal y seguridad social - Trimestre móvil agosto - octubre 2019. Bogotá.

DANE.“Https://Www.dane.gov.co/Files/Investigaciones/condiciones_vida/Pobreza/2021/Presentacion-Pobreza-Monetaria-Con-Enfoque-Diferencial.pdf,” June 2022. https://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/condiciones_vida/pobreza/2021/Presentacion-pobreza-monetaria-con-enfoque-diferencial.pdf.

Davenport C (2014) How Social Movements Die. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Del Río Perdomo, Sofía, and María Camila Quintero Soto. "SÍLOVÉ: una aventura de arriba a abajo." (2022).

Della Porta, D. "Eventful protest, global conflicts. Distinktion: *Journal of Social Theory*, 9 (2), 27–56." (2008).

Della Porta, Donatella. "Multiple belongings, tolerant identities, and the construction of ‘another politics’: Between the European social forum and the local social fora." *Transnational protest and global activism* (2005): 175-202.

Dest, Anthony. "“Desencantarse del estado”: confrontando los límites del multiculturalismo neoliberal en Colombia." *Revista Colombiana de Antropología* 57, no. 1 (2021): 17-48.

Diaz, Wilhelm Londono, and Anghie Prado Mejía. "Experiences of citizenship in precarization: An ethnography from northern Colombia in the time of COVID-19." *Heliyon* 7, no. 7 (2021)

Dobson, Andrew. *Environmental politics: A very short introduction*. Vol. 457. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Doocy, S., Page, K.R., de la Hoz, F., Spiegel, P., Beyrer, C., 2019. Venezuelan migration and the border health crisis in Colombia and Brazil. J. Migr. Human Sec. 7 (3), 79–91.

Dowdney, Luke. "Children of the drug trade: A case study of children in organised armed violence in Rio de Janeiro." (2003).

Doyle, Audrey-Anne. "Domestic Workers' Strategies of Resistance to Chronic Workplace Violence in Medellín, Colombia." PhD diss., Concordia University, 2021.

Durán Saavedra, Gustavo Adolfo, Katia Paola Barros Esquivel, Sindy Faissury Martinez Cruz, and Victoria Eugenia Gonzalez Cano. "Triple espacialidad en la participación ciudadana no institucionalizada: nuevas agendas de cambio social en Cali, Colombia." *Bitácora Urbano Territorial* 32, no. 3 (2022): 15-29.

Durán Saavedra, Gustavo Adolfo, Katia Paola Barros Esquivel, Sindy Faissury Martinez Cruz, and Victoria Eugenia Gonzalez Cano. "Triple espacialidad en la participación ciudadana no institucionalizada: nuevas agendas de cambio social en Cali, Colombia." *Bitácora Urbano Territorial* 32, no. 3 (2022): 15-29.

Edwards, Bob, and John D. McCarthy. "Resources and social movement mobilization." *The Blackwell companion to social movements* (2004): 116-152.

El Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (CNMH). "Llamado Urgente Del Centro Nacional De Memoria Histórica Sobre Las Amenazas a Líderes Sociales De Los Montes De María," July 2020. https://centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/llamado-urgente-del-centro-nacional-de-memoria-historica-sobre-las-amenazas-a-lideres-sociales-de-los-montes-de-maria/.

El Pais. "Cifra De Homicidios En Cali Cerró El Año Pasado Por Encima De Los 1.200," January 4, 2022. https://www.elpais.com.co/cali/cifra-de-homicidios-en-cerro-el-ano-pasado-por-encima-de-los-1-200.html.

El Tiempo. "Durante La Cuarentena, Cada Tres Días Asesinan a Un Líder': MOE." *El Tiempo*, June 10, 2020. https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/durante-la-cuarentena-cada-tres-dias-asesinan-a-un-lider-moe-505330.

Epstein, Edwin M. "The historical enigma of corporate legitimacy." (1972): 1701.

Espinosa Arango, Mónica L. "Memoria cultural y el continuo del genocidio: lo indígena en Colombia." *Antípoda. Revista de antropología y arqueología* 5 (2007): 53-73.

Eugenia, María, Ibarra Melo, Carlos Humberto, Ortiz Quevedo, Quintín Quilez Pedro, and Valencia Gutiérrez Alberto. *Pensar la resistencia:: Mayo del 2021. Cali y Colombia*. Programa Editorial UNIVALLE, 2021.

HCHR. El Paro Nacional 2021: Lecciones aprendidas para el ejercicio del derecho de reunión pacífica en Colombia, 2021. https://www.hchr.org.co/documentos/el-paro-nacional-2021-lecciones-aprendidas-para-el-ejercicio-del-derecho-de-reunion-pacifica-en-colombia/#_Toc89787113.

Fernandez, Carlos, Mauricio García Durán, and Fernando Sarmiento. "Movilización por la paz en Colombia 1978-2002." *Revista Controversia* (2004): 18-23.
file:///Users/carlosj.zapata/Downloads/presentacion-grupos-etnicos-poblacion-NARP-2019.pdf

Fine, Gary Alan, and Brooke Harrington. “Tiny Publics: Small Groups and Civil Society.” *Sociological Theory* 22, no. 3 (2004): 341–56. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0735-2751.2004.00223.x.

Flechas, Clara Judith Botia, and Jair Preciado. "Resiliencia comunitaria: defensa del agua y del territorio en la cuenca del río Sumapaz, Colombia." *Perspectiva Geográfica: Revista del Programa de Estudios de Posgrado en Geografía* 24, no. 1 (2019): 13-34.

Flesher Fominaya, Cristina. “Collective Identity in Social Movements: Central Concepts and Debates: Collective Identity in Social Movements.” *Sociology Compass* 4, no. 6 (2010): 393–404. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2010.00287.x.

Forero Ruiz, Andrés Felipe. "Hágalo real. Sistematización del proceso de creación colectiva de la Casa cultural el Trébol en el Barrio Ciudad de Cali, Bogotá." (2022).

Forero, Eduardo Andrés Sandoval, and José Javier Capera. "La resistencia sociocultural de la Guardia Indígena del Tolima, Colombia: narrativas subalternas en tiempos del Covid-19." *Espacio Abierto* 29, no. 4 (2020): 209-229.

Francesconi, Robert A. "James Hunt, the Wilmington 10, and institutional legitimacy." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68, no. 1 (1982): 47-59.

Franco Agudelo, Saúl. "Momento y contexto de la violencia en Colombia." *Revista cubana de salud pública* 29, no. 1 (2003): 18-36.

Freeman, James. 2014. Raising the Flag over Rio de Janeiro’s Favelas: Citizenship and Social Control in the Olympic City. Journal of Latin American Geography. 14(1).

Fuchs, Christian. "The self-organization of social movements." *Systemic practice and action research* 19, no. 1 (2006): 101-137.

Gamarra, José. "Pobreza, corrupción y participación política: una revisión para el caso colombiano." (2006).

Garces, Andree, 2018. Violencia sistemática contra defensores de derechos territoriales en Colombia. *Informe. Abril del 2018.*

García-Ponce O and Pasquale B (2019) How Political Repression Shapes Attitudes Toward the State: Evidence from Zimbabwe. Working Paper. Available from http://omargarciaponce.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GarciaPonce_and_Pasquale_2014. pdf.

Garcia, Ana Guatame, and Ovidio Delgado Mahecha. "Desaparición forzada y violencia sexual contra mujeres en Putumayo, Colombia." *Criterio Jurídico Garantista* 9, no. 14 (2016): 42-67.

Garrido Ortolá, Anabel. "Narrativas de resistencia: análisis de tres organizaciones de mujeres en Colombia." (2019).

Gutiérrez, Lorena Marín. "Pistas metodológicas para sistematizar las acciones colectivas en el marco del Paro Nacional en abril-junio de 2021 en Cali, Colombia." *Chasqui: Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación* 148 (2021): 209-230.

Garzon Vergara, Juan Carlos. "Cali: La Protesta y Las Varias Violencias." *Fundacion Ideas para la Paz*, June 7, 2021. https://www.ideaspaz.org/publications/posts/2008.

Gillan, Kevin. "Temporality in Social Movement Theory: Vectors and Events in the Neoliberal Timescape." *Social Movement Studies* 19, no. 5-6 (2020): 516–36. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2018.1548965.

Giraldo Alzate, Orfa Margarita, Reinaldo Giraldo Díaz, María Fernanda Caballero Lozada, Wilson Sánchez Jiménez, Libia Esperanza Nieto Gómez, and Patricia Galarza González. "El Mapa como Discurso de lo Cotidiano Cartografía Social de Siloé." (2015).

Gómez Morales, Luis Felipe. "Los movimientos sociales como actores legitimadores del acuerdo de paz con las FARC-EP." *Justicia* 24, no. 36 (2019): 70-88.
González Esgerra, Jairo Eligio. "Fuerzas Armadas y Sociedad Civil. Representaciones sociales en las y los líderes sociales de Buenaventura." *Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales (IEPRI)*. 2017.

González Monguí, Pablo Elías, Germán Silva-García, Bernardo Pérez-Salazar, and Luz Angélica Vizcaíno-Solano. "Estigmatización y criminalidad contra defensores de derechos humanos y líderes sociales en Colombia." *Revista Científica General José María Córdova* 20, no. 37 (2022): 142-161.

González Riaño, Irene. "¡ Kilele!: cultura e identidad del Pacífico sur colombiano en Cali (1970-2020)." (2020).

Guayara Moncayo, Mónica Fernanda. "Determinantes de la informalidad laboral según condiciones de género y raza en Cali para el año 2012." PhD diss.

Gutiérrez, Francisco, Margarita Marín, Diana Machuca, Mónica Parada, and Howard Rojas. "Paz sin garantías: el asesinato de líderes de restitución y sustitución de cultivos de uso ilícito en Colombia." *Estudios socio-jurídicos* 22, no. 2 (2020).

Gutiérrez, Lorena Marín. "Pistas metodológicas para sistematizar las acciones colectivas en el marco del Paro Nacional en abril-junio de 2021 en Cali, Colombia." *Chasqui: Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación* 148 (2021): 209-230.

Guzmán-Valenzuela, Carolina, and Ronald Barnett. "Patterns of Theory Use in Qualitative Research in Higher Education Studies in Latin America: a Geopolitical Interpretation." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 32, no. 5 (2019): 477–92.

Guzman, German, Orlando Fals Borda, and Eduardo Umaña Luna. *La violencia en Colombia: estudio de un proceso social*. Vol. 10. Ediciones Tercer Mundo, 2019.

Hearit, Keith Michael. "'Mistakes Were Made': Organizations, Apologia, and Crises of Social Legitimacy." *Communication Studies* 46, no. 1-2 (1995): 1–17.

Hoffmann, Elizabeth A. "Open-Ended Interviews, Power, and Emotional Labor." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 36, no. 3 (2007): 318–46. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606293134.

Hollan, Heinz. "Class Antagonism, Exploitation and the Labour Theory of Value." *The Economic Journal (London)* 92, no. 368 (1982): 868–85.

Holmes, Jennifer S., and Sheila Amin Gutiérrez de Piñeres. "Violence and the state: Lessons from Colombia." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25, no. 2 (2014): 372-403.

Horbath, Jorge Enrique. "Pobreza y elecciones en Colombia: algunos hallazgos para reflexionar." *Espiral Estudios sobre Estado y sociedad (eISSN: 2594-021X)* 10, no. 29 (2004). https://corrupcionaldia.com/buenaventura-el-municipio-mas-corrupto-de-colombia/

Human Rights Watch. "Colombia/Venezuela: Abusos De Grupos Armados En Zona Fronteriza," 2022. https://www.hrw.org/es/news/2022/03/28/colombia/venezuela-abusos-de-grupos-armados-en-zona-fronteriza.

Hurtado, María Isabel Caicedo, and María del Pilar Castillo Valencia. "Tipologías de pobreza en Cali: un análisis con base en el SISBEN." *Tendencias* 22, no. 1 (2021): 39-70.

Hurtado, María Isabel Caicedo, and María del Pilar Castillo Valencia. "Tipologías de pobreza en Cali: un análisis con base en el SISBEN." *Tendencias* 22, no. 1 (2021): 39-70.

Ibarra Melo, María Eugenia, José Fernando Sánchez Salcedo, and Mateo Montes Martínez. "Space and classification of the population in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic in Cali." *Civilizar Ciencias Sociales y Humanas* 21, no. 41 (2021): 15-30.

Idrovo, Alvaro J. "More social discontent than pandemic-related risk perception in Colombia." *The Lancet* 398, no. 10296 (2021): 211

Infobae. "Las Grandes Empresas Que Recibieron Ayuda Del Gobierno Durante La Pandemia," February 2021. https://www.infobae.com/america/colombia/2021/02/23/las-grandes-empresas-que-recibieron-ayuda-del-gobierno-durante-la-pandemia/.

INSTITUTO GEOGRÁFICO AGUSTÍN CODAZZI. "Catastro Multipropósito." Gobierno Nacional , 2023. https://www.igac.gov.co/es/contenido/areas-estrategicas/catastro/catastro-multiproposito.

International Monetary Fund. “Five Things to Know about the Informal Economy,” July 2021. https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2021/07/28/na-072821-five-things-to-know-about-the-informal-economy.

Jacobsson, Kerstin, and Elzbieta Korolczuk. "Mobilizing grassroots in the city: Lessons for civil society research in Central and Eastern Europe." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 33, no. 2 (2020): 125-142.

Janoski, Thomas, and Brian Gran. "Political Citizenship: Foundations of Rights." In *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, 13-52. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2002. http://dx.doi.org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.4135/9781848608276.n2

Jenkins, J. Craig. “Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 9, no. 1 (1983): 527–53.

Jones, G.R. (1998), Organizational Theory: Text and Cases, 2nd ed., Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA

Koobak, Redi, M. V. Tlostanova, and Suruchi Thapar-Björkert. *Postcolonial and Postsocialist Dialogues : Intersections, Opacities, Challenges in Feminist Theorizing and Practice*. Edited by Redi Koobak, M. V. (Madina Vladimirovna) Tlostanova, and Suruchi Thapar-Björkert. First Edition. London ;: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021.

Kubik, Jan. "Ethnography of politics: Foundations, applications, prospects." *Political ethnography: What immersion contributes to the study of power* (2009): 25-52.

Lalinde Ordonez , Sebastian. “Elogio a La Bulla: Protesta y Democracia En Colombia.” Documentos 49. *DeJusticia*, June 2019.

Lara-Rodríguez, Juan Sebastián, André Tosi Furtado, and Aleix Altimiras-Martin. "Minería del platino y el oro en Chocó: pobreza, riqueza natural e informalidad." *Revista de economía institucional* 22, no. 42 (2020): 241-268.

Lara, Jorge Hernández. "DE LA MARCHA HACIA EL CENTRO AL BLOQUEO EN LOS BARRIOS: LAS LUCHAS POR RECONOCIMIENTO Y OPORTUNIDADES EN CALI DURANTE EL PARO NACIONAL DE ABRIL-MAYO DE 2021." *PENSAR LA RESISTENCIA: MAYO DEL 2021 EN CALI Y COLOMBIA*: 127.

Lemaitre, Julieta (2009) El Derecho como Conjuro. Bogota: Siglo del Hombre y Universidad de los Andes.

Lemaitre, Julieta, and Kristin Bergtora Sandvik. “Shifting Frames, Vanishing Resources, and Dangerous Political Opportunities: Legal Mobilization Among Displaced Women in Colombia.” *Law & Society Review* 49, no. 1 (2015): 5–38. https://doi.org/10.1111/lasr.12119.

Libal, Kathryn, and Prakash Kashwan. "Solidarity in times of crisis." *Journal of Human Rights* 19, no. 5 (2020): 537-546.

Loayza, Norman, Luis Serven, and Naotaka Sugawara. *Informality in latin america and the caribbean*. Vol. 4888. Washington DC: World Bank, 2009.

Lombard, Melanie. "Planeación insurgente en asentamientos informales: un estudio de caso en Cali, Colombia." *Cuadernos de Vivienda y Urbanismo* 5, no. 10 (2012).

Londoño Botero, Rocío. "Los sindicatos y las juntas de acción comunal en Colombia." (1997).

Lopez, Carlos Augusto Viáfara. "Efectos de la raza y el sexo en el logro educativo y estatus ocupacional en el primer empleo en la ciudad de Cali Colombia." *sociedad y economía* 11 (2006): 66-95.

"Le rôle politique de la Mémoire en Colombie et au Chili : Imaginaires, mobilisations, institutions". *The Ethics Forum/ Les ateliers de l'éthique* 14 (2): 43-75.

Lozano, Ángela Emilia Mena, and Yeison Arcadio Meneses Copete. "La filosofía de vivir sabroso." *Revista Universidad de Antioquia* (2019).

Luna Orozco, K., 2018. Venezuelan immigration to Colombia: public health challenges. Revista de la Universidad Industrial de santander. Salud 50 (1), 5–6.

Martínez, Diana Vinasco. "Pacificando el barrio: orden social, microtráfico y tercerización de la violencia en un barrio del distrito de Aguablanca (Cali, Colombia)." *Cultura y Droga* 24, no. 27 (2019).

Martínez, Diana Vinasco. "Pacificando el barrio: orden social, microtráfico y tercerización de la violencia en un barrio del distrito de Aguablanca (Cali, Colombia)." *Cultura y Droga* 24, no. 27 (2019).

Martínez, Diana Vinasco. "Pacificando el barrio: orden social, microtráfico y tercerización de la violencia en un barrio del distrito de Aguablanca (Cali, Colombia)." *Cultura y Droga* 24, no. 27 (2019).

Martínez, Fabio Alberto Enríquez. "Hacia una nueva realidad de las familias desplazadas del litoral Pacífico colombiano a la ciudad de Cali-Distrito de Agua Blanca (DAB): comprensión actuante desde sus filosofías milenarias." *Lumen Gentium* 7, no. 1 (2023): 61-78.

Martínez, Lina, Blanca Zuluaga, and Daniela Estrada. "The socioeconomic conditions of recyclers: Census data in Cali, Colombia." *Data in brief* 23 (2019): 103695

Martínez, Lina, Isabella Valencia, and Valeria Trofimoff. "Subjective wellbeing and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: Data from three population groups in Colombia." *Data in brief* 32 (2020): 106287

Martínez, Lina, John Rennie Short, and Daniela Estrada. "The urban informal economy: Street vendors in Cali, Colombia." *Cities* 66 (2017): 34-43.

Martínez, Yamileth Bolaños, and Omar Alejandro Bravo. "Proceso de construcción de liderazgos en la comuna de Siloé." *Teoría y Crítica de la Psicología* 11 (2018): 164-182.

Matopoulos, Aristides, Gyöngyi Kovács, and Odran Hayes. "Local Resources and Procurement Practices in Humanitarian Supply Chains: An Empirical Examination of Large-Scale House Reconstruction Projects." *Decision Sciences* 45, no. 4 (2014): 621–46.

McAdam, Doug. (1986). Recruitment to High-Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer. American Journal of Sociology, 92 (1), pp. 64-90.

McLean, Phillip. "Colombia: Failed, failing, or just weak?." *Washington quarterly* 25, no. 3 (2002): 123-134.

Meléndez Monroy, Yira Rosa, and Darly Farith Velasquez Martinez. "Procesos de paz en Colombia: derechos humanos y familias víctimas del conflicto armado." *Jurídicas Cuc* 14, no. 1 (2018).

Melo, María Eugenia Ibarra. "“Al otro lado del miedo está el país que soñamos” Mujeres y feministas en el paro nacional de 2021." *Pensar la resistencia:: Mayo del 2021. Cali y Colombia* (2021): 79.

Molinares, César, and Elizabeth Reyes le Paliscot. "Pobreza, debilidad institucional, cultivos iílicitos, tráfico de drogas y grupos armados ilegales en Buenaventura y Tumaco." (2013).

Monroy, Cindy Lorena, Diana Castillo, Natalia Corredor Parra, and Johana Rivera Izquierdo. "Aportes del movimiento estudiantil a los procesos de movilización social en Colombia." (2014).

Monsalvo, Marcos. "“Sembrar nos salvó la vida”. Iniciativas de economías solidarias en el Distrito de Aguablanca, Santiago de Cali, Colombia." *Theomai* 30 (2014): 119-131.

Montero-Sieburth, M. (1992). Models and practice of curriculum change in developing countries. Comparative Education Review, 36(2), 175–193.

Montero, M. (2006). Teoría y práctica de la Psicología comunitaria. Buenos Aires: Paidós.

Montoya Amado, Adrián Camilo. "Capitalismo urbano, conflicto social y acción colectiva en Santiago de Cali." (2018)

Montoya Robledo, Valentina, and Germán Escobar-Álvarez. "Domestic Workers' Commutes in Bogotá: Transportation, Gender and Social Exclusion." Transportation Research. Part A, Policy and Practice 139 (2020): 400–411. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2020.07.019.

Moreno Hurtado, Vicenta, and Debaye Mornan. "¿ Y el derecho a la ciudad? Aproximaciones al racismo, la dominación patriarcal y las estrategias feministas de resistencia en Cali, Colombia." *CS* 16 (2015): 87-108.

Moreno, Jorge Andres Dominguez. *Informalidad laboral y pobreza urbana en Colombia*. CIDSE, 2011.

Mouly, Cécile, and María Belén Garrido. "No a la guerra: resistencia civil en dos comunidades periféricas de Colombia." *Desafíos* 30, no. 1 (2018): 245-277.

Muñoz-Morales, Edgar, and Jan Grill. "¡ Arriba el telón!: teatro comunitario y jóvenes en la ladera de la ciudad de Cali." *Sociedad y Economía* 45 (2022).

Núñez, Jairo, and Alberto Carvajal Panesso. "¿ Cómo romper las trampas de pobreza en Buenaventura? Propuestas desde las comunidades y las instituciones." *Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo PNUD* (2017).
Niño, Santiago Alberto Vargas. "Persecución penal internacional de los crímenes cometidos durante el Paro Nacional en Colombia como salvaguarda de la democracia." *Ius et veritas* 63 (2021): 83-106.
https://colombia.as.com/colombia/2021/05/13/actualidad/1620927509_251411.html

Olave González, Dorian Wilfred, Germán Rayo Candelo, and Sandra Milena Mora Urbano. "Representaciones sociales sobre la paz desde una práctica de resistencia noviolenta en integrantes de la Escuela Fundación de baile-Bomba Salsera-del barrio Mojica I, comuna 15, distrito de Aguablanca en Santiago de Cali." PhD diss., Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, 2019.

Ordóñez, J. (2017). De la pandilla a la banda. Transformaciones de la violencia pandillera en barrios marginales en Cali. Sociedad y Economía, (32), 107-126.

Ortega Poveda, Pablo Alberto. "La cuestión rural en Colombia: entre las dinámicas de la violencia y la movilización social." 2009.

Osorio Pérez, V., 2018. Dinamica Sectorial del Trabajo Doméstico Remunerado en Colombia. In El Trabajo Doméstico en Colombia: Historias tras las cortinas (Escuela Na, pp. 53–149). Medellín.

Osorio, Daniel. Tres jóvenes vinculados al paro nacional en Cali han sido asesinados en una semana. El Espectador, September 7, 2022. https://www.elespectador.com/judicial/tres-jovenes-vinculados-al-paro-nacional-en-cali-han-sido-asesinados-en-una-semana/.

Padilla-Ospina, Ana Milena, and Javier Humberto Ospina-Holguín. "Gestión comunitaria durante la pandemia COVID-19 bajo la mirada de la innovación social: estudio de seis casos." *Perfiles Económicos* (2020).

Pardo, Daniel. "'En Colombia Al Pobre Siempre Le Quitan, Siempre Le Han Robado': La Angustia De Una Familia Que Resume Parte De Los Motivos De Las Protestas," June 20, 2021. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-57896658.

Pardo, Daniel. “Coronavirus | Por Qué Tantos Colombianos Han Colgado Trapos Rojos En Sus Casas En Medio De La Cuarentena Por La Pandemia.” *BBC News*, April 20, 2020. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-52349231.

Paschel, Tianna S., and Mark Q. Sawyer. “Contesting Politics as Usual: Black Social Movements, Globalization, and Race Policy in Latin America.” *Souls (Boulder, Colo.)* 10, no. 3 (2008): 197–214. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999940802347707.

Peña, Claudia Bermúdez. "Intervención social y organizaciones comunitarias en Cali." *PROSPECTIVA. Revista de Trabajo Social e intervención social* 15 (2010).

Payán, Ximena. “Seguridad Alimentaria Para Afectados Por La Pandemia.” Alcaldía de Cali , June 2021. https://www.cali.gov.co/gestiondelriesgo/publicaciones/161238/seguridad-alimentaria-para-afectados-por-la-pandemia/.

Paz, Fundación. "Justicia restaurativa y procesos restaurativos: modelo pedagógico de las Casas de Restauración Juvenil Francisco Esperanza de la Fundación Paz y Bien en el Distrito de Aguablanca, Cali, Colombia." (2016).

Pearce, Jenny. "Violence, power and participation: Building citizenship in contexts of chronic violence." (2007).
Pécaut, Daniel. “De la banalité de la violence à la terreur : le cas colombien.” *Cultures & conflits*, 1997. https://doi.org/10.4000/conflits.2169.

Pelaez Gaviria, María Camila. "Desplazamiento forzado intraurbano producido en procesos de reasentamiento en la ciudad de Cali, Colombia." (2021).

Pérez, Carlos E. "Los enemigos del Desarrollo. Sobre los asesinatos de lideres sociales en Colombia." *Iberoamérica Social: Revista-red de estudios sociales* XI (2018): 92-111.

Pérez, Natalia. "Desarrollo rural y movilización social en la zona rural de la Subcuenca del Río Pance (Cali, Colombia)." *Revista CS* 21 (2017): 69-96.

Pigg, Kenneth E. “Community Leadership and Community Theory: A Practical Synthesis.” *Journal of the Community Development Society* 30, no. 2 (1999): 196–212. https://doi.org/10.1080/15575339909489721.

Pirela, Ana M., Jhon J. Junca, Natalia Triana-Ángel, and Stefan Burkart. "¿ Qué pasa con la deforestación cuando “acaba” el conflicto? Evidencia de la implementación del Acuerdo de Paz en Colombia." (2023).

Pizarro Leongómez, Eduardo. "Cambiar el futuro: Historia de los procesos de paz en Colombia 1981-2016." *Bogotá: Debate*(2017).

Portafolio. “Los Subsidios Que Se Crearon En Pandemia y Siguen 'Vivos',” February 2022. https://www.portafolio.co/economia/gobierno/subsidios-en-pandemia-cuales-seguiran-en-2022-561540.

Poveda, María Eugenia Rodríguez. "Experiencias TIP-Jóvenes Sin fronteras en Cali Innovación+ Disrupción." *Espacio Sociológico* 1, no. 1 (2021): 23-36.

Prado, Alexander Ortiz. "Veloreando es que ha sido. Los velorios como práctica cultural y religiosa de las Comunidades Afropacíficas de Barbacoas en Cali." *Entorno Geográfico* 19 (2020).

Pyoria, Pasi. "Informal organizational culture: the foundation of knowledge workers' performance." *Journal of Knowledge Management* (2007).

Ravallion, Martin. "Pandemic policies in poor places." *CGD Note (April 24), Center for Global Development, Washington, DC* (2020).

RESTREPO, Eduardo [1999] “Aletosos. Identidades generacionales en Tumaco”, en M. Agier et al. Tumaco. Haciendo ciudad, Bogotá, ICAN/IRD/CIDSE-Universidad del Valle, pp.151- 196.

Revista Semana. “Las Protestas Del Hambre En El Oriente De Cali.” Coronavirus en Cali. Revista Semana, April 15, 2020. https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/coronavirus-en-cali-protestan-por-falta-de-comida/663735/.

Revista Semana. “Tensión En Cali: Ciudadanos De Ciudad Jardín Salen En Sus Camionetas a Enfrentar a Los Manifestantes,” May 4, 2021. https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/tension-en-cali-ciudadanos-de-ciudad-jardin-salen-en-sus-camionetas-a-enfrentar-a-los-manifestantes/202137/.

Roa García, María Cecilia, Sandra Brown, and Clara Eugenia Roa García. "Jerarquía de vulnerabilidades de las organizaciones comunitarias de agua en Colombia." *Gestión y Ambiente* 18, no. 2 (2015): 51-79.

Rodríguez Cárdenas, Julián Ricardo. "Rehabitar Siloé, un hábitat excluido." (2015).

Rodríguez, Alfonso Insuasty. "“Nadie nos defendía”. El horror amparado por una democracia fallida. Caso Exterminio de la UP. (2021) Colombia."

Rodríguez, Martha C. Sandino, Martha E. Valencia Zuluaga, and Daniel Carranza Bautista. "Responsabilidad social del deporte: caso Siloé Fútbol Club, Cali, 2019." *Gestión y Educación para el Movimiento*: 39.

Rogers, Todd, Noah J. Goldstein, and Craig R. Fox. "Social mobilization." *Annual review of psychology* 69 (2018): 357-381.

Rojas Londoño, Elizabeth. "Colombia: el despertar de una movilización social sin precedentes." *Boletín del Departamento de América Latina y El Caribe* (2021).

Roldan, Mary. "End of discussion: Violence, participatory democracy, and the limits of dissent in Colombia." In *Violent Democracies in Latin America*, pp. 63-83. Duke University Press, 2010.

Rojas Sotelo, Miguel, and Laura Quintana Porras. "Sobre la primera y la última línea. Los vencidos de la historia y sus luchas por abrir el porvenir (Colombia, paro nacional, 2021)." *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies/Revue canadienne des études latino-américaines et caraïbes* 47, no. 3 (2022): 346-368.

Saa Parra, Yuly Fernanda. "Análisis de las Condiciones Laborales de la Población Informal de la Galería de Siloé (En el Marco de la Pandemia por el Covid 19) de la Ciudad de Santiago de Cali 2021." (2021).

Saavedra, Gustavo Adolfo Durán, Katia Paola Barros Esquivel, Sindy Faissury Martinez Cruz, and Victoria Eugenia Gonzalez Cano. "Triple espacialidad en la participación ciudadana no institucionalizada: nuevas agendas de cambio social en Cali, Colombia." *Revista Bitácora Urbano Territorial*32, no. 3 (2022): 15-29.

Salamanca, Roberth. “Sobre El Paro Nacional En Colombia 2021.” Universidad Externado, 2021. https://www.uexternado.edu.co/ciencias-sociales-y-humanas/sobre-el-paro-nacional-en-colombia-2021/.

Sánchez-Alfaro, Luis Alberto, Carol Cristina Guarnizo-Herreño, and Dairo Javier Marín-Zuluaga. "Movilización social y retos para la universidad en la Colombia del siglo XXI." *Acta Odontológica Colombiana* 11, no. 2 (2021): 7-9.

Sánchez-Alfaro, Luis Alberto, Carol Cristina Guarnizo-Herreño, and Dairo Javier Marín-Zuluaga. "Movilización social y retos para la universidad en la Colombia del siglo XXI." *Acta Odontológica Colombiana* 11, no. 2 (2021): 7-9.

Sánchez, Jaime. "El cristo de espaldas: perspectivas de una hermenéutica nómada para entender la violencia en Colombia desde la literatura." *RECIAL: Revista del Centro de Investigaciones de la Facultad de Filosofía y Humanidades, Áreas Letras* 13, no. 21 (2022): 198-207.

Sanmiguel, Alejandro Ulloa. "La política y la estética de “lo popular no representado”–Una aproximación al levantamiento popular en Cali, desde las ideas de Jesús Martín Barbero." *Nexus* (2022): e20511838-e20511838.

Santisteban, Ginna. "El bajo cauca antioqueño, una tierra dorada que vive en la pobreza." *Rutas Del Conflicto. https://bit. ly/3PKAgVG* (2020).

Sassone, S.M., 2007. Migracion, territorio e identidad cultural: construccion de" lugares bolivianos" en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires. Poblacion de Buenos Aires 4 (6), 9–28.

Scott, James C. *Domination and the arts of resistance: Hidden transcripts*. Yale university press, 1990

Scott, James C. *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. yale university Press, 1998.

Semana. “Las 34 Cuentas De Twitter Que El Ejército Incluyó En Su Polémica Lista ‘Oposición.’” *Revista Semana*, October 3, 2020.

Serrano, Francisco José Del Pozo. "Pedagogía Social en Colombia: Entre la experiencia de la educación popular y el reto de la investigación-acción en la profesionalización socioeducativa de un país en posconflicto." *Ensino & Pesquisa* (2017).

Sewell, William H. (1996) 'Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology: pp. 24-80 in Terence J. McDonald (ed) The Historic Turn in the Hum Sciences. Ann Arbor: *University of Michigan Press*.

Shaw, Alan, Brian R. Lawler, and Deepa Muralidhar. "Supporting orality and computational thinking in mathematics." *Exploring new ways to connect* (2021): 917.

Silverman, D. “Qualitative Research: Meanings or Practices?” *Information Systems Journal (Oxford, England)* 8, no. 1 (1998): 3–20.

Sinisterra-Ossa, Lizeth, and Inge Helena Valencia. "Orden social y violencia en Buenaventura: entre el outsourcing criminal y la construcción de paz desde abajo." *CS* 32 (2020): 103-129.

Skocpol, Theda., and Morris P. Fiorina. *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1999.

Smith, Janel. "Solidarity networks: what are they? And why should we care?." *The Learning Organization* (2009).

Smith, Janel. "Solidarity networks: what are they? And why should we care?." *The Learning Organization* (2009).

Soto, Laura. “EN MEDIO DEL CORONAVIRUS, CALI LE APUNTA FUERTE A LA COMIDA.” La Silla Vacia , April 2020. https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/en-medio-del-coronavirus-cali-le-apunta-fuerte-a-la-comida.

Sovacool, Benjamin K., and Alexander Dunlap. “Anarchy, War, or Revolt? Radical Perspectives for Climate Protection, Insurgency and Civil Disobedience in a Low-Carbon Era.” *Energy Research & Social Science* 86 (2022): 102416–. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2021.102416.

Steup, Rosemary, Arvind Santhanam, Marisa Logan, Lynn Dombrowski, and Norman Su. “Growing Tiny Publics: Small Farmers’ Social Movement Strategies.” *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* 2, no. CSCW (2018): 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1145/3274434.

Stokke, Kristian. “Politics of Citizenship: Towards an Analytical Framework.” *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift* 71, no. 4 (2017): 193–207. https://doi.org/10.1080/00291951.2017.1369454.

Swim, Janet K., Nathaniel Geiger, and Michael L. Lengieza. "Climate change marches as motivators for bystander collective action." *Frontiers in Communication* 4 (2019): 4.

Tabares-Mosquera, M., E. Zapata-Caldas, and O. Buitrago-Bermúdez. "Valoración de servicios ecosistémicos para la identificación de estructuras ecológicas metropolitanas: el caso de Cali, Colombia." *Cuadernos De Investigación Geográfica* 46, no. 2 (2020): 603-631.

Taylor, Laura K. "Impact of Political Violence, Social Trust, and Depression on Civic Participation in Colombia." *Peace and Conflict* 22, no. 2 (2016): 145–52. https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000139.

Thaler, Kai M. "Reflexivity and temporality in researching violent settings: Problems with the replicability and transparency regime." *Geopolitics* 26, no. 1 (2021): 18-44.

Tobon, Marco. "“Nuestro futuro es nuestro pasado”. explotación de oro, medioambiente y resistencia indígena en el medio río Caquetá." *Maguaré* 32, no. 1 (2018): 139-170.

Tokman, Victor E. "Informalidad en América Latina: balance y perspectivas de políticas." *Realidad, Datos y Espacio. Revista Internacional de Estadística y Geografía* 2, no. 3 (2011): 16-31.

Toro, Patricia Lasso. "Cuando se vive el desarraigo. Educación y desplazamiento forzado: una mirada desde el Distrito de Aguablanca, Cali, Colombia." *Revista Guillermo de Ockham* 11, no. 2 (2013): 35-51.
Toro, Patricia Lasso. "Cuando se vive el desarraigo. Educación y desplazamiento forzado: una mirada desde el Distrito de Aguablanca, Cali, Colombia." *Revista Guillermo de Ockham* 11, no. 2 (2013): 35-51.

Trejos Rosero, Luis F., and David J. Luquetta Cediel. "Una aproximación a la ilegalidad, el crimen organizado y ausencia estatal en la frontera colombo-venezolana. El caso del departamento de La Guajira en Colombia." *Memorias: revista digital de historia y arqueología desde El Caribe* 24 (2014): 125-148.

Trejos, Luis. "Posacuerdo en el caribe colombiano. Ilegalidad y nuevas violencias." *Palimpsesto* 7, no. 12 (2017): 076-096.

Trujillo, Andres. "Lo Que Hay Detrás De La Presencia Del 'Tren De Aragua ' y Carteles Mexicanos De La Droga En Cali." El Pais, Colombia, March 15, 2023. https://www.elpais.com.co/judicial/lo-que-hay-detras-de-la-presencia-del-tren-de-aragua-y-carteles-mexicanos-de-la-droga-en-cali.html.

Turriago Molinas, Andrea. "VIOLENCIA SISTEMÁTICA CONTRA LOS DEFENSORES Y DEFENSORAS DE DERECHOS HUMANOS DEL AMBIENTE Y EL TERRITORIO EN COLOMBIA EN EL MARCO DEL POSACUERDO." *Acciones e Investigaciones Sociales* 43 (2022).

United Nations. “2019, El Año Más Violento Para Los Excombatientes De Las FARC En Colombia,” December 2020. https://news.un.org/es/story/2019/12/1467341.

United Nations. “La Violencia Contra Excombatientes En Colombia Sigue Siendo La Mayor Amenaza Para Su Transición a La Vida Civil,” January 2022. https://news.un.org/es/story/2022/01/1502572.

University of Los Andes. “Evaluación De La Implementación Del Acuerdo De Paz,” January 2022. https://uniandes.edu.co/es/noticias/dificultades-y-propuestas-sobre-la-implementacion-del-acuerdo-de-paz-firmado-entre-el-gobierno-colombiano-y-las-farcep.

Urrea-Giraldo, Fernando. "Algunos factores desencadenantes del levantamiento popular en Cali y su región metropolitana." *PENSAR LA RESISTENCIA: MAYO DEL 2021 EN CALI Y COLOMBIA* (2021): 167.

Utzet, M., Botías, F., Silva-Peñaherrera, M. *et al.* Informal employment and poor self-perceived health in Latin America and the Caribbean: a gender-based comparison between countries and welfare states in a pooled analysis of 176,786 workers. *Global Health* **17**, 140 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-021-00792-3

Valencia, Ana María Gómez. "El 28A, Cali y Jesús Martín." *Nexus* (2022): e20111834-e20111834.
Valencia, Víctor Hugo, and Adolfo A. Abadia. "Discursos musicales y mediaciones. Migración y asentamiento de comunidades afrodescendientes en Cali-Colombia." *Revista de ciencias sociales* 25, no. 4 (2019): 87-105.

Van Teijlingen, Karolien, and Emilie Dupuits. "Estrategias comunitarias frente a conflictos socioambientales: más allá de la resistencia." *Íconos. Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 69 (2021): 7-16.

Vargas Gallego, Miguel Ángel. "Segregación socioespacial y población afrodescendiente en el distrito de Aguablanca en Cali." (2015).

Vásquez, Doctoranda Judith Cortés. "Nuevos Movimientos Sociales y uso de las TIC. El caso colombiano del 4 de febrero del 2008."

Vásquez, Edgar. "Historia del desarrollo histórico y urbano en Cali." (1990).
Venegas, John Edison Sabogal. "Violencias deformadas, intentos de transición y reacomodo de las resistencias en Colombia." (2021).

Verdad Abierta. “Exterminio De La UP Fue Un Genocidio Político.” *Verdad Abierta*, September 15, 2016.

Verta, Taylor, and Whittier Nancy. "Collective identity in social movement communities: Lesbian feminist mobilization." *Frontiers in social movement theory* (1992): 104-29.

Villa Velasco, Crhistian Camilo. "“Camino al barrio”, o de la relación entre la memoria y la intervención urbana. Algunos apuntes: caso San Francisco, Siloé. Cali." (2020).

Villa-Gomez, Juan David, and Manuela Avendano-Ramírez. "Arte y memoria: expresiones de resistencia y transformaciones subjetivas frente a la violencia política 1." *Revista Colombiana de Ciencias Sociales* 8, no. 2 (2017): 502-535.

Villa, William, and Juan Houghton. *Violencia política contra los pueblos indígenas en Colombia 1974-2004*. Iwgia, 2005.

Villar, Juan David Luján. "Los hijos de la violencia y la segregación: La escena afrojuvenil del rap en la ciudad de Cali en la década de los noventa." *methaodos. revista de ciencias sociales* 4, no. 1 (2016): 177-188.

Velásquez Giraldo, Mónica. "Conflicto armado, desplazamiento y caracterización con enfoque de género a la población desplazada ubicada en la comuna 14 en Cali-Colombia." (2007).

Wade, Peter. "Afro-Colombian social movements." *Comparative Perspectives on Afro-Latin America* (2012): 135-155.

Wade, Peter. "Trabajando la cultura: Sobre la construcción de la identidad negra en Aguablanca, Cali." *CS* 2 (2008): 13-50.3

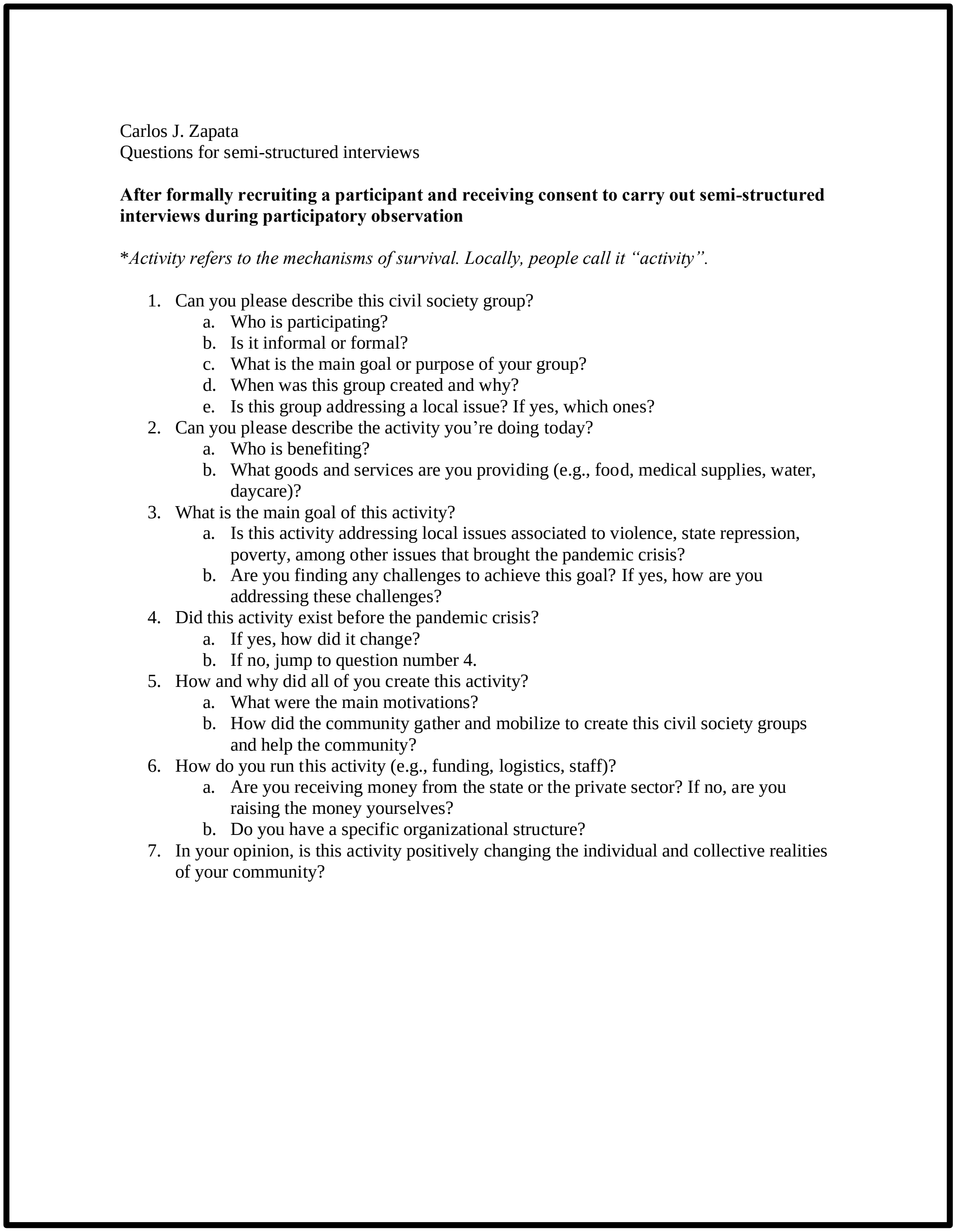
Warren, D. Michael, and B. Rajasekaran. "Putting local knowledge to good use." *International Agricultural Development* 13, no. 4 (1993): 8-10.
Waterman, P. (2004), “The global justice and solidarity movement and the world social forum: a backgrounder”, in Sen, J., Anand, A., Escobar, A. and Waterman, P. (Eds), The World Social Forum: Challenging Empires, The Viveka Foundation, New Delhi.

Weber, M. (1984). Los tipos de dominación. Montevideo: Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana.

Wrenn, Mary V. "The social ontology of fear and neoliberalism." *Review of Social Economy 72*, no. 3 (2014): 337-353.

Yang, Guobin. “The Liminal Effects of Social Movements: Red Guards and the Transformation of Identity.” *Sociological Forum (Randolph, N.J.)* 15, no. 3 (2000): 379–406. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1007563225473.

Appendix 1

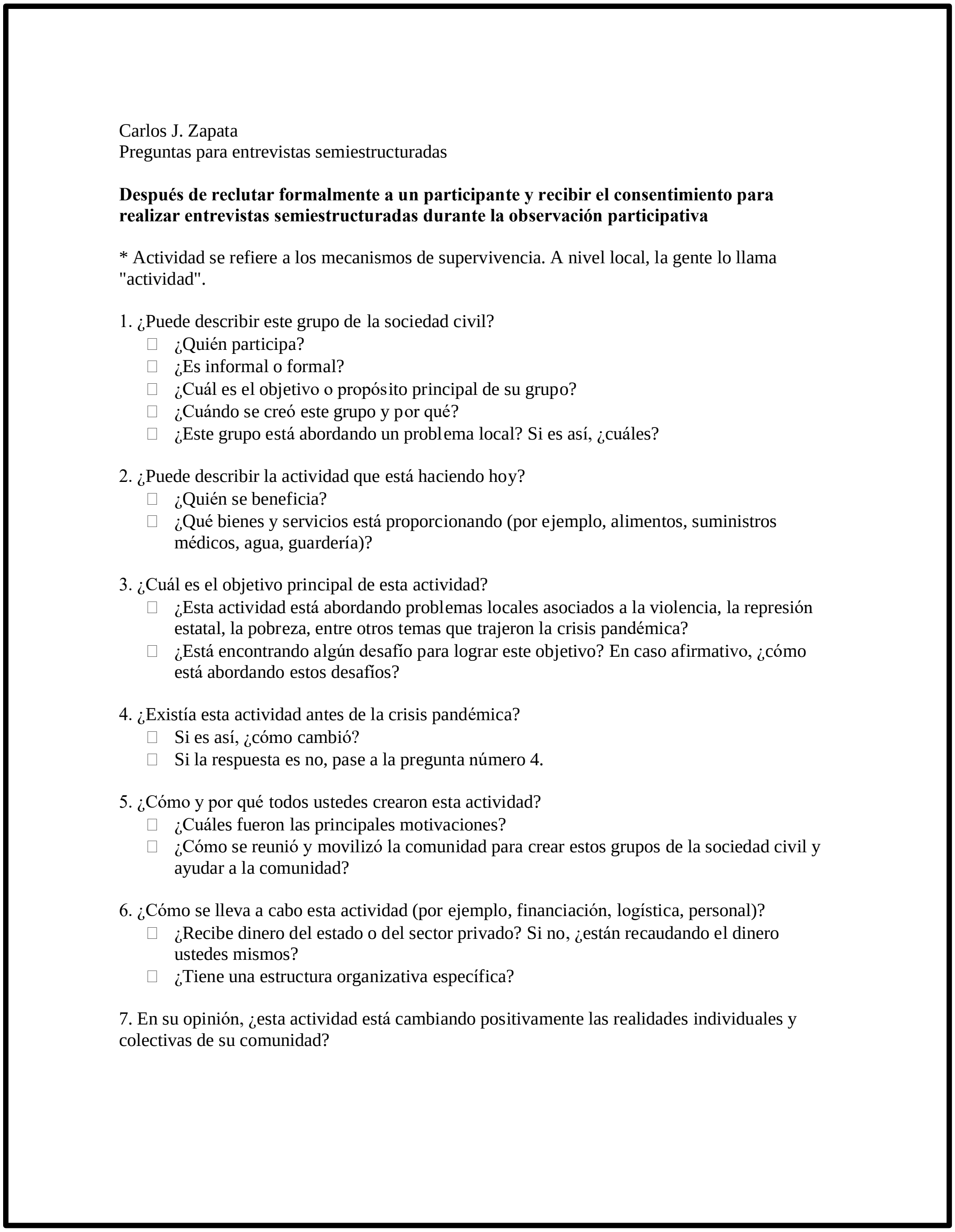


Carlos J. Zapata
Questions for semi-structured interviews

After formally recruiting a participant and receiving consent to carry out semi-structured interviews during participatory observation

**Activity refers to the mechanisms of survival. Locally, people call it "activity".*

1. Can you please describe this civil society group?
    a. Who is participating?
    b. Is it informal or formal?
    c. What is the main goal or purpose of your group?
    d. When was this group created and why?
    e. Is this group addressing a local issue? If yes, which ones?
2. Can you please describe the activity you're doing today?
    a. Who is benefiting?
    b. What goods and services are you providing (e.g., food, medical supplies, water, daycare)?
3. What is the main goal of this activity?
    a. Is this activity addressing local issues associated to violence, state repression, poverty, among other issues that brought the pandemic crisis?
    b. Are you finding any challenges to achieve this goal? If yes, how are you addressing these challenges?
4. Did this activity exist before the pandemic crisis?
    a. If yes, how did it change?
    b. If no, jump to question number 4.
5. How and why did all of you create this activity?
    a. What were the main motivations?
    b. How did the community gather and mobilize to create this civil society groups and help the community?
6. How do you run this activity (e.g., funding, logistics, staff)?
    a. Are you receiving money from the state or the private sector? If no, are you raising the money yourselves?
    b. Do you have a specific organizational structure?
7. In your opinion, is this activity positively changing the individual and collective realities of your community?



Carlos J. Zapata
Preguntas para entrevistas semiestructuradas

Después de reclutar formalmente a un participante y recibir el consentimiento para realizar entrevistas semiestructuradas durante la observación participativa

* Actividad se refiere a los mecanismos de supervivencia. A nivel local, la gente lo llama "actividad".

1. ¿Puede describir este grupo de la sociedad civil?
    - ¿Quién participa?
    - ¿Es informal o formal?
    - ¿Cuál es el objetivo o propósito principal de su grupo?
    - ¿Cuándo se creó este grupo y por qué?
    - ¿Este grupo está abordando un problema local? Si es así, ¿cuáles?

2. ¿Puede describir la actividad que está haciendo hoy?
    - ¿Quién se beneficia?
    - ¿Qué bienes y servicios está proporcionando (por ejemplo, alimentos, suministros médicos, agua, guardería)?

3. ¿Cuál es el objetivo principal de esta actividad?
    - ¿Esta actividad está abordando problemas locales asociados a la violencia, la represión estatal, la pobreza, entre otros temas que trajeron la crisis pandémica?
    - ¿Está encontrando algún desafío para lograr este objetivo? En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo está abordando estos desafíos?

4. ¿Existía esta actividad antes de la crisis pandémica?
    - Si es así, ¿cómo cambió?
    - Si la respuesta es no, pase a la pregunta número 4.

5. ¿Cómo y por qué todos ustedes crearon esta actividad?
    - ¿Cuáles fueron las principales motivaciones?
    - ¿Cómo se reunió y movilizó la comunidad para crear estos grupos de la sociedad civil y ayudar a la comunidad?

6. ¿Cómo se lleva a cabo esta actividad (por ejemplo, financiación, logística, personal)?
    - ¿Recibe dinero del estado o del sector privado? Si no, ¿están recaudando el dinero ustedes mismos?
    - ¿Tiene una estructura organizativa específica?

7. En su opinión, ¿esta actividad está cambiando positivamente las realidades individuales y colectivas de su comunidad?