Report

'Doble afectación'

Living with disasters and conflict in Colombia

Ayesha Siddiqi, Katie Peters and Julia Zulver

September 2019

Cover photo: Army unit stationed in Comuna 13, the most dangerous district in Medellín, Colombia. © Lianne Milton/Panos.

About this paper

This report is part of the project 'When disasters and conflict collide: uncovering the truth', a collaboration between the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The lead researcher is Katie Peters, Senior Research Fellow, ODI (**k.peters@odi.org.uk**).

Available in this series

Peters, K. (2018) *Accelerating Sendai Framework implementation in Asia: disaster risk reduction in contexts of violence, conflict and fragility*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11153-accelerating-sendai-framework-implementation-asia-disaster-risk-reduction-contexts-violence-conflict)

Peters, K. and Peters, L.E.R. (2018) *Disaster risk reduction and violent conflict in Africa and Arab states: implications for Sendai Framework Priorities*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11208-disaster-risk-reduction-and-violent-conflict-africa-and-arab-states-implications-sendai-framework)

Peters, K., Holloway, K. and Peters, L.E.R. (2019) *Disaster risk reduction in conflict contexts: the state of the evidence*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11340-disaster-risk-reduction-conflict-contexts-state-evidence)

Peters, K., Peters, L.E.R., Twigg, C. and Walch, C. (2019) *Disaster risk reduction strategies: navigating conflict contexts*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11341-disaster-risk-reduction-strategies-navigating-conflict-contexts)

Peters, K., Dewulf, A., Barbelet, V., Benoudji, C. and Le Masson, V. (2019) *Pursuing disaster risk reduction on fractured foundations: the case of Chad*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11411-pursuing-disaster-risk-reduction-fractured-foundations-case-chad)

Peters, K., Eltinay, N. and Holloway, K. (2019) *Disaster risk reduction, urban informality and a 'fragile peace': the case of Lebanon*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11412-disaster-risk-reduction-urban-informality-and-fragile-peace-case-lebanon)

Mena, R., Hilhorst, D. and Peters, K. (2019) *Disaster risk reduction and protracted violent conflict: the case of Afghanistan*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11413-disaster-risk-reduction-and-protracted-violent-conflict-case-afghanistan)

Siddiqi, A., Peters, K. and Zulver, J. (2019) *'Doble afectación': living with disasters and conflict in Colombia*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11414-doble-afectacion-living-disasters-and-conflict-colombia)

Peters, K. (2019) *Disaster risk reduction in conflict contexts: an agenda for action*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11408-disaster-risk-reduction-conflict-contexts-agenda-action)

Multimedia content

- Online feature including videos from Colombia, Lebanon, and Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Ms Mami Mizutori (www.odi.org/disasters-conflict)
- Podcast series: *When disasters and conflict collide* (www.odi.org/opinion/10507-podcast-series-when-disasters-and-conflict-collide)
  - Episode 1: *Conflict: the elephant in the diplomatic meeting room*
  - Episode 2: *The politics of disasters*
  - Episode 3: *A call to action*

All reports and content as well as information on the project can be found online: www.odi.org/projects/2913-when-disasters-and-conflict-collide-uncovering-truth

Acknowledgements

Contents

List of figures

Figures

6

Acronyms

AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defenders of Colombia)
BACRIM	*bandas criminales* (criminal bands)
DRR	disaster risk reduction
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army)
EPM	Empresas Públicas de Medellín
EWS	early warning system
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army); from 2017: Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionario del Común (Common Alternative Revolutionary Force)
FNGRD	Fondo Nacional de Gestion del Riesgo de Desastres (National Fund for Disaster Risk Management)
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction
IGAC	Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi (Agustín Codazzi Geographic Institute)
SNGRD	Sistema Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres (National Disaster Risk Management Information System)
SNPAD	Sistema Nacional para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres (National System for Disaster Prevention and Response)
UARIV	Unidad para la Atencíon y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas (Victims' Unit)
UNGRD	Unidad Nacional para la Gestion del Riesgo en Desastres (National Disaster Risk Management Unit)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Executive summary

Colombia is considered one of the most advanced countries in Latin America for disaster risk reduction (DRR). Decades of state engagement in large-scale disasters has generated a relatively mature legal and institutional framework governing disaster response and risk reduction, developed over the past 20–30 years. However, the country also has a long history of conflict, involving targeted killings, generalised violence, kidnapping and extortion. Despite a recent peace process, violence continues.

As in many other parts of the world, Colombia's current DRR policy and practice fail to take adequate account of the conflict situation. As a result, large numbers of conflict-displaced people (an estimated 15% of the country's population is internally displaced) are highly vulnerable, with scant protection against the devastating effects of disasters. Colombia's conflict-affected poor are forced to live in locations that increase their exposure to natural hazards.

This case study sheds light on why disaster risk is so high in Colombia, and how disasters and conflict interact to increase vulnerability. In addition to exploring the current national institutional and policy frameworks for DRR, it includes a critical analysis of two recent disasters: a landslide in the Mocoa area in 2017 and the structural failure of a dam resulting in severe flooding of the Cauca River in 2018.

The findings highlight the complex and inherently political nature of DRR efforts in a context of conflict, protracted displacement and troubled state–society relations. The study highlights the need for an approach that goes beyond technocratic solutions; the reality that there are competing visions for DRR in conflict situations; and the fundamental necessity of rebuilding the social contract and recognising the rights and voices of affected citizens.

The double impacts of disasters and conflict

Colombia is one of the most hazard-prone countries in Latin America, exposed to cyclones, coastal and river flooding, earthquakes, landslides and volcanic activity. Millions of people are displaced due to violence and conflict, and levels of poverty and income inequality are high. Families often have no other option than to live in high-risk areas. The situation is referred to locally as 'doble afectación' or 'doubly affected'. Since 2012, victims of violence can apply to a dedicated government body – Unidad para la Atencíon y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas (UARIV), known as the 'Victims' Unit' – for financial compensation and other benefits, but progress in delivering support has been slow.

Against this background, the government has made significant strides over the years in implementing more effective disaster risk management frameworks, including dedicating a national institution, the Unidad Nacional para la Gestion del Riesgo en Desastres (National Disaster Risk Management Unit) (UNGRD), to that purpose. Even so, for a range of reasons, major disaster events still exceed the national capacity to respond. One of the main factors hampering effective DRR is that current approaches to disaster and conflict risk are disconnected, with UARIV and UNGRD operating independently of each other. One consequence is institutional neglect of conflict as the context in which DRR ambitions are pursued. Lack of funding, corruption and insufficient decentralisation of resources also hamper effective DRR. Solutions generally lack community engagement, tend to rely on external technical experts and offer infrastructure solutions, rather than building local capacity. All of these factors combine to perpetuate a predominantly 'top-down' approach to risk reduction.

Opposing visions and an 'uncaring' state

The 2018 Cauca floods were the result of structural failures during the construction of a hydropower dam, widely touted as Colombia's largest infrastructure project. The event highlights many of the complexities associated with a technological or man-made disaster, and its politicisation. First, because it was not caused by a natural hazard, and there were vested political and private interests, the government refused to classify it as a disaster. Second, the state was unwilling or unable to categorise affected communities correctly, effectively preventing many people from accessing relief. Third, limited efforts were made to define responsibilities for risk reduction and post-disaster response for such an event, which was considered outside the remit of UNGRD because it was not a natural hazard. This effectively privatised responsibility to the company building the dam, yet the government failed to hold the company accountable for compensation or further risk reduction efforts. The lack of an effective response exacerbated community feelings of marginalisation and further undermined already fragile levels of trust in the government.

The 2017 landslide in Mocoa was caused by heavy rainfall coupled with erosion and lack of vegetation on the surrounding slopes. It left more than 300 people dead, injured or missing, with thousands more losing their homes. Most of the internally displaced and indigenous groups living in Mocoa were left out of disaster preparation activities, and their participation in rehabilitation planning has also been very limited. Some officials even maintained that these groups had no rights since they 'chose' to live in a hazard-prone area. In the aftermath of the landslide, many simply returned to the same dangerous locations, while others resettled in areas they considered to be at higher risk from future landslides.

Both disasters illustrate that, while there has been a shift in political thinking to prioritise risk reduction, inadequate prevention and mitigation measures and conflicting visions of DRR between the state and affected citizens hamper efforts to build disaster resilience, as well as doing little to repair already fractured state–citizen relations. State policies that result in dispossession or displacement – a factor in both examples – only reinforce the perception of an 'uncaring' state. Top-down institutional support also contributes to this belief.

Another aspect highlighted by both events is the importance of rights and voice and the need to groundtruth visions of DRR, especially in a country with a history of state violence against its citizens. This calls for a change in mindset away from a culture of expert-led planning and towards meaningful and genuinely 'bottom-up' dialogue that empowers citizens with the knowledge and skills they need to build more resilient livelihoods.

Recommendations

The Colombia case highlights the close interactions between disasters and conflict, and their effects on people's lives and livelihoods. When the legal and institutional frameworks for dealing with disasters and conflict are compartmentalised, insufficient attention is likely to be paid to the ways in which vulnerabilities are linked. Addressing this does not warrant convergence of these frameworks – that would be legally problematic in Colombia – but it does require due recognition of linked vulnerabilities and impacts in order to better design and deliver DRR in conflict contexts. New challenges arising from the demobilisation of armed groups and the crisis in neighbouring Venezuela are only reinforcing the impetus to find more effective solutions. With each disaster affecting citizens differently, including in terms of their perceptions of the state, there is a need for nuanced and thorough consideration of conflict dynamics in the design and delivery of DRR. Urgent action is required to deepen knowledge and understanding of the disaster–conflict interface.

The lessons from this study yield useful recommendations for strengthening the institutional regimes dealing with 'doubly affected' citizens, both in Colombia and elsewhere.

Adopt a more community-based vision of DRR
A legally mandated and robust system for local consultation would enable a more integrated approach to DRR that addresses people's demands for social justice and helps repair state–society relations.

Improve coordination among agencies and across scales

There is an urgent need to improve coordination between UARIV and UNGRD to foster the design and delivery of disaster response and DRR for 'doubly affected' communities. This includes working out how to overcome existing challenges and avoid exacerbating mistrust between citizens and the state.

Establish clear legal responsibility for DRR relating to man-made disasters

The Cauca floods demonstrate clearly that privatising responsibility does not work. On the contrary, there is a danger that the current approach will deepen the divide between people and the state and further entrench the strongly held beliefs that are undermining the social contract. There is therefore a need for more robust and punitive laws to safeguard citizens from such disasters.

Strengthen the underlying social contract and build trust

Enshrining the rights and entitlements of citizens in law is a critical foundation for dealing with disasters in areas affected by armed conflict and insecurity. This requires a more consultative, transparent and equitable DRR process that addresses people's basic human rights, including protection from violence and disasters. Equally, better access to disaster relief (achieved by addressing current classifications and removing the need to demonstrate that people are in danger or deserve to receive support) will not only benefit people directly, it will also help build trust and restore faith in the state.

1   Introduction: 'doble afectación'

> I already lost everything when I was displaced due to the conflict, and now again [due to the landslide] (Maris, a woman affected by the Mocoa landslide).

Emerging trends in social science research on natural hazard-related disasters ('disasters') in conflict areas are increasingly highlighting the need to move beyond questions of attribution, which draw on large N-studies establishing causal links between disasters and conflicts, and to look past the state as the only provider of DRR services (Siddiqi, 2018; Peters et al., 2019). To understand the complex realities of disasters and conflict and their effects, a far more 'multi-dimensional, context specific and historically relevant understanding of climatic disasters and their impact on local politics' is necessary (Siddiqi, 2014).

This paper responds to the need to generate evidence and analysis on the ways in which disasters (deriving from all natural hazards, not just climate-related) and conflict interact. In the context of Colombia, this is referred to colloquially as 'doble afectación', or doubly affected. The paper examines the case of Colombia to address a seemingly simple question: what has been Colombia's experience of disasters in areas affected by armed conflict and insurgency?

Primary research across two scales – national and local – explores the institutional frameworks and policy regulation for DRR and conflict management at the national, departmental and municipal levels. The emphasis is on hazard-related disasters and, to a lesser extent, responses to conflict impacts. These policies and frameworks operate independently of each other, and the paper discusses the challenges this creates for resilience planning and improved human security. The paper then provides a rich and textured analysis of two hazard-based disasters in areas of armed conflict: flooding in Bajo Cauca and Northern Antioquia in 2018, which affected more than 120,000 people in towns along the Cauca River north of Medellín (Parkin, 2018); and a landslide in Mocoa, the capital of Putumayo Department, in 2017. The landslide was one of the deadliest disasters in Colombia in recent times: while the official death-toll was 333, local estimates are much higher, and thousands of people were displaced (Semana, 2018). The empirical data collected at this local scale enables a nuanced and finely tuned analysis of policy gaps and institutional weaknesses, while also contextualising the independent policy regimes around disasters and conflict within a much deeper and longer history of troubled state–society relations in peripheral areas of Colombia.

The remainder of the paper is organised in three chapters as follows: Chapter 2 discusses the conflict and disaster context, policies dealing with DRR and, to a lesser extent, conflict, and the intersections between conflict and disaster. Chapter 3 uses empirical data to construct people's 'lived experience' of disasters and conflict in Bajo Cauca and Northern Antioquia and Mocoa. Chapter 4 presents conclusions and policy recommendations.

The paper identifies five distinct areas for policy intervention:

- Moving away from an over-reliance on technocratic, expert-led DRR towards a more community-based vision of DRR that allows

for lived experiences of conflict, both past and present, to be intrinsically considered.

- Institutional capacities and disconnects – between centre and local, and across agencies of the state: who enacts DRR, formally or informally, in regions with legacies of violence and armed conflict.
- Political classification and the politics of access to different types of support require a shift away from repeatedly needing to prove either deservedness or danger.
- Establishing a clear and enforced legal responsibility for DRR in the context of anthropogenic disasters, especially when disaster risks are created by private actors.
- Strengthening the underlying social contract – rights, duties and responsibilities, underpinned by considerations of voice, empowerment and accountability.

1.1 Methodology and approach

This paper draws on a range of methods and data, including a review of secondary literature, analysis of policy documents, primary qualitative data and analysis of media articles. Primary data was collected between November and December 2018. Efforts were made to include extracts from the interviews throughout the report to bring the events to life and help convey the diverse ways in which disaster risk is framed and communicated.

Interviews with policy-makers were conducted primarily in Bogotá and Mocoa, and interviews with community members took place in Mocoa and four towns in Northern Antioquia (Sabanalarga, Toledo, Ituango and Puerto Valdivia).[1] Fieldwork in Northern Antioquia is complicated for non-Colombians due to accessibility and security issues, and international observers were accompanied to the most heavily affected towns by a local civil society organisation, Rios Vivos. This method of engaging with flood-affected residents in Northern Antioquia enabled the researchers to document the testimonies of residents and conduct individual interviews in communities

Figure 1 Fieldwork sites in Colombia

where people receive frequent and regular death threats. However, the reliance on an activist civil society organisation also meant that the researchers primarily engaged with interviewees associated with a specific political agenda (in this instance opposition to a large dam on the Cauca River). The research team acknowledges the potential impact of this perspective on data collection.

In addition to fieldwork in affected communities, the research analysed the key pieces of legislation institutionalising responsibilities for reducing disaster risk, including Decree 4147, which formalised the UNGRD as the national institution dealing with risk reduction, and Law 1523 (passed in 2012) establishing the Sistema Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres (National Disaster Risk Management System (SNGRD) – see Figure 2). Finally, the research team conducted a media analysis covering three of Colombia's most widely circulated newspapers: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador* and *El Colombiano*. The analysis was undertaken from the day of the two disasters and over the subsequent 30 days, and included all articles on this subject published within that period. The data was used to triangulate and contextualise the findings from other sources within the wider national and regional narrative.

---

1 More than 30 interviews took place with over 61 respondents, including policy-makers and government representatives in Bogotá and Mocoa (including UNGRD), international and national operantional agencies (including the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Oxfam, the Red Cross and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)). 'Town hall' meetings were organised in Sabanalarga, Toledo, Ituango and Puerto Valdivia.

2 The interface between conflict and disasters in Colombia

2.1 The conflict context

In November 2016, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC)) and the Colombian government signed a historic peace deal following 52 years of conflict. The FARC, founded in the mid-1960s, claimed to represent the interests of poor *campesinos* (peasants), but from the early 1980s began financing its operations through the illegal drug trade, as well as extortion of businesses and kidnapping (InSight Crime, 2017). Peace negotiations with the government began in 2012, leading to the group's demobilisation in 2016. In 2017 FARC became an official political party, the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionario del Común (Common Alternative Revolutionary Force).

Despite the peace agreement with the FARC, Colombia cannot be considered a post-conflict country, and an array of armed groups remain active. The Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army (ELN)) engages in drug-trafficking, kidnapping and extortion, as well as attacks on infrastructure, including oil pipelines. Paramilitary groups established in the 1980s to protect wealthy landowners and drug-traffickers have also been involved in drug-trafficking, kidnapping and extortion. These groups, under a loose coalition known as the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defenders of Colombia (AUC)), demobilised in 2006, but many continue to operate as *bandas criminales* ('criminal bands'

(BACRIM)). Alongside dissident FARC fighters and international drug cartels, they compete violently for control over coca cultivation and trafficking routes.

Throughout the conflict, civilians have endured violence, large-scale forced displacement (15% of Colombia's population are internally displaced), human rights abuses, targeted killings, including of activists and community leaders, and kidnapping. Official figures count 8.7 million registered victims, including more than 7 million forcibly displaced, 267,000 killed and 47,000 disappeared (Unidad para las Víctimas, 2018). Hundreds of social leaders and 'environmental defenders' have been murdered and thousands more threatened. Conflict between Colombia's various armed groups leaves civilians injured or killed and property damaged (see, for example, RCN, 2018). Endemic violence is taking place against a backdrop of deep poverty and income inequality, notably a disparity between urban and rural areas. Rural Colombians suffer from a lack of education and employment opportunities, and unsustainable farming and climate conditions have left large numbers of people in agricultural communities with only two viable livelihood choices: either migration to cities or joining one of the country's armed groups. The Venezuelan migrant crisis is putting further strain on service provision (UNHCR, 2018).

In 2011, under 'mounting pressure from domestic and international human rights groups as well as the Colombian Constitutional Court', the government passed Law 1448 – the Victims' Law. This led in 2012 to the creation of the

UARIV, charged with providing assistance and reparations to victims of the armed conflict, including economic payments, land restitution, education and healthcare and access to housing. Given that almost one-fifth of Colombia's population is registered with the UARIV, the government's response has perhaps unsurprisingly been uneven. In August 2017, a progress report noted that, between 2009 and 2016, the government had offered reparations to 580,415 people, or 7% of the population (Zulver, 2018).

2.2 Hazards and the policy landscape for DRR

Colombia is one of the most hazard-prone countries in Latin America: it is highly exposed to a range of hazards, including cyclones, coastal and river flooding, earthquakes, landslides and volcanic activity. Some 84% of the population and 86% of assets are exposed to at least two hazards (GFDRR, 2019). Against this background, the government has made significant strides over the years in implementing more effective disaster risk management frameworks. Even so, for a range of reasons, major disaster events still exceed the national capacity to respond.

Colombia has followed a well-trodden path in developing its legal, institutional and financial capacity for DRR, beginning with response and then moving to greater consideration of ex-ante measures. Reforms have been prompted by major disaster events, coupled with public criticism of inadequate state responses. Prior to 1948, the dominant paradigm was local-scale action on disaster management supported by municipal fire brigades (Zeiderman, 2012). In 1948, the assassination of populist political leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan and subsequent violence in Bogotá led to the establishment of the Socorro Nacional de la Cruz Roja, responsible for national emergency response (Ramirez Gomez and Cardona, 1996, in Zeiderman, 2012: 1576). In the 1960s, influenced by USAID and Cold War politics, civil defence entities were established across Latin America, including in Colombia. Their aim was to maintain social and political stability, and as such they were mandated to respond to both natural hazard-related and man-made disasters (Ramirez Gomez and Cardona, 1996, in Zeiderman, 2012).

By 1979, Emergency Management Committees had been established across Colombia (Hernandez Vargas, 2014). In 1979, Law 9 established the Comité Natconal de Emergencias (National Emergency Committee), responsible for declaring emergency situations and coordinating the response. There were also efforts to encourage preparedness through the development of local contingency plans tailored to local risk profiles. A notable shift came in 1984 following the 1983 Popayan earthquake. Decree 1547 saw the establishment of the Fondo Nacional de Calamidades (National Calamities Fund), designed to provide the financial resources to support relief and reconstruction, as well as aspects of disaster prevention (Hernandez Vargas, 2014).

Civil defence forces responded to the Nevado del Ruiz eruption and the siege of the Palace of Justice in Bogotá in 1985. Despite their significantly different origins, these two events marked a shift towards ex-ante risk management and the institutional separation of political or military threats (the responsibility of the country's security agencies) from risk management related to natural hazards (the responsibility of technical agencies such as the Sistema Nacional para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres (National System for Disaster Prevention and Response) (SNPAD), established in 1988, the Red Cross and the National Institute of Geological Study and Mining) (Zeiderman, 2012: 1577). In effect, 'the legal and policy framework underpinning disaster management in Colombia divided the world of potential threats and emergencies into those with human and nonhuman cause' (Zeiderman, 2012: 1578). This distinction between 'natural' disasters and issues associated with conflict and societal instability mirrored the international discourse on disasters, which maintained (and still does, to a large degree) the same separation.

Law 919 of 1989 modified the Dirección de Prevención y Atención de Desastres into a body responsible for risk management under the Dirección de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres. In practice, this saw the beginning of risk mitigation activities at the city and town level (Hernandez Vargas, 2014: 41). Up to the late 1980s, major changes to disaster policy reflected actual and perceived failures of risk management following

major events. This continued through the 2000s, as moves towards risk reduction took place faster on paper than in practice.

Following a year of excessive rainfall related to La Niña, flooding in 2010–11 was declared a national emergency, highlighting to civilians and risk management institutions alike the stark need to improve DRR. Alongside action to address the floods – including 37 legislative decrees – the government updated the legal and institutional structures for DRR, though changes to disaster policy have largely been characterised by reactive policy-making in the post-disaster space. Between 1971 and 2011 at least 24 policy documents were issued related to disaster risk management, primarily triggered by specific hazard events (Campos et al., 2011: 78).
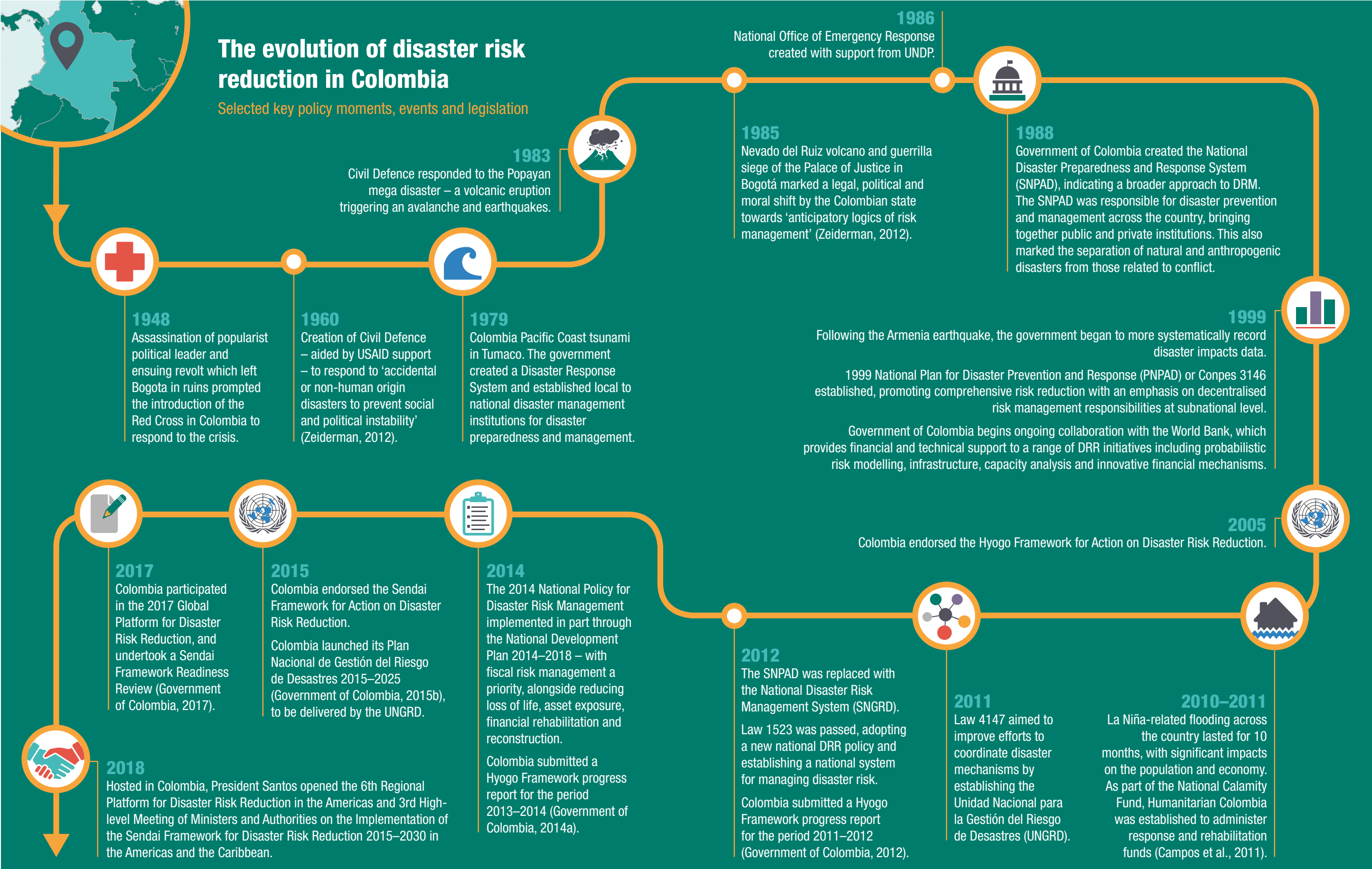
Decree 4147 in 2011 formalised the UNGRD as the national institution dealing with risk reduction. The UNGRD, which sits within the Ministry of Interior, an office reporting directly to the President, assumed responsibility for designing and delivering policies and implementing programmes. This includes coordination and operationalisation of the SNGRD, the successor to the SNPAD, with a stronger focus on disaster reduction and prevention. With a mandate down to the municipal level, this new architecture encompasses a comprehensive set of accompanying bodies and coordination structures. In addition, Law 1523, passed in 2012, mandates local authorities to undertake hazard and risk identification, and to take these findings into consideration in land-use plans. Emergency mechanisms and data collection at the local level are supported by the SNGRD and by the Fondo Nacional de Gestion del Riesgo de Desastres (National Fund for Disaster Risk Management). The government has also endorsed the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, indicating the political importance attached to this agenda. As an extension of the political commitment to DRR, Colombia's vision for risk reduction is articulated in a 10-year DRR plan, the Plan Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres 2015–2025 (Government of Colombia, 2015). This outlines an ambitious set of targets for achieving a significant reduction in disaster mortality, the economic impact of disasters and the number of people affected.

On paper at least, the establishment of the UNGRD and SNGRD and the 10-year plan reflect a radical move away from a focus on response and preparedness to a system which understands and seeks to act on risk reduction holistically, across scales and sectors and across the risk management cycle. In practice, however, even the basics of preparedness and response still fall short. Multiple actors are engaged in response operations, with varying degrees of effectiveness. Civil Defence, the Colombian Red Cross and the Fire Department have all responded promptly to numerous hazard events, but major disasters – such as the 2010–11 La Niña floods, which led to 400 deaths and affected 3 million people – continue to exceed national capacity. Funding to actually deliver national and subnational risk management plans is lacking, and recovery, prevention and mitigation actions are not systematically implemented. Patronage and clientelism hamper efforts to pursue effective DRR across the country and corruption undermines government functioning across the board, including the SNGRD (Hernandez Vargas, 2014: 24). This affects all stages of DRR, from the diversion of response funds through to mismanagement of land zoning. Irregularities in the distribution of disaster response aid have been documented, including for political ends (Hernandez Vargas, 2014: 25), while political interest influences the willingness and ability of subnational entities to enforce land-use policies. Where ex-ante risk reduction has been pursued this tends to be via hard infrastructure, rather than efforts to reduce systemic risk through engaging with communities and building local capacity.

2.3 The conflict–disaster interface

The combination of Colombia's turbulent and violent political history and high exposure to a range of hazards means that conflict looms large as a root cause of disaster risk, and as the operational context in which disaster risk management is delivered. The disaster–conflict nexus also presents significant challenges to the ability of local and national governments to deliver on Sendai Framework ambitions. Currently, however, approaches to disaster and

Figure 2 The evolution of DRR in Colombia

The evolution of disaster risk reduction in Colombia

Selected key policy moments, events and legislation

1986
National Office of Emergency Response created with support from UNDP.

1985
Nevado del Ruiz volcano and guerrilla siege of the Palace of Justice in Bogotá marked a legal, political and moral shift by the Colombian state towards 'anticipatory logics of risk management' (Zeiderman, 2012).

1988
Government of Colombia created the National Disaster Preparedness and Response System (SNPAD), indicating a broader approach to DRM. The SNPAD was responsible for disaster prevention and management across the country, bringing together public and private institutions. This also marked the separation of natural and anthropogenic disasters from those related to conflict.

1983
Civil Defence responded to the Popayan mega disaster – a volcanic eruption triggering an avalanche and earthquakes.

1948
Assassination of popularist political leader and ensuing revolt which left Bogota in ruins prompted the introduction of the Red Cross in Colombia to respond to the crisis.

1960
Creation of Civil Defence – aided by USAID support – to respond to 'accidental or non-human origin disasters to prevent social and political instability' (Zeiderman, 2012).

1979
Colombia Pacific Coast tsunami in Tumaco. The government created a Disaster Response System and established local to national disaster management institutions for disaster preparedness and management.

1999
Following the Armenia earthquake, the government began to more systematically record disaster impacts data.

1999 National Plan for Disaster Prevention and Response (PNPAD) or Conpes 3146 established, promoting comprehensive risk reduction with an emphasis on decentralised risk management responsibilities at subnational level.

Government of Colombia begins ongoing collaboration with the World Bank, which provides financial and technical support to a range of DRR initiatives including probabilistic risk modelling, infrastructure, capacity analysis and innovative financial mechanisms.

2005
Colombia endorsed the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction.

2017
Colombia participated in the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, and undertook a Sendai Framework Readiness Review (Government of Colombia, 2017).

2015
Colombia endorsed the Sendai Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Colombia launched its Plan Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres 2015–2025 (Government of Colombia, 2015b), to be delivered by the UNGRD.

2014
The 2014 National Policy for Disaster Risk Management implemented in part through the National Development Plan 2014–2018 – with fiscal risk management a priority, alongside reducing loss of life, asset exposure, financial rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Colombia submitted a Hyogo Framework progress report for the period 2013–2014 (Government of Colombia, 2014a).

2012
The SNPAD was replaced with the National Disaster Risk Management System (SNGRD).

Law 1523 was passed, adopting a new national DRR policy and establishing a national system for managing disaster risk.

Colombia submitted a Hyogo Framework progress report for the period 2011–2012 (Government of Colombia, 2012).

2011
Law 4147 aimed to improve efforts to coordinate disaster mechanisms by establishing the Unidad Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres (UNGRD).

2010–2011
La Niña-related flooding across the country lasted for 10 months, with significant impacts on the population and economy. As part of the National Calamity Fund, Humanitarian Colombia was established to administer response and rehabilitation funds (Campos et al., 2011).

2018
Hosted in Colombia, President Santos opened the 6th Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas and 3rd High-level Meeting of Ministers and Authorities on the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in the Americas and the Caribbean.

conflict risk are disconnected from each other; there are notable legal and institutional cultures that maintain this separation (Peters, 2017), and no efforts have been made to integrate consideration of conflict dynamics into DRR (Wong, 2008). The legal frameworks governing UNARIV and the UNGRD are entirely discrete and unrelated. 'Natural disasters' are mentioned just once in the accord between the government and the FARC, in the context of evacuation responsibilities in designated demobilisation zones, and 'armed conflict' and 'displacement' do not feature at all in the text of Law 1523. While there is a rationale for this separation – it would arguably have been politically impossible to enshrine the disaster management system within the politics of conflict in Colombia given how disaster management laws have evolved over the past 50 years – this does not reflect the complex daily reality of living with conflict and disasters.

The coincidence of disasters and conflict is increasingly seen as creating a 'double effect'. Displacement, for example, leads to a loss of productive assets, severely disrupts people's social networks and social safety nets and cuts them off from financial, social and livelihood opportunities, leaving them highly vulnerable to future shocks (Pinto et al., 2014). In many Colombian cities, peasant communities forced to flee violence are living in 'high-risk conditions … hanging on unstable hillsides or occupying flood zones on the banks of rivers, streams or wetlands' (Wilches-Chaux, 2018). Likewise, people fleeing conflict in Bajo Putumayo and settling in Mocoa were forced to find shelter in an area of the city prone to landslides because they had no other option, thereby increasing their vulnerability; as one former government official in Putumayo put it in an interview for this study, 'the poor and marginalised always live in vulnerable areas, in this case it was the displaced [from the conflict]'. People fleeing conflict are also more suspicious of the military personnel who provide rescue and relief. One study (Fraser, 2016) reports that a lack of trust in state risk management agencies as a result of the conflict has undermined risk communication and response efforts. Many areas, including those with a history of conflict and home to conflict-displaced populations, lack basic capacity to transition from disaster preparedness

and response to ex-ante risk reduction, and channelling resources to the local level – even where there is the political appetite to do so – is particularly difficult in conflict-affected areas (Stirk, 2013: 13); following the 2010–11 floods '[a]n estimated 40% of affected people in some areas had still not received assistance one year after the floods first hit' (ibid.). Operational agencies spoke of the challenges of building disaster resilience in contexts where the state has little or no presence, where capacities at the local level are lacking and where, as one Oxfam staff member put it in an interview, there may be 'a breakdown of social fabric due to armed conflict'. There are also issues of intersectionality, with greater disaster impacts on marginalised and indigenous groups and disproportionate effects on women and girls, in part related to sexual and gender-based violence associated with both natural hazard- and conflict-related emergencies. In circumstances such as these, the connections between the impacts of natural hazard-related disasters and violent conflict seem self-evident.

Despite Colombia's long history of violence, conflict dynamics have been neglected in the institutional framework of disaster management. A keyword search of the current Plan Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres 2015–2025 (Government of Colombia, 2015) found none of the following terms: conflict, IDP, violence, armed, FARC or war (*guerra*). The word 'peace' appears once, in relation to education programmes. Thus, considerations of conflict are essentially non-existent in the formal DRR architecture, despite being a major inhibitor of progress. It is unlikely that the ambitions set out within the current 10-year plan – including that every municipality and department has incorporated risk management in their development plans – will be achieved without specific consideration of how to enact DRR at the subnational level, including in areas currently under the control of non-state armed groups.

There is widespread acknowledgement that pursuing DRR is more challenging in contexts of conflict, where institutions may be weaker and there is a lower level of state capacity (Siddiqi, 2018; Peters and Peters, 2018). Several interviewees cited negative incentives – electorally, it is not attractive to invest in

prevention and preparedness, relative to response and reconstruction. This is a well-documented challenge for DRR, often resulting in cost–benefit studies seeking to create a convincing case that ex-ante investment outweighs ex-post.

Research by Gallego (forthcoming) found that, during the 2010–11 rains, locations more severely affected by the disaster saw an increase in violence by the FARC and paramilitaries. When patterns of violence were analysed, a strong connection was found between the violence and the location and type of aid. Broadly, in contexts receiving relief – food, hygiene kits – FARC violence increased. In contexts receiving reconstruction aid – bridges, roads, schools – paramilitary violence increased. Gallego (forthcoming) suggests that, for the FARC, relief is more attractive – resources can be captured to weaken the state – whereas paramilitaries are trying to 'capture the state from the inside', making alliances with local politicians, so reconstruction aid in the form of contracts provides different types of incentives and opportunities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the types of contracts and processes used for the distribution of disaster mitigation and prevention undergo more supervision (i.e. audits), reducing the scope for manipulation relative to emergency aid, where politicians and mayors may have more discretion when distributing cash and relief immediately after a disaster.

Conventional wisdom states that disasters signal a politician's competence by providing a stage on which to test their ability to manage a crisis. According to this logic, an incumbent has a higher chance of being re-elected because well-managed responses will be rewarded with re-election. The case of disasters in Colombia challenges this logic. Rather than competence, it is the availability of manipulatable resources – through aid – that provides the means through which to secure votes: 'it's because you have a positive shock on the budget to buy votes'.[2] If this holds true, in contexts where resources are likely to be manipulated for political gain and/or where elections are impending, normative DRR discourse which promotes decentralised decision-making and resource distribution may require rethinking. It may be necessary to consider having an independent agency in charge of allocating funds and contracts, which can provide a degree of independence from political interference or mechanisms to enable community-led decision-making and stronger processes for transparency and accountability to those affected.

---

2   Interview with Jorge Gallego.

3   On the ground: the lived reality of disasters in conflict contexts

This chapter explores people's experience of disasters and conflict in the two case study locations: Bajo Cauca and Northern Antioquia, which was affected by large-scale flooding in May 2018, and Mocoa, the capital of Putumayo, where a landslide killed more than 300 people in the early hours of 1 April 2017.

3.1   Floods in Bajo Cauca and Northern Antioquia

Bajo Cauca, a sub-region of Antioquia Department, comprises six municipalities. The main economic activities are mining, cattle ranching and agriculture (rice, corn and plantain). There is also coca cultivation. The region has experienced violence for decades, including homicide, torture, disappearances and forced displacement. The late 1990s were particularly bloody, with massacres of civilians by paramilitary groups, including in El Aro and La Granja (in Ituango municipality) (Rutas del Conflicto, 2018). The ELN, dissident FARC members and Mexican cartels remain active in the area, and murder rates have increased dramatically as armed factions struggle for control of coca cultivation and drug-trafficking routes (Ávila, 2018).

The floods in May 2018 destroyed bridges, schools and health centres and made hundreds of people homeless (Parkin Daniels, 2018). While resettlement housing has been built for some affected families and new evacuation routes have been marked, at the time of the fieldwork in November 2018 people were still living in makeshift housing (such as a sports complex) in Ituango. Neighbourhoods in Puerto Valdivia, the town most affected by the flooding, had been entirely destroyed by the flood waters and were deemed unsafe. Houses were marked with red stickers by the local municipality, with the words '*no retorno*'. The health centre and school destroyed by the flood waters had not been rebuilt, and the SNGRD office had closed several months before the fieldwork for this study took place.

The floods were the result of structural failures in the construction of a mega-dam on the Cauca River. This is widely touted as Colombia's largest infrastructure project, expected to cost upwards of $5.5 billion.[3] The project, which is designed to harness the potential of hydroelectricity on the Cauca River, has affected numerous towns, villages and other riverine settlements. Because the dam is being built on the site of some of the worst massacres of the 1990s, it is likely that its reservoir has already flooded, or will flood, mass graves of victims killed at the height of the violence.[4] The company responsible for the construction of the dam, the Colombian utility group EPM (Empresas Públicas de Medellín), has

---

3   www.power-technology.com/projects/ituango-hydroelectric-power-colombia/.

4   https://colombiareports.com/colombias-prosecution-investigating-epm-over-ituango-dam-emergency/.

already exhumed and relocated 300 bodies,[5] but it is believed that many still remain unrecovered; the local press has reported that the European Parliament asked dam construction to be delayed so that bodies could be exhumed, but the request was ignored.[6]

Virtually no one the study spoke to was able to clearly articulate whether precautionary risk reduction measures or post-disaster response was the responsibility of the state authorities or the company in charge of building the dam. To some extent, this confusion was also evident at the highest state levels: according to the newspaper *El Tiempo*, the government stated that EPM was responsible for the emergency and 'should provide explanations'. While then-President Juan Manuel Santos announced that he would activate the SNGRD national disaster response system, EPM was still apparently regarded as the responsible party (El Tiempo, 2018).

There is a general understanding in the literature on disasters that declaring a hazard-based event an 'emergency' or 'disaster' is a profoundly political act (Klein, 2008; Ophir, 2010; Warner, 2013). States need to 'invoke exceptionality', the act of catastrophising, to 'serve humanitarian but also utilitarian political instrumentality'. This is because disasters help to maintain state legitimacy – what Warner (2013) calls the 'barbarian at the gates' narrative – as they legitimise the authority and value of strong state institutions that can respond to such challenges. At the same time Warner also presents exceptions to this rule, where states have abandoned the official category of disaster to refer to recurring and repeated natural hazards, for example droughts in Australia. However, this 'de-catastrophisation' of disasters may mean that citizens cannot access the resources and services that are made available in a declared disaster, leaving people feeling abandoned by the state and potentially damaging state–society relations (Raleigh, 2010).

The civil society organisation leading the movement against the dam, Rios Vivos, claimed that this was not a 'natural' disaster, but also made the wider point that 'because in Colombia they don't know what to do with anthropogenic disasters, who to blame, they don't know what to do – there is a piece of legislature clearly to do with natural disasters. It says who is in charge'. According to the head of Rios Vivos, the state was either unwilling or unable to categorise affected people in ways that genuinely enabled them to access, and make claims on, the state. Law 1523 of 2012 states that a 'public calamity' should be declared when natural events occur causing material, economic or environmental losses (Restrepo, 2018). However, the state governor of Antioquia famously 'de-catastrophised' the disaster by referring to it as a 'minor impasse' (Parkin Daniels, 2018). As another interviewee put it, the state's failure to declare a 'public calamity' meant that it could avoid responsibility for the response:

> But this wasn't a natural disaster. The municipality said that EPM should be in charge of rescue and relief, EPM said it should be the municipality. According to legislation, the municipality should be the first responder. But when it's not the state that creates the tragedy, then it needn't be the state that responds. And so, we are left in a limbo, everyone washes their hands of us … the UNGRD says that judicially it wasn't natural and so it isn't within their remit. They leave us like crazy people.

Certainly, to some extent 'de-catastrophising' the disaster enabled the Colombian state to 'privatise responsibility' (Ilcan, 2009) to EPM. Yet the company was not compelled to engage in any further risk reduction measures for people whose livelihoods or assets had been damaged or destroyed. The general narrative on the ground was that these communities had to continue to live with these vulnerabilities.

The question of compensation is a complicated issue in the conflict-afflicted context of Bajo Cauca. People who are categorised as *desplazados*

---

5   www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/12/colombia-river-cauca-breach-flooding-farc.

6   www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/que-es-y-donde-queda-ituango-antioquia-218974.

(displaced due to violence) are registered by the *personeros* (local ombudsman) when they arrive at the location they have been displaced to. According to interviewees from Rios Vivos, when people arrived as *damnificados* (disaster-affected – though almost everyone had been displaced multiples times by conflict in the past), they were incorrectly registered by the *personeros* as displaced due to violence, simply because that is the category they are most used to registering. This seemingly inconsequential error in categorisation had serious repercussions because of the separation between the UNGRD and UARIV policy regimes. Once it became obvious that these affected individuals were not from an area currently undergoing conflict they were subsequently struck off the list and were not entitled to any rehabilitation assistance. As the head of Rios Vivos emphasised:

> This displacement isn't related to the conflict, so it doesn't correspond to the UARIV. When you talk about evictions related to the floods, they say they have nothing to do with it. And since this is a vacuum [of policy], it is the companies that benefit. No one is in charge of anything. And us? Since the first displacement in 2013 [because of dam- related hazards], we haven't got anywhere with the UARIV. It's complicated, they say it's difficult. They say, go and make your declarations, say whether it was the paramilitaries or the FARC who displaced you. But we won't go and lie, it wasn't either of these groups. And we say that it was something else, and they don't know what to do with us.

Testimonies gathered through four town hall-style meetings, followed up by individual interviews, show how the history of armed conflict, displacement and dispossession due to the flooding disaster constitutes a continuum of violence in people's lives. In effect, the flood is seen as part of the same process of denial of rights and marginalisation that people in Bajo Cauca feel for being 'campesinos' and regarded as 'FARC sympathisers'. People in this part of the country are no strangers to state violence at the hands of paramilitary forces during the dark years at the peak of the armed conflict, or at the very least they believe the state looked the other way when these atrocities were being committed. The narrative around the flooding of the Cauca River that our interviewees were constructing – no doubt with the help of an activist movement such as Rios Vivos – was that this disaster was a continuation of violence through other means. Similar arguments have been made elsewhere. Branch (2018: 306), for example, has called for disasters in conflict contexts to be recast as a product of 'ongoing, longstanding multiscalar processes of devastation produced by histories of human engagement with the environment, including that of war'. In this light, disasters are the outcome of histories and lived experiences in specific contexts, and call for greater consideration of the way political violence and destructive environmental change intertwine.

In interviews, there was a clear implication that the state was acting as an enabling agent for EPM, much as it had for decades enabled paramilitaries to prosecute the war against guerrilla groups. During fieldwork, researchers encountered numerous individuals who had survived or fled massacres in the late 1990s and early 2000s in Northern Antioquia. Their story of the floods was part of this wider narrative. As one man in Puerto Valdivia put it, 'we have lived with massacres our whole lives'. In the town hall meeting in Toledo, one woman said that, even when people began to arrive at town meetings in the early days after the floods, they were unable to find the words to speak up: after being terrorised by the conflict for so long, they had no idea how to write petitions and engage with the state. The fact that these devastating floods were another chapter in the wider story of state marginalisation and oppression of people who consider themselves *campesinos* was never far from the surface of these conversations.

In some interviews anger towards the state was palpable. One middle-aged woman told us how, over the past 25 years, she had lost three family members to the conflict. Her husband had disappeared and was presumed killed, and two of her brothers had been tortured and killed by forces believed to be paramilitaries. She was

emphatic in stating that the armed conflict was linked to the flooding in May 2018, through the dam. Her distrust of these forces, and the state's complicity in creating the space for violence and relative impunity, ran so deep that she went so far as to suggest that the paramilitaries killed all the young men who could present a challenge to the construction of the dam. After that 'the company' came in: 'The state helped the company – you can't see it any other way. They have killed many, many men'. In this context, where the relationship between the state and its citizens is fractured, policy frameworks for DRR are unlikely to have the positive impact desired if rolled out in a 'business as usual' manner and without systematic consideration of the fact that the state is often seen with great distrust and has limited credibility in these communities.

Finally, the floods in May 2018 damaged the local ecology in ways that the state DRR architecture, run by formal laws and frameworks, is not necessarily sensitive to. The head of the Rios Vivos movement spoke frequently of the ideological divide between the movement's members and the state, particularly the latter's vision for development. In one conversation, she said that EPM had tried to promote a narrative that there were no people there and that the area was just 'wilderness'. For the movement, then, resisting the dam is also about resisting hegemonic narratives of marginalisation. It was eloquently argued that dismantling Hidroelctrico Ituango is about more than just the dam: it is about dismantling the ideologies driving it in the first place.

Nowhere was this clearer than in the town hall meeting in Toledo. Every single resident who spoke about their experience of the floods, and gave their testimony of damage and destruction, first and foremost spoke of the devastating impact on the local ecology and the destruction of habitats. Residents also told the study that tress had been cut down to make way for coca production, fuelling conflict and increasing vulnerability to flooding. (The local research team from Bogotá needed translation help because, as non-natives to the area, they were unfamiliar with the names of the animals and plants residents were at pains to record had been destroyed.)

3.2   The landslide in Mocoa

Located in the south of the country, along the border with Ecuador, Putumayo has been one of the departments most affected by violent conflict in Colombia. According to a report by the National Centre for Historical Memory (2012: 17): 'for more than two decades, the civilian population has been stigmatised as either guerrilla or paramilitary [sympathisers], according to where they lived, and has been the victim of multiple and atrocious repertoires of violence'. Coca cultivation began in the 1970s, attracting at various points the FARC, paramilitaries and narco-traffickers. The FARC established control in 1991, but in the late 1990s the AUC returned to the region, and between 1999 and 2006 engaged in horrific massacres in towns such as El Tigre and El Placer (ibid.). Torture, sexual violence, murder and disappearances were common. People fleeing the violence headed for Mocoa, a city that historically had not been under the control of armed groups: almost 140,000 people were displaced within the department, and 60% of Mocoa's current population comprises conflict victims (Ávila Cortés, 2018a).

The landslide on 1 April 2017, which left hundreds dead, injured or missing, has been called a 'compound disaster' (Cheng et al., 2018). Remote sensing and satellite imaging revealed that a range of hazards, from the heavy rains that started the previous night to droughts a few years before, which reduced vegetation cover, and erosion came together to result in the landslide (ibid.). The landslide was also experienced as a 'compound disaster' by the people affected: according to the mayor of Mocoa, 80% of the victims were also victims of armed conflict.

Active and sustained DRR measures to reduce and manage hazard-based risk were largely absent in Mocoa prior to the landslide. During the disaster a significant response operation was activated, and after it the construction of a terraced housing estate provided homes for a number of affected families in the neighbourhood of Villa Aurora, on the outskirts of the city. In San Miguel, the neighbourhood most severely affected by the landslide, evacuation routes were

visible when this research was carried out two years after the event. Yet there were families who were not resettled, and people have returned to San Miguel with seemingly little improved knowledge or capacity for preparedness or response. The municipality's attempts to use construction equipment to dig channels to direct water flow in the event of another hazard event are widely regarded as ill-chosen and redundant.

In the aftermath of the disaster an interesting and unique link was established between the UNGRD and UARIV. There is evidence to suggest that the landslide, and the media and public attention the response received, prompted the UNGRD and UARIV to coordinate and expedite reparations to residents who were 'doubly affected'. This allowed those affected by the disaster to access funds to support the rebuilding of their lives and livelihoods, but also caused resentment among those waiting for support from UARIV. Individuals who had received reparations from UARIV and used them to invest in homes in the San Miguel area which were subsequently destroyed were not entitled to further payments.

Zeiderman's (2012) work on Bogotá meticulously documents how the state at municipal level demarcates 'zones of high risk' and attempts to resettle people living in exposed areas. People, especially those who have been displaced numerous times by armed conflict, as many of our interviewees in Mocoa had been, were obviously weary of government officials arriving on their doorsteps talking about hazards and risk in a way that may result in further displacement. In Zeiderman's (2012: 1583) words: 'there is noticeable hostility [towards government technicians recording dangerous cracks in walls]. Experience might lead people to assume that if government officials are knocking on doors today, they will be delivering eviction notices tomorrow'. Zeiderman's point, and one supported by the Mocoa experience, is the oversimplification and misconception that people *insist* on living in risky areas exposed to natural hazards, and refuse to relocate when they are asked to do so.

Although there is little evidence that there were active ex-ante risk reduction measures by the municipal government in Mocoa, the idea that residents in more vulnerable and poorer neighbourhoods do not perceive and understand risk adequately and are stubborn runs deep through government and local narratives. According to the mayor of Mocoa, despite the municipal government trying its best to dissuade people from returning to risky, damaged houses after the landslide, 'even today, after what happened, people still insist on returning to these areas'. Andreas, a local social media celebrity, said that his family had lived in a landslide-affected neighbourhood in Mocoa, Los Pinos, for two generations. He was of the view that there had been a landslide 60 years ago, and therefore his family should have been more aware of the risk, but it was seldom discussed: 'I do not know why older people are not conscious of the risk levels that they are exposed to. So, they did not pay that much attention to it'. Gabriela, who found herself in the affected neighbourhood of San Miguel because she had been displaced from her *finca* due to the conflict with the FARC, implied that hasty construction by residents of the area and the landslide were directly linked: 'Around the time of the landslide, people were building a lot; the neighbourhood was populated in a year. Those three neighbourhoods that are in the upper part used to be really populated. People build and build and build'.

While the local government and residents not affected by the landslide did not explicitly say that it was directly the fault of affected citizens for living in the path of a landslide, in public discourse it often appeared that people with little other choice than to live where they could find cheap accommodation, and who had received planning permission to build, were being blamed for high levels of exposure. Every resident we interviewed had received a licence to build their house from the *Planeación* (planning department), and this was confirmed by the mayor of Mocoa. The government had been unable to deal with soaring housing demand from high rates of in-migration due to the protracted conflict in the Bajo Putumayo region, which pushed residents to move to Mocoa. This resulted in hasty and risky construction, responsible in large part for the level of devastation caused by the landslide in 2017. San Miguel, a neighbourhood entirely destroyed by the landslide, had been constructed over

the last 10 years, and its residents were almost exclusively people displaced by conflict.

The mayor also referred to 'climate change' as an important cause of the landslide. He spoke of how environmental changes are resulting in unexpected outcomes: 'This region has 4,500ml of rainfall every year … And it's the place where the most "hydric charges" exist. I think that this sector is being affected by climate change. While in coastal regions, the melting of ice brings floods, here, climate change changes the mossy "mattresses" that contain water [resulting in less absorption of water]'. Likewise, an SNGRD official interviewed for this study said that the landslide was unprecedented and a consequence of climate change: 'Here it has rained for a full day in the past and nothing like this has happened. Then this time it rained three hours and look what happened. Of course, it's climate change'. For its part, the media were far less convinced. According to *El Tiempo*: 'It is not fair to blame climate change and "the fury of nature" on what in reality is the lack of our own urban planning and lack of institutional capacity … The government uses climate change as an excuse to avoid its responsibility to its citizens' (Behrentz, 2017).

In the public spaces where politics is performed and enacted, there was more emphasis on placing responsibility for the disaster on climate change. Concurrently, there was also a consistent narrative around affected populations being unaware of danger and putting themselves in 'risky' locations that would inevitably be affected by hazard-related disasters, despite little municipal government action on ex-ante DRR in 'obviously' high-risk zones.

In the imagination of people living in areas adjacent to the landslide, the neighbourhood of San Miguel was often referred to as a dangerous area with significant 'social problems' brought in by the *desplazados*. Maris, who lived in the neighbourhood of Obrero, adjacent to San Miguel, said: 'It was a popular neighbourhood with victims of armed conflict. There were many

problems. They were selling alcohol beginning in the early morning, there was even prostitution'. This was not an uncommon view among interviewees from Mocoa, most of whom did not live in San Miguel but in surrounding areas.[7] Andreas contextualised this by explaining that:

> I think there are many fake stories about that. This is a Catholic topic, where people think of the landslide as a divine punishment. I think it is a cruel version of the story because no one, it does not matter what him or her did, deserves that something like that happens to them. But I think that behind the stories is that people say that the tragedy happened where bad people lived, and it is simply not true.

As this summary shows, the factors thought to be behind the disaster varied depending on who was being asked, from climate change and unusually heavy rainfall to residents being careless and hasty with construction to 'immoral people' leading 'debauched' lives. Reference to the significant numbers of displaced people moving to Mocoa and the pressures this was putting on the city's crumbling infrastructure was not a common theme in interviews with policy-makers, though the former head of the UARIV in Putumayo, who was perhaps in a position to have a more frank and open discussion, spoke of corruption within the mayor's office allowing land in hazardous areas to be sold to vulnerable and desperate people to make 'quick cash'. From interviews for this study, it was clear that the municipal authorities were not equipped to deal with the mushrooming population living in these hazard-prone areas, despite selling them land titles allowing them to live there.

There also seemed to be some confusion around early warning systems (EWS). According to the mayor, in an effort to abide by Law 1523, the authorities had just started working on EWS when the landslide hit:

---

7 We asked Sofia, a displaced widow from San Miguel resettled in the new neighbourhood of Villa Aurora, whether she had noticed any 'social problems' in her old neighbourhood. She replied that 'I never heard anything like that. Where I lived was very healthy and nice. I never heard anything about any of the neighbourhoods around there. They were safe'. While we were not able to interview a large number of residents directly from San Miguel, the two we did speak to did not particularly ascribe to this narrative.

> And in these zones that are high risk, they have installed an early warning system, which is very complicated, which includes machines but also community plans to call out to the communities to evacuate … The early warning system was made by a firm with lots of professionals. They have meteorological stations and they monitor the river levels.

The mayor did, however, admit that, while they were not prepared in 2017 for the scale of the disaster caused by the landslide, the authorities had since taken steps to implement systems to support communities to cope better with extreme weather events. The SNGRD official agreed: 'We have been working with these early warning systems for three years and the most modern one is in Mocoa, because of what happened'. This confidence in new 'technological' and 'modern' EWS was not, however, echoed on the ground among communities. Maris, who had been campaigning for better risk reduction and mitigation, said she did not see the point of EWS as it did not make her feel safe:

> Now they do drills to evacuate, but there are no shelters. I am not going out on the street with my kids in the middle of the rain. If I wake up my little boy, who is warm, and I take him out in the rain he gets sick. Near my house, the street looks like a river … we have no escape routes or safe rendezvous points.

Interviewees either said they were not familiar with drills and other aspects of EWS, or that they had heard about them but did not participate in them because of the way they were being run. Drills were often scheduled for late at night, and evacuation routes did not seem sensible to people who had lived in the area for years. There remains a need to more effectively understand and respond to local perceptions of risk and design appropriate risk reduction measures with accompanying risk communications, tailored to local needs. Such initiatives need to be cognisant of the lack of trust in the state, which makes the implementation and uptake of EWS additionally complicated.

3.2.1 Competing visions of DRR in Mocoa

Discussions with government officials and those at the helm of policy-making regularly referred to the political shift in thinking in Colombia since Law 1523, from response to risk reduction, and the positive impact this has had. One official with the SNGRD in Putumayo, for example, spoke of the substantial support municipal and local offices had begun to receive to deliver DRR: 'We also give technical assistance in normal situations, like "knowledge" for reduction and action … We give training and technical assistance and we have resources and machinery when it is needed … We have invested a lot in risk reduction'. Other officials reported substantial increases in technical capacity (including through the use of consultants) 'with the capacity to manage everything that can happen', including 'geologists, geographers, environmental engineers and architects'. There seems to be a determination to move forward with technical planning and implementation of official risk reduction. On the ground, this agenda is being pushed forward even when it causes significant problems for residents living in affected neighbourhoods. Indeed, as the Mocoa case indicates, there may be an official view that it is people who are the 'problem': the SNGRD official quoted above regarding developments in Putumayo also bemoaned the fact that 'every day, more people locate themselves in zones of risk … if the community doesn't take a role in risk management, the risks will continue. It is hard to kick people out of the high-risk zones. People can be dangerous as well'.

Three hundred households affected by the landslide in Mocoa have been relocated to resettlement land, now called Ville Aurora. When asked how the land had been acquired, it was evident that this had been a tense process:

> The UNGRD bought it. The municipality is autonomous in saying where, people need UNGRD, as it has the resources to buy it. There are various mechanisms. 1) You sell it to me. 2) If you don't want to sell it, I'll expropriate it under a judicial sentence. When it is of public interest and if you don't want to sell it, I'll expropriate it.

A hard engineering-driven DRR paradigm that over-emphasises relocation and resettlement was often the clearest message coming from state authorities, partly as a result of high-modernist state policies 'best conceived as a strong, one might even say muscle-bound, version of the beliefs in scientific and technical progress' (Scott, 1998), and partly a legacy of decades of conflict and large-scale displacement and resettlement (Fraser, 2017).

Residents affected by the Mocoa disaster and who still continued to live in exposed and 'risky' areas often presented an alternative vision of DRR that spoke to a different way of understanding and living with risk. Interviewees often indicated that large-scale technical interventions based on 'science' seemed to miss the point, with the state often putting them at greater risk through haphazard and irresponsible resettlement (Fraser, 2017). Laura, whose land on the outskirts of Mocoa had been expropriated by the municipal government to resettle neighbourhoods affected by the landslide, was visibly upset by the decision. Beyond her financial loss, she saw a disregard for natural systems and ecosystems in the government's placement of the resettlement scheme:

> the land used to be agrarian. We have been living forever by producing milk … My dad is an environment lover; he would give his own life for it. The lands have their own water streams, their wetlands and the lands have a forest reserve of more than seven hectares. And the government in their haste didn't take this into account. Now I think: how is it possible for the government to come here to destroy that many trees, flora, and fauna for a political whim? They just took into account what the IGAC [Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi (Colombia's national Geographic Institute)] says. IGAC is the entity that makes the geographic study. But they are violating everything. According to their maps, there are no water streams, there are no wetlands and there is not a forest.

> My dad used to have a nature reserve but he did not legalise it. But there it is.

According to this interviewee, a technocratic government could not have the same depth of knowledge around managing community risk as people familiar with the local context. For Laura, her father's understanding of the intricacies of the local ecosystem was simply not comparable to the scientific knowledge produced by the IGAC. For Laura, all agencies such as the IGAC can do is make maps that support the government's vision of risk reduction through resettlement.

Maris, whose house in Mocoa was very close to the landslide, told us that resettlement schemes are driven by political agendas, not by what affected people want:

> The government has made housing projects, but the municipal administration has always said that it does not have the room to build. However, the buildings that the government makes are not very good. Corruption is very strong, there are people who have received housing, but they are made with low-quality standards … I have studied the POT[8] [municipal plan] and it says that one should not change his or her way of life. Here, most of the people are displaced from the countryside, or we are indigenous and we are accustomed to meet as a family. My daughters come with their husbands and we meet to eat. In these new houses, we will have to change our Amazonian culture, peasant and ancestral.

Similar sentiments were expressed by Jose, the leader of an indigenous civil society movement. He too was concerned that they were not included in formal consultations:

> We are lobbying the government to make dignified housing, with a differential approach, that is in keeping

---

8   Plan de Orderamiento Territorial.

> with our cosmovision [worldview] and culture. We don't just have houses, we have ceremonial spaces, we have spaces for our plants … So, these spaces that we need to promote our culture, so that our kids don't lose their culture, this is what we're asking for. But they just want to hand us over a house that is designed by them. 'Go up there.'

There seem to be conflicting visions of DRR between the state and affected citizens in Colombia (Fraser, 2017). In a country with a history of state violence against its citizens, this ideational conflict evidently puts the state–citizen relationship under further stress. In fact, these incompatible visions of DRR were often experienced by people in the form of an 'uncaring', even a 'brutal', state, whose policies result in dispossession or displacement. In both Mocoa and Northern Antioquia, there was a prevalent narrative around a state that is not concerned for the well-being (through locally relevant risk reduction) of *desplazados* or *campesinos*. In a context where insurgencies against the state have been the norm rather than the exception, the importance of engaging in a more meaningful and genuinely bottom-up dialogue on DRR becomes ever more critical. The culture of 'expert-led' planning in Colombia, perhaps because of the need to insulate certain policy areas from the politics of conflict, is as prevalent and disempowering as it was during the height of the insurgency (Berney, 2010: 544). And yet alternatives are available. Prioritising investment in building local knowledge and capacity could increase the ability of individuals to understand and act on disaster risk – skills which could be transferred to new sites should individuals move to other high-risk areas over the course of their lifetime.

4 Navigating competing visions for reducing disaster risk in conflict contexts: policy recommendations

This paper has examined Colombia's experience with disasters in areas directly and indirectly affected by armed conflict and insurgency. Disasters and conflict interact and intersect in people's everyday lives, but the legal and institutional frameworks for dealing with them are compartmentalised, with insufficient consideration of how linked vulnerabilities manifest. This contrasts with narratives from operational agencies on the complexity of the context, and the need to consider risks and threats holistically, reflecting the lived experiences of people affected by both conflict and disaster. The compartmentalisation of the UARIV and UNGRD institutional regimes plays out in unhelpful, even problematic, ways on the ground. Interviewees in Mocoa affected by disasters and conflict were not always sure why their neighbour received a pay-out from one agency while they did not.

What can be learnt from Colombia's experience with disasters and conflict, and what are some possible areas where institutional regimes dealing with a large population of 'doubly affected' citizens can be strengthened?

Moving away from an over-reliance on technocratic expert-led DRR towards a more community-based vision which allows for lived experiences of conflict, both past and present, to be intrinsically considered. There seemed to

be agreement among interviewees in Mocoa and Northern Antioquia on the lack of engagement they had had in consultation processes before the disaster – hazard mapping, etc. – and in the aftermath, when rehabilitation plans were being drawn up. Jose, the indigenous leader from Mocoa, was emphatic that local people had not been included in any consultations.

Priority 2 of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction clearly states that, when DRR laws are being drafted at the national *and* local levels, it is essential to 'undertake comprehensive public and community consultations during the development of such laws and regulations to support their implementation'. While Colombia has signed on to this framework for inclusive and progressive DRR, an institutional approach that is technocratic and focused on a hard engineering-driven disaster policy regime seems to dominate (Fraser, 2016). 'Solutions' to risk reduction seem to be focused on expert-led disaster risk planning, including high-cost hardware and infrastructure responses. According to some political analysis, DRR interventions are clearly tangible and visible, helping to appease supporters and 'buy' political support. Several interviewees suggested that the belief in top-down interventions is partly a consequence

of Colombia's troubled political history, with bureaucrats wary of bringing people's voices into policy planning debates for fear of this space being taken over or captured by the conflict, and the partisanship associated with it.

Affected people interviewed for this research did not see these expert-led infrastructural interventions as the only way forward, and were deeply critical of the government's preference for such measures. For interviewees, there was a strong sense that their worldview, culture and way of life had to be reflected and respected in DRR interventions. A legally mandated and robust system for local consultations – representative of indigenous people's organisations, women and youth groups and a diverse array of social and political groups – in the development of DRR policies and projects in Colombia would go some way towards addressing this. It would enable a more integrated DRR approach that addresses people's demands for social justice and helps repair state–society relations. Several interviewees indicated that, while a legal framework for local consultation exists, for instance in the POT, consultations rarely actually take place. To guarantee an early and diverse consultation process, municipalities need to be better resourced, with staff who deal specifically with public-facing consultation processes, along with stronger punitive measures in the event consultation at municipal level is ignored. Such measures could even help lay the foundations for establishing or rebuilding the social contract and state–society relations.

Institutional capacities and disconnects – between centre and local, and across agencies of the state: who enacts DRR, formally or informally, in regions with legacies of violence and armed conflict? It was evident throughout the research that there was significant disparity between the competence and functioning of national-level bureaucrats and institutions – those drafting the plans – and their translation into local-level plans and implementation, which routinely lack finances to deliver the ambitions articulated in those plans. This creates obvious barriers to delivering national DRR plans at the local level. This problem is compounded by the fact that, in smaller towns and villages,

Colombians tend to regard the state in Bogotá with considerable suspicion and mistrust.

The case of the disaster in Mocoa was somewhat unusual in that the recognition that many landslide victims were also conflict-displaced prompted informal action to encourage coordination between the UNGRD and UARIV. The suggestion that the government may have accelerated reparations from the UARIV for these 'doubly affected' people is one example of the potential for linked actions. There is anecdotal evidence that this has created some tensions within communities where people who have waited years for reparations are yet to receive them, whereas people affected by the landslide received assistance. This makes Mocoa an unusual and interesting moment in post-disaster politics in Colombia. As one OCHA interviewee put it: 'this is what we want to promote: not the disaster management unit being involved in the conflict situation, but to be aware where there is a conflict situation and to recognise that'. There is therefore an urgent need to better understand the ways in which informal coordination between these two agencies has improved or could improve responses for populations 'doubly affected', the challenges or limitations to future coordination and the ways in which this can – formally or informally – be overcome.

Political classification and the politics of access to different types of support require a shift away from repeatedly needing to prove either deservedness or danger. Scholars point out that 'citizenship and the benefits it confers are mediated by and predicated on a governmental rationality that classifies subjects and manages populations according to the degree to which their lives are in danger' (Zeiderman, 2013). Those people considered to be living under most risk can make claims on the state, for resettlement, reparation and so forth. There is a very clear and evident politics of access managed and governed through the politics of classification by the state. The case of the floods in Bajo Cauca and Northern Antioquia demonstrates how these classifications were effectively used to refuse payments to people registered as *desplazados* as opposed to *damnificados*.

In the context of disasters, particularly in countries where the state–society relationship is

marked by conflict or mistrust, as in Colombia, universal interventions that address *all* affected citizens can be effective in restoring faith in the state (Siddiqi, 2013; 2018). The state in Colombia needs to examine ways to reach out to all citizens affected by disasters and conflict – for instance by exploring the viability of distributions through social transfers – rather than repeatedly asking them to prove either deservedness or danger.

Establishing a clear and enforced legal responsibility for DRR of anthropogenic disasters, especially when disaster risks are created by private actors. The Bajo Cauca floods demonstrate clearly that 'privatising' responsibility for disaster response and risk reduction does not work. Considering the scale of the challenges it is creating for people in these historically marginalised communities, and the ways in which it is driving a deeper wedge between communities and the state, this is a potentially explosive situation for the government, made worse by the fact that there does not seem to be an adequate institutional framework to deal with it.

In field research in Mocoa, while it was evident that there were gaps and shortcomings in the institutional response, there was a municipal, state-led response that was escalated all the way to the national level when the need arose. In the case of the floods in Northern Antioquia, however, it seemed equally evident that whether the UNGRD was to be involved, and the extent to which it was responsible for post-disaster response, and where this became the duty of EPM remained unclear. This was not just unclear to residents affected by the disaster, but equally it seems to those making policy and giving public statements in the press. Given the frequency and scale of such disasters (the Brumadinho dam in Brazil collapsed less than a year after the Mocoa floods, killing more than 171 people), Colombia needs robust preventive and punitive laws to safeguard its citizens.

Strengthening the underlying social contract – rights, duties and responsibilities, underpinned by considerations of voice, empowerment and accountability. Strengthening the rights and entitlements of citizens through protection mandated by law is a critical step in addressing disasters in areas affected by armed conflict and insecurity. In engaging with a DRR process that is more consultative, transparent and equal; that addresses people's basic human security versus just addressing one form of insecurity while leaving them vulnerable to another; that sees all affected people as citizens without asking them to prove deservedness; that legally protects people from disasters created by profit-making enterprises, Colombia will see improvements in the wider state–citizen relationship, and in the lived experience of people affected by disasters and insecurity.

This research shows how the specific relationship between disasters, patterns of vulnerability and the experience and dynamics of conflict in different locales across Colombia varies considerably. The drivers of the disaster in Northern Antioquia were not the same as the drivers or the response in Mocoa. Likewise, disasters and conflict differentially affect citizens' experiences and perceptions of the government, and thus require nuanced and thorough consideration of conflict dynamics in the design and delivery of DRR. Urgent action is required to deepen our collective knowledge and understanding of the disaster–conflict interface in Colombia.

New manifestations of the disaster–conflict interface continue to emerge, from within and beyond Colombia's borders. For example, there is evidence to suggest that post-Accord Colombia is more vulnerable to landslides and floods due to deforestation. The demobilisation of FARC has resulted in previously guerrilla-controlled forests now becoming accessible to illegal loggers. Where the FARC were known to have their own forest conservation policies, the year after demobilisation saw a spike of 600% in forest clearing fires.[9] The Venezuelan crisis is creating a further layer of complexity. Many interviewees felt that the crisis is overwhelming institutions, detracting from progress on the Peace Accord, DRR and development more broadly.

9   www.futurity.org/colombia-farc-deforestation-1930522-2/.

The case of Northern Antioquia and Mocoa provides insights into the complexity of the challenges involved in identifying and pursuing DRR ambitions in dynamic conflict contexts, and reveals the limitations of a technocratic approach to DRR – including how ill-informed approaches can further damage state–society relations. New challenges from the demobilisation of the FARC and the Venezuelan crisis signal that complex, competing and dynamic conditions of violence and conflict are part of the fabric of society in which disaster risks manifest, and will be for some years to come. Finding viable solutions will require the DRR community to accelerate pursuit of knowledge about DRR in contexts affected by violence and conflict and, as part of that, to better understand how to support communities, agencies and governments to navigate the reality that there are competing visions for reducing disaster risk in conflict contexts.

Bibliography

Alsema, A. (2018) 'Colombia's prosecution investigating EPM over Ituango dam emergency' *Colombia Reports*, 18 May (https://colombiareports.com/colombias-prosecution-investigating-epm-over-ituango-dam-emergency/)

Ávila, A. (2018) 'La guerra por el Bajo Cauca y Norte de Antioquia' *El Espectador*, 2 October (https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/territorio/la-guerra-por-el-bajo-cauca-y-norte-de-antioquia)

Ávila Cortés, C. (2018a) '¿Qué está pasando con la reubicación de desplazados en Putumayo?' *El Espectador*, 13 November (https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/territorio/que-esta-pasando-con-la-reubicacion-de-desplazados-en-putumayo)

Ávila Cortés, C. (2018b) 'Coca y disidencia, la encrucijada de putumayo' *El Espectador*, 10 December (https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/territorio/coca-y-disidencias-la-encrucijada-de-putumayo)

Bates-Rutgers, T. (2018) 'How peace with FARC threatens Colombia's forests' *Futurity*, 12 December (www.futurity.org/colombia-farc-deforestation-1930522-2/)

Behrentz, E. (2017) 'Mocoa no fue un desastre natural' *El Tiempo*, 18 April (www.eltiempo.com/opinion/columnistas/eduardo-behrentz/mocoa-no-fue-un-desastre-natural-78762)

Berney, R. (2010) 'Learning from Bogotá: how municipal experts transformed public space' *Journal of Urban Design* 15(4): 539–558

Bilak, A. (2017) *Global report on internal displacement*. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2017/pdfs/2017-GRID.pdf)

Botero, H. (2014) 'Colombia: statement made at the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom 2) of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction'. Government of Colombia (www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/policies/v.php?id=40536)

Bouvier, V. (2016) 'Q&A: Colombians narrowly reject peace deal: on the issues with Virginia M. Bouvier'. USIP (www.usip.org/publications/2016/10/qa-colombians-narrowly-reject-peace-deal)

Branch, A. (2018) 'From disaster to devastation: drought as war in Northern Uganda' *Disasters* 42(S1): S306–S327

Brodzinsky, S. (2018) 'Vulnerable Venezuelans find help in Colombia'. UNHCR, 5 October (www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2018/10/5bb71ad34/vulnerable-venezuelans-find-help-colombia.html)

Campos, A., Holm-Nielsen, N., Díaz, C., Rubiano, D.M., Costa, C.R., Ramírez, F. and Dickson, E. (2011) *Analysis of disaster risk management in Colombia: a contribution to the creation of public policies*. Washington DC: World Bank and GFDRR

Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2012) 'El Placer: mujeres, coca, y guerra en el Bajo Putumayo'. Bogotá: Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica

Cheng, D., Cui, Y., Su, F., Jia, Y. and Choi, C. (2018) 'The characteristics of the Mocoa compound disaster event, Colombia' *Recent Landslides* 15: 1223–1232 (https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs10346-018-0969-1.pdf)

Colombia Reports (2018) 'Poverty and inequality' *Colombia Reports*: data, 17 November (https://data.colombiareports.com/colombia-poverty-inequality-statistics/)

Comisionado Para la Paz (2016) *Summary of Colombia's agreement to end conflict and build peace*. Bogotá (www.altocomisionadoparalapaz.gov.co/herramientas/Documents/summary-of-colombias-peace-agreement.pdf)

Dennis, A. (2013) 'Colombia gets ready for Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction'. UNISDR (www.unisdr.org/archive/31036)

El Tiempo (2018) 'Ituango: un territorio al que ha perseguido la violencia' *El Tiempo*, 17 May (www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/que-es-y-donde-queda-ituango-antioquia-218974)

Fraser, A. (2016) 'The politics of knowledge and production of vulnerability in urban informal settlements: learning from Bogotá, Colombia' in R. Manoj, S. Cawood, M. Hordijk and D. Hulme (eds) *Urban poverty and climate change: life in the slums of Asia, Africa and Latin America*. London: Routledge Advances in Climate Change Research

Fraser, A. (2017) 'The missing politics of urban vulnerability: the state and the co-production of climate risk' *Environment and Planning* 49(12): 2835–2852

Fundacíon Ideas para la Paz (FIP) (2018) *Trayectorias y dinámicas territoriales de las disidencias de las FARC*. Bogotá (http://ideaspaz.org/media/website/FIP_Disidencias_Final.pdf)

Gallego, J. (2018) 'Civil conflict and voting behaviour: evidence from Colombia' *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 35(6): 601–621

GFDRR – Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction (2019) 'Colombia' (www.gfdrr.org/en/colombia)

Gobierno de Colombia (2018) 'Bases Del Plan Nacional de Desarrollo: 2018–2022'. Bogotá: Gobierno de Colombia

Government of Colombia (2012) *Colombia: national progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo framework for action (2011–2013)*. SNPAD (www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/policies/v.php?id=28738)

Government of Colombia (2014) *Colombia: national progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo framework for action (2013–2015)*. UNGRD (www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/policies/v.php?id=40143)

Government of Colombia (2015) *Plan Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres 2015–2025*. Unidad Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres (http://portal.gestiondelriesgo.gov.co/Documents/PNGRD-2015-2025-Version-Preliminar.pdf)

Government of Colombia (2017) *Colombia: Sendai framework data readiness review report* (www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/policies/v.php?id=53131)

Hernandez Vargas, J. (2014) *Colombia: a county under constant threat of disasters*. Kansas: School of Advanced Military Studies

Ilcan, S. (2009) 'Privatizing responsibility: public sector reform under neoliberal government' *Canadian Review of Sociology* 46: 207–234

InSight Crime (2015) 'AUC' InSight Crime, 17 November (www.insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/auc-profile/)

InSight Crime (2017) 'FARC' InSight Crime, 3 March (www.insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/farc-profile/)

InSight Crime (2018) 'ELN' InSight Crime, 16 October (www.insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/eln-profile/)

InSight Crime and Universidad del Rosario (2018) 'Observatorio Colombiano de crimen organizado' InSight Crime (https://es.insightcrime.org/indepth/observatorio-rosario/)

Johnson T., von Meding J., Gajendran T. and Forino G. (2019) 'Disaster vulnerability of displaced people in Rakhine State, Myanmar' in A. Asgary (ed.) *Resettlement challenges for displaced populations and refugees*. Sustainable Development Goals Series. Cham: Springer

Klein, N. (2008) *The shock doctrine: the rise of disaster capitalism*. USA: Picador

Magali, A., Boesten, J., Idler, A., Masullo, J., Tickner, A., and Zulver, J. (2018) 'Challenges in Colombia's changing security landscape: toward a shared vision of peace' *LASA Forum* 49(3): 75–80

Maher, D. and Thomson, A. (2018) 'A precarious peace? The threat of paramilitary violence to the peace process in Colombia' *Third World Quarterly* 39(11): 2142–2172

Nicholas, C. (2018) 'Colombia's coca acreage for cocaine production at all-time high' *New York Times*, 20 September (www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/world/americas/cocaine-colombia.html)

Norwegian Refugee Council (2018) 'Increased internal displacement in Colombia' Norwegian Refugee Council, 23 February (www.nrc.no/news/2018/february/increased-internal-displacement-in-colombia)

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2015) *Colombia: policy priorities for inclusive development*. Washington DC: OECD (www.oecd.org/about/publishing/colombia-policy-priorities-for-inclusive-development.pdf)

Ophir, A. (2010) 'The politics of catastrophization: emergency and exception' in D. Fassin and M. Pandolfi (eds) *Contemporary states of emergency: the politics of military and humanitarian interventions*: 59–88. New York: Zone Books

Opitz-Stapleton, S., Nadin, R., Kellett, J., Quevedo, A., Caldarone, M., Peters, K. and Mayhew, L. (2019) *Risk-informed development: from crisis to resilience*. London and New York: ODI and UNDP

Orjoux, A. and Said-Moorhouse, L. (2019) 'ELN claims responsibility for Bogotá car bomb that killed 20 at a police academy' CNN World, 21 January (https://edition.cnn.com/2019/01/21/americas/colombia-car-bomb-eln/index.html)

Oxfam (2011) '¿Cómo evitar otro desastre? Lecciones de la ola invernal en Colombia'. Oxfam Report 148, 29 April (www.oxfam.org/en/node/2388)

Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (2018) *Global MPI country briefing 2018: Colombia*. Oxford, September (https://ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CB_COL-2.pdf)

Parkin Daniels, J. (2018) 'Colombia: tens of thousands ordered to evacuate after floods at dam' *The Guardian*, 16 May (www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/16/colombia-tens-of-thousands-of-ordered-to-evacuate-after-floods-at-dam)

Parkin Daniels, J. and Ebus, B. (2018) 'Colombians who once fled war now forced to run from catastrophic flooding' *The Guardian*, 12 June (www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/12/colombia-river-cauca-breach-flooding-farc)

Parker, A. (2018) 'Colombia government rejection may cement end of ELN peace talks' InSight Crime, 22 November (www.insightcrime.org/news/brief/colombia-government-rejection-may-cement-end-eln-peace)

Peters, K. (2017) *The next frontier for disaster risk reduction: tackling disasters in fragile and conflict-affected contexts*. London: ODI

Peters, K. and Peters, L.E.R. (2018) *Disaster risk reduction and violent conflict in Africa and Arab states: implications for Sendai Framework Priorities*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11208-disaster-risk-reduction-and-violent-conflict-africa-and-arab-states-implications-sendai-framework)

Peters, K., Holloway, K., and Peters, L.E.R. (2019) *Disaster risk reduction in conflict contexts: the state of the evidence*. London: ODI (www.odi.org/publications/11340-disaster-risk-reduction-conflict-contexts-state-evidence)

Pinto, G., Attwood, J., Birkeland, N. and Nordbeck, H. (2014) 'Exploring the links between displacement, vulnerability, resilience' *Procedia Economics and Finance* 18: 849–856 (www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212567114010107)

Power Technology (n.d.) 'Ituango hydroelectric power project, Colombia' (www.power-technology.com/projects/ituango-hydroelectric-power-colombia/)

Radio Cadena Nacional (2018) 'Un conductor herido y cinco caminoes quemados tras atentado en Antioquia' RCN Radio, 9 December (www.rcnradio.com/colombia/antioquia/un-conductor-herido-y-cinco-camiones-quemados-tras-atentado-en-antioquia)

Raleigh, C. (2010) 'Political marginalization, climate change and conflict in African Sahel states' *International Studies Review* 12(1): 69–86

Restrepo, V. (2018) 'Declaran calamidad pública por la contingencia en Hidroituango' *El Colombiano*, 15 May (www.elcolombiano.com/antioquia/declaran-calamidad-publica-por-la-contingencia-en-hidroituango-IE8699965)

Rutas del Conflicto (2018) 'Masacre de El Aro' *Rutas Del Conflicto* (http://rutasdelconflicto.com/interna.php?masacre=25)

Santamaría, V., Eduardo, J., Gómez Vélez, M. and Martínez Hincapié, H. (2018) 'La Avenida Torrencial de Mocoa, Putumayo ¿ejemplo de una retrospective sin punto final en la gestión del riesgo de desastres detonados por eventos naturales?' Colombia: Revista de Derecho, Universidad del Norte

Santos, J. (2016) 'Peace in Colombia and the third way in Latin America' *Horizons* 6. Centre for International Relations and Sustainable Development (www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-winter-2016--issue-no-6/peace-in-colombia-and-the-third-way-in-latin-america)

Scott, J. (1998) *Seeing like a state: how certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press

Sebastian, A. and Cavelier Adarve, I. (2011) 'Protecting people displaced by disasters in the context of climate change: challenges from a mixed conflict/disaster context' *Tulane Environmental Law Journal* 24(239): 239–252

Semana (2016) 'Las víctimas votaron por el Sí' *Semana*, 2 October (www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/plebiscito-por-la-paz-victimas-del-conflicto-votaron-por-el-si/496571)

Siddiqi, A. (2013) 'The emerging social contract: state–citizen interaction after the floods of 2010 and 2011 in southern Sindh, Pakistan' *IDS Bulletin* 44: 94–102

Siddiqi. A (2014) 'Climatic disasters and radical politics in southern Pakistan: the non-linear connection' *Geopolitics* 19(4): 885–910

Siddiqi. A (2018) 'Disasters in conflict areas: finding the politics' *Disasters* 42(S2): S161–S172

Stirk, C. (2013) *Colombia: resources for humanitarian response and poverty reduction*. Global Humanitarian Assistance

Summers, N. (2012) 'Colombia's victims' law: transitional justice in a time of violent conflict?' *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 25

Unidad para las Víctimas (2018) 'Registro Unico de Victimas'

UNOHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018) 'Informe Anual Del Alto Comisionado de Las Naciones Unidas Para Los Derechos Humanos Sobre La Situación de Los Derechos Humanos En Colombia'. Bogotá

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2017) 'UNHCR policy brief on displacement and disaster risk reduction: 2017 update'. UNHCR Briefing Paper (www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/53214)

UNHCR (2018) 'Colombia: fact sheet'. Bogotá

UNOCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2011) 'Colombia: massive flooding affects millions' OHCA, 3 May (www.unocha.org/story/colombia-massive-flooding-affects-millions)

UNISDR – United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (2005) *Hyogo framework for action 2005–2015*. Hyogo: UNISDR

UNISDR (2015) *Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction 2015–2030*. Sendai: UNISDR

UNISDR (2017) *Terminology guide*. UNISDR (www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology)

UNISDR (2018) 'Regional platform for disaster risk reduction in the Americas'. UNISDR (http://eird.org/pr18/eng/)

Waddington, R. (2018) 'Colombia cites progress on risk management' UNISDR, 20 June (www.unisdr.org/archive/58870)

Warner, J. (2013) 'The politics of catastrophisation' in D. Hilhorst (ed.) *Disaster, conflict and society in crisis: everyday politics of crisis response*: 76–94. Abingdon: Routledge

Wilches-Chaux, G. (2018) '¿Habrá paz para el Ambiente? ¿Habrá Ambiente para la Paz?' *Revista Sur*, 2 July (www.sur.org.co/habra-paz-para-el-ambiente-habra-ambiente-para-la-paz/)

Wong, K. (2008) *Colombia: a case study in the role of the affected state in humanitarian action*. HPG Working Paper. London: ODI

World Bank (2018) 'GINI Index (World Bank Estimate)' (https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?locations=CO)

Zeiderman, A. (2012) 'On shaky ground: the making of risk in Bogotá' *Environment and Planning A* 44(7): 1570–1588

Zulver, J. (2018) 'Feasible justice? How to guarantee reparations for Colombia's 8.3 million victims' JusticeInfo.Net, 12 June (www.justiceinfo.net/en/justice-reconciliation/37686-feasible-justice-has-colombia-over-promised-and-under-delivered-reparations-for-its-8-6-million-vic.html)

ODI: Evidence. Ideas. Change.

ODI is an independent, global think tank, working for a sustainable and peaceful world in which every person thrives. We harness the power of evidence and ideas through research and partnership to confront challenges, develop solutions, and create change.