

Challenges and alternatives towards peacebuilding

A RURAL DEVELOPMENT
PERSPECTIVE



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Compilers

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Challenges and alternatives towards peacebuilding A RURAL DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

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Rural development alternatives for peacebuilding: educational strategies to strengthen the ability of producers and young people that contribute to the coffee production chain in the municipalities of Leiva, Policarpa and Los Andes of the department of Nariño, with international impact in the province of Carchi-Ecuador



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SUMMARY

Rural development and peacebuilding in Colombia have been highly prioritized by higher education institutions since the signing of the Peace Agreement between the National Government and the FARC-EP. This has resulted in the need to further analyze rural strategies that contribute towards a better life for the population of territories where armed conflict is coming to an end, whilst understanding the pressing uncertainty that this process implies; on the one hand, for the urgency of generating rapid and concrete responses to social justice and equity, and on the other, because fulfilling the agreement guarantees scenarios of non-repetition of the war in the country.

These were some of the reflections that motivated the research project “Rural development alternatives for peacebuilding: educational strategies to strengthen the ability of producers and young people that contribute to the coffee production chain in the municipalities of Leiva, Policarpa and Los Andes of the department of Nariño, with international impact in the province of Carchi-Ecuador”. This work is presented as an investigative result that contains the analysis of theoretical and territorial dynamic contributions regarding the construction of peace, education and the economy for rural development.

The book is made up of three parts: Part 1 gathers sociological, legal and demographic works on the challenges of peacebuilding with the national and departmental context of Nariño, and looks at human rights from the perspective of population health and quality of life. Part 2 presents texts on the dynamics of rural education in Colombia; national challenges and lessons learned based on case studies of specific forms of education. Part 3 presents economic analyses regarding the models that are behind the conception of rural development and the productive and institutional dynamics of the local sphere for the generation of employment and income.

All three parts are relevant at both the national level and also the more specific area of the department of Nariño and within this, the Cordillera region. This area, historically affected by the armed conflict, despite experiencing continuing uncertainty regarding the resurgence of violence and the increase in illegal crops, has also reignited hope with regards to finding solutions to the problems seen in the countryside; through educational, community and productive experiments.

Although there are contradictory dynamics, the authors agree that the rural territory is a scene of permanent and collective construction, mediated by constant social struggles and

power disputes with the State. It is therefore necessary to rethink the strategies for implementing the Peace Agreement in this region, with participatory scenarios being provided to include the rationale specific to rurality, such as: justice and reconciliation, social pedagogy, pertinence of study and student retention rates, social and solidarity economy, productive associativity, demographic conditions and health; including the physical, mental and social wellbeing of rural workers. With this work, we hope to reflect collectively with academics and human rights activists, spurring an increase in studies of rural areas and those analyses of community and innovative strategies that reinforce the road towards the construction of a lasting peace with social justice in Colombia.

KEYWORDS: *peacebuilding, human rights, rural development, rural education, rural economy.*

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PROLOGUE

In his novel, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, the Czech writer Milán Kundera, recounts how communist leaders, not related to the Russian government, were erased from history. The crude and uncomplicated process consisted of modifying the photos where the indicated character had appeared, changing his name in the records of the speeches and forcing people to affirm that they did not know them. Obviously, this move, whose purpose was to stimulate oblivion, generated a public dynamic of acceptance, but promoted intimate reflection exercises, where people, in the most remote part of their homes and their memory, remembered those who no longer existed, with the purpose of keeping them alive, separated from slander.

This same form of memory preservation appears in the works of Gabriel García Márquez, the Colombian winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature 1982, who narrates in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, that when José Arcadio Segundo asked about the massacre of the three thousand workers who demanded their rights in front of the banana company and everyone answered that that had not happened, he made it his duty to explain this to his people, his nephews and those of his household, as a story, to experience it, so that their memory somehow kept the events a reality; one that the inhabitants of Macondo now considered strange and pure fantasy.

García Márquez and Milan Kundera are two examples of how literature extracts the facts of reality and captures them in a lively, exhilarating way so that in reading the texts you can once again feel the indignation, dismay, laughter, joy and lament that make up life. This practice of transmitting emotions is also carried out by the indigenous communities of Colombia, who make it their moral duty to pass on stories and legends to future generations through the spoken word, recounting the facts and events of their people, with the purpose of forming an identity, of knowing that they are someone and that they belong to each other.

From this practice of the indigenous communities, and paraphrasing the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, who affirms that the configuration of the Self is defined by interpersonal relationships and by the historical relations of one's ancestors, it can be said that there is a close relationship between memory and identity, in that we can only know what we are if we remember what our ancestors were. Paraphrasing a quote from Marx, we can say that our identity rises from the shoulders of our ancestors.

The book before the reader is perhaps a clear example of how memory seeks to survive, to make its existence evident. This is stronger in the Colombian territories, where its presence was more direct. For that reason, although we do not want to talk about it, it is irremediable to do so; it seeps out through the pores, where one least expects it. This document is not creative literature or fiction but the result of research by experts with different fields of expertise, who intend to trace a reality, to record a small period in time where the noise of weapons and the smell of the cordite, which sowed anxiety and uncertainty, gave way to the grinding of beans and the smell of coffee, sowing hope and enthusiasm among populations that believed for many years that they were the doomed lineage of which García Márquez spoke.

Those who scroll through the pages of this book will find two planes of interpretation; an obvious one, which can be seen by simply deciphering the characters recording the research results, ranging from historical readings, to proposals for rural education and observations on the development model, as well as the analysis of the health situation in the municipalities that are the subject of the research project. The other not-so-obvious plane, reveals the period in which the authors live, where hope forges a path to peace, making itself evident in the issues they address, generating in the reader the idea that we are moving in the direction of prosperity and a different reality from the one drawn out by the past 50 years. The first plane transmits information, the second arouses feelings; dreams that are hoped to not be fleeting.

In short, this book is born of a time in which Colombians dream of finally moving on from a dark moment of violence, and so, beyond thinking about the information within its pages, it is necessary to look at the strength and spirit that motivated those who wrote it; to finally highlight how the facts narrated here, the data and reflections provided, are the living record of an era that is unprecedented in history. It is as if we wanted to hold on to what we have, to prevent the force of the current in which we have been sailing from returning us to turbulent waters. For that reason, the plurality of voices, perspectives and themes, recorded in these pages, do not see coffee as a concrete thing or object, but as an event from which Leiva, Policarpa and Los Andes formed different realities from what their pasts had mapped out.

In accordance with the above, we can say that this book is a memory of the attempt of the populations to seize the opportunity that they themselves have formed; of ex-combatants returning to the classrooms, of academics thinking about how to improve the quality of agricultural products and of reflections on rurality so as to cultivate solidarity. This type of memory contrasts with that which has persecuted Colombians for more than 50 years and shows the emergence of a new identity, which although real, is still fragile and is beset by many difficulties, especially the old habit of wanting to return to war due to a belief that this path is the only way to achieve transformations.

Apart from being a memory of hope for future generations to read, in the reflections that are woven between the lines of this document there is an implicit question that must be made explicitly and will be a constant concern of all professors, academics and researchers: If the entirety of the agreements signed in Havana are successfully implemented, can we (as Colombians) really identify ourselves as a people without armed conflict? Answering this question seems easy, but it is supremely complex. The question hides a dilemma of existence formulated years ago, in another country and with other situations, by the Greek poet Kavafis in his poem “Waiting for the barbarians”, where he alludes to the Greeks, seen by us as a

splendorous and magical people who bequeathed us all their western wealth, but that in reality all their greatness was due to the barbarians and that is why, when the Greeks knew that the barbarians would no longer return, they said: “Now what’s going to happen to us without barbarians? Those people were a kind of solution.”

Communities in the affected regions have already begun to think of a future without armed conflict and without armed actors; the evidence of this is here, in the results presented by the research project that motivated this book. All that remains is for the elites of our country to make the same reflection and hopefully they do not end up paraphrasing the last expression of Kavafis’ poem.

Romel Armando Hernandez Silva
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CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE COLLECTIVE WORK

The research “Rural development alternatives for peacebuilding: educational strategies to strengthen the ability of producers and young people that contribute to the coffee production chain in the municipalities of Leiva, Policarpa and Los Andes of the department of Nariño, with international impact in the province of Carchi-Ecuador” arose from a call addressed to municipalities with Development Plans with a Territorial Focus (Spanish acronym PDET); sub-regional programs of comprehensive transformation of the rural area, for a period of 10 years in the territories most affected by armed conflict, poverty, illicit economies and institutional weakness. PDETs are a planning and management instrument to prioritize the implementation of the components of the “*Reforma Rural Integral*” or “Comprehensive Rural Reform” program and the relevant measures established by the Final Agreement for 170 prioritized municipalities with a total of 6.6 million inhabitants; 2.5 million of whom are victims of armed conflict and represent 36% of the national territory (Educando paz. Café de paz, 2018, pp. 14-16).

In this post-conflict scenario, to effectively respond to the requirements identified in the prioritized areas, the Ministry of National Education in May 2017, launched the “Call for the formation of a bank of eligible higher education projects that promote rural development by forming inter-institutional alliances”. This call was intended to invite higher education institutions to base their inventory of educational actions and projects around rural development and peacebuilding through the formation of inter-institutional alliances. In the case of the department of Nariño, the PDET of Alto Patía and Norte del Cauca and the PDET of Pacifico and Frontera Nariñense were prioritized.

The initiative by the institutions should be to develop one or several lines of work proposed by the Ministry of National Education: flexible adaptable educational models, educational access and student retention, and alliances

for rural development. In the department of Nariño, the Rural Development Alliance was formed between the Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia (UCC) – Campus Pasto, the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios (UNIMINUTO), the Corporación Unificada Nacional de Educación Superior (CUN), the Universidad Politécnica Estatal del Carchi (UPEC) in Ecuador and the Federación Nacional de Cafeteros – Comité Nariño.

One of the actions proposed by the inter-institutional alliance was this interdisciplinary project that involves the research groups: Indesco, La Minga, Eslinga, GIISE, GIOD of the Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia and GICAEF of the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios.

The authors of the book integrate academic experiences around the social, human, legal, economic and engineering sciences. The research shares a qualitative and quantitative approach to consolidate an exploratory scope, in topics that are rarely addressed in the territory of analysis (the Cordillera region of the department of Nariño), and descriptive scope by the analysis of the phenomena concerning rural development and peacebuilding.

Introduction

“Peace requires a collective responsibility in order to leave a better place filled with hope for future generations”.

Alfredo Molano

Ángela Marcela Castillo Burbano
Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia, Campus Pasto

Territory has traditionally been understood as a geopolitical notion associated with the concepts of State, control, limits and borders. However, the analysis of territory in the Latin American region takes on particular nuances associated with the sociopolitical claim of marginalized groups; this means that the analysis of territory currently includes broader meanings about the spatial processes related to the production-reproduction of identity, the control and appropriation of natural resources, the autonomy dispute (Sandoval, Robertsdotter and Paredes, 2017), defense and the demands of social movements when faced with the violation of their rights, among other dynamics.

In that polysemic view of territory, the country has begun down the path of peacebuilding; a desired peace that finds its foundations in the territory and in the fulfillment of rights to the population that inhabits said space. Beyond the silencing of guns, the peace agreement must remediate the victims, guarantee constitutional rights to all Colombians and generate guarantees of protection and non-repetition. From there, the category of territorial peace arises, as the armed conflict affected some territories more

than others and because the change must mobilize guarantees of peace to the most affected (Jaramillo, 2014).

One of the main causes of the armed conflict, recognized by many academics, is the historical debt of the State to the Colombian countryside (Molano, Estrada, Restrepo). There has been a stronger spatial evolution of the conflict in rural settings; which is why one of the approaches adopted by this work involves rural development as a strategy for the consolidation of territorial peace. This process of rural progress through territorial development refers specifically to the local scenarios; that is, the relevance of considering local particularities in the face of national or global homogenizing trends. In other words, the rural environment invites us to analyze the specificities of the environment, our own social and spatial capacities, and also the power disputes between local and external actors so as to guide the planning and territorial management processes in a way that satisfies social needs over a broad spectrum of human rights.

This research book starts by broadening the discussion on the subject, territorially involving three municipalities in the Cordillera region of the department of Nariño, characterized by a permanent territorial conflict with dynamics such as: the high incidence of armed conflict, the concentration of illegal armed groups, the low direct presence of the State, the low institutional offer for the generation of initiatives in territorial development, the weak road infrastructure that hinders access to municipalities, and the low coverage of basic services for the population. The context in question indicates a high vulnerability for a population of around 44,000 inhabitants in 2018. With the signing of the “*Acuerdo Final de Paz*” or “Final Peace Agreement” and the deployment of the instruments for its implementation, concrete actions are expected to reduce this vulnerability and uncertainty in the population. Once the agreements were signed, the silencing of the guns diminished the violence significantly, however, with the departure of the FARC-EP from the territory and the absence of the State, the territory in question is permeated by a deployment of new armed groups, dissidents,

rearmed guerrillas or paramilitary groups, sparking warnings of a new conflict.

The aforementioned requires the fulfillment and effective implementation of the points contemplated in the Agreement and a permanent inter-institutional accompaniment to develop territorial management actions, in the understanding that the consolidation of territorial peace for the area of the Nariñense mountain range not only depends on the signature of an agreement, but of a high regional cohesion that firmly plants the organizational and associative capacity of the population, the agricultural vocation and the natural and cultural diversity of the territory in the foundations of its territorial planning.

Studying the different situations that the present peace agreement evokes within the territory, at the national level in Colombia and local level in the Nariñense mountain range, motivated the present collective work within the framework of the research project in which different research groups, attached to the universities of the inter-institutional alliance, participated.

The research methodology responds to a mixed methodological approach related to epistemological lines of the social sciences, integrating interdisciplinary studies of the socio-legal, sociological, demographic, economic and territorial order. For this reason, the work benefits from a methodological diversity and various information gathering techniques that combine quantitative techniques (with the generation of statistics and indicator analyses) with qualitative techniques (that combine document reviews, theoretical conceptualization and focus groups) to generate contributions in the comprehension of social phenomena.

The work, divided into three parts, places special emphasis on the three rural development objectives sought by the institutional alliance of universities and the Ministry of National Education: contribute to the educational field in rural settings affected by the armed conflict, identify opportunities for inclusion and economic dynamics, and energize citizen participation, thereby bolstering reflection on peace agreements, their challenges and opportunities in Colombia. The first part of the book, called

“Construction of peace and human rights”, focuses on the academic discussion surrounding what happened, at both the national level and in Nariño, regarding the historical process of peacebuilding and human rights, seen in the Final Agreement for the end of conflict and the construction of a stable and lasting peace, between the FARC- EP and the National Government. The second part, called “Education for rural development”, analyzes education as a fundamental right and as an energizing axis of rural development, prioritizing the different educational needs of rurality and the relevance required to boost social mobility in that environment. The third and last part of the book, called “Economic models of rural development and local productive dynamics”, contemplates two views; the first, on critical debates about theories of rural development, economic models and the agrarian question, in contrast to the alternatives towards a more supportive economy, and the second takes up the criteria of territorial development to analyze factors that can help in its fulfillment through social responsibility, associativity and productive opportunities for quality coffee.

In the first chapter, the authors Israel Biel and Andrea Casanova analyze the most important current challenges in building a stable and lasting peace in Colombia: the issue of the Colombian countryside and the need to emphasize the Comprehensive Rural Reform that provides a solution to the illicit drug problems; and the transformation of the armed confrontation into an open political discussion with guarantees of democratic spaces and rights for the victims, structured around a system of judicial and extrajudicial mechanisms aimed at guaranteeing the truth, reparations, justice and non-repetition. The challenges that have been analyzed seem to stall, with the same difficulties and setbacks observed during the implementation of the Agreement. This reflects a resurgence of violence in Nariño, along with an increase in crops for illicit use and other dynamics that imply rethinking the implementation strategies for this region.

The dynamics of the conflict and the post-agreement in Nariñense territory is analyzed by Amanda Riascos and Alba Lucy Ortega in the second chapter. The authors agree with the analysis made in the first chapter

by Biel and Casanova and take a closer look at the set of instruments and mechanisms addressed to promote post-agreement transformations. With a reflective approach, they find that conflict is a social effect that will be present in the department of Nariño and that its accentuation will be proportional to the extent that structural social problems are not resolved. Therefore, a culture of conflict resolution is necessary with peaceful negotiation strategies that make it possible to maintain coexistence in the territories with clear policies of economic opportunities, education and social inclusion.

In the third chapter, the authors Andrés Salas, Franco Montenegro and Julie Benavides conduct a study that positions health as a fundamental human right. Therefore, they develop a demographic analysis, on the health conditions of the population of the municipalities of Leiva, Policarpa and Los Andes, to project the current quality of life of the rural population and explain how the implementation of the Peace Agreement can improve this situation, resolving epidemiological problems that affect physical, mental and social wellbeing at different life stages of the population: early childhood, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and the elderly.

The fourth chapter, by Deicy Villarreal, addresses the challenges of education and pedagogy in rurality. They can lead to social transformation if the contributions of social pedagogy are resumed, leading criticism, reflection, freedom through historical knowledge, social justice and the search for good living with alternative pedagogical processes; contextualized and built participatively with the populations that contribute to the construction of peace in the territories.

Along the same lines, the fifth chapter, by Ángela Mora and Claudia Guerrero, emphasizes the criteria of quality and relevance of rural education as a factor that has had a negative impact on rural poverty, armed conflict and the development of illegal economies.

The sixth chapter, by Karen Ocaña, Natalia Villota and Camilo Fajardo, shows the educational experience of the 45 young beneficiaries of the “Rural Development Alternatives” project and the importance of planning rural

education environments that make it possible to reduce student dropout rates using strategies of academic support, student welfare, entrepreneurship and graduate support.

The seventh chapter, by Mauricio Chamorro and Ronal Urbina, theoretically analyzes the relationship of rural and agrarian studies with the prevailing economic models of Latin America. The authors encounter divergent approaches and political initiatives over the last 80 years in the region. However, they recognize that the rural territory is a scenario of permanent and collective construction, mediated by constant social struggles and disputes with the State, to the extent that it seeks to factor in the logic and rationality of rurality so that they become real instruments of rural development.

The eighth chapter, by Ángela Marcela Castillo Burbano, reflects on viable paths to consolidate rural development in Colombia; through social and solidarity economy practices. It argues that to overcome the limitations of conventional development paradigms, alternative fundamental conditions of good living must be considered: a broad guarantee of rights, the sovereignty of the State and the consolidation of public policies with the opening to new concepts and approaches, such as that provided by food sovereignty, the right to water and the rights of Nature.

The authors Alba Lucy Ortega and Amanda Riascos, in the ninth chapter, suggest that the formation of associations in the rural sector is a fundamental factor that can strengthen the potential of productive sectors, in order for communities to contribute to rural development, based on strategies that improve skills for the sustainability of rural enterprises.

In the tenth chapter, the authors Alba Lucy Ortega and Claudia Guerrero analyze, in a cross-cutting manner, corporate social responsibility as a strategy that stimulates investment, production and marketing activities in the countryside, addressing areas of governance, human rights, labor practices and the environment. Their case study of the “*Federación de Cafeteros*” or “Federation of Coffee Growers” provides insight into how a second-degree organization affects rural productive dynamics and how

coffee production activity can be improved in territories dedicated to agriculture or in territories where this production has been decided as an alternative to the cultivating of crops for illicit use.

Finally, the eleventh chapter, by authors David López, Andrés Mosquera and Esteban Guerrero, punctually analyzes the economic opportunities of coffee for the generation of employment and income in the municipalities of Leiva, Policarpa and Los Andes, to the extent that they replicate quality and specialty criteria that generate greater added value and take advantage of opportunities in the market.

The ensemble of these chapters should demonstrate an academic work that tries to cast a light on the multiple dialogues around rural development from a polysemic and critical perspective that incorporates the visible realities of the territory. The Nariñense mountain range is a region full of cultural and ecological diversity with a significant community fabric, driven by leaders who hope to overcome the consequences of the armed conflict and interweave the paths of truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition. Current efforts, in adding inter-institutional and community alliances, are not enough and it should be a permanent task to ensure that the rural population appropriates the role of protagonist in this unfinished peacebuilding process.

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PART 1

PEACEBUILDING AND HUMAN RIGHTS