

High Risk Feminism in Colombia: Women's Mobilisation in Violent Contexts

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by

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I hereby certify that this thesis is the result of my own work except where otherwise indicated and due acknowledgement is given.

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ABSTRACT

Against all odds, in uncertain and violent times, Colombian women are mobilising for gender justice. They do so even when they face ongoing violence and personal threats from a variety of armed actors. The questions arise: how and why do women mobilise in contexts of high violence and insecurity? Despite a well-established tradition of studying women's social movements in times of conflict, and of high risk collective action more generally, there is a lacuna when it comes to analysing feminism as a mobilisation strategy. My research uses the case studies of the *Liga de las Mujeres Desplazadas* (League of Displaced Women, LMD), and AFROMUPAZ (Afro-Colombian Women for Peace) to illustrate the utility of an original framework – High Risk Feminism – to explain *how* and *why* women chose to act collectively, despite the real and threatened dangers that this implies. The thesis further looks to a similar setting (an invaded neighbourhood in Riohacha, La Guajira) where displaced women *do not* mobilise, in order to strengthen the parameters of the HRF framework. In all, it posits that we will see a specifically feminist type of mobilisation emerge when a leader is able to form a charismatic bond with participants by framing participation as 'worth it' in a domain of losses, despite the risks this incurs.

To recognise that women as a group experience their social worlds differently from men as a group complicates feminist thinking, deepens female self-awareness, and calls attention to the complexity and richness of our social experiences and relations.

(Elshtain, 1982, 47)

Despite so much pain, despite so many violations, despite so much damage, the voice of women has always survived. We decided not to silence ourselves.

(Member of LMD, 2017)

An abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation is normal behaviour.

(Frankl, 1959, 20)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFROMUPAZ (*la Asociación de Mujeres Afro por la Paz,* Association of Afro Women for Peace)

AUC (*las Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*, United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia)

BACRIM (*Bandas Criminales*, Criminal Gangs)

DV (Dependent Variable)

ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, National Liberation Army)

FARC-EP (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejercito Popular,* Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army)

FMW (*Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu*, Force of Wayuu Women)

HRD (Human rights defender)

HRF (High Risk Feminism)

IDP (Internally Displaced People)

IPV (Intimate Partner Violence)

IV (Independent Variable)

IMD ([Mill's] Indirect Method of Difference)

IACHR (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights)

LJ (*Liga Joven*, Young League)

LMD (*Liga de las Mujeres Desplazadas*, League of Displaced Women)

MDSA (Most Different Systems Analysis)

MMA (Mill's Method of Agreement)

OAS (Organisation of American States)

PIRC *(Plan Integral de Reparación Colectiva,* Comprehensive Plan for Collective Reparation)

POS (Political Opportunity Structures)

SMT (Social Movement Theory)

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**All translations from Spanish documents are my own unless otherwise stated.*

Chapter I: Introduction

A. The Puzzle

In the face of the high risks of ubiquitous violence, it might seem logical that women turn inwards to the private domain of the household for protection and safety. Moreover, we might assume that as a function of fear and social isolation, they would lack the resources to mobilise. Puzzlingly, however, women's social movements in Colombia are very much visible in the streets, courts, social networks, and neighbourhoods. The country has been embroiled in a civil conflict (with the FARC) for 52 years, and continues to be home to violent armed groups, including revolutionary guerrillas, paramilitary forces, and common criminal groups (InSight Crime & Universidad del Rosario, 2018). Meertens notes that women have suffered the most in this multi-faceted melee (2010, 2012). When violence – in its many forms – against women continues to victimise vulnerable populations, how can we explain why women living in high risk conditions choose to make their claims increasingly public?

At its core, this is a thesis about feminist resistance to gendered violence. The following pages explore this theme in a way that seeks to expose the complicated ways in which women understand their violent surroundings and how they choose to act and react despite and against them. Despite an increased focus on the relationships between women and conflict within the literature, including in Latin American contexts, there is a gap when it comes to understanding *feminist* mobilisation, particularly in high-risk contexts. Women experience their violent surroundings in a manner shaped by gendered power

dynamics, and this thesis therefore aims to showcase the various forms of agency that women have, adopt, manipulate, create, modify, and employ in their daily lives.

The following chapters take a new look at ideas of high-risk collective action in order to shed light on the reasoning behind engaging in social movements that assume a high level of personal and group risk. Earlier studies have shown that severe repression may actually stimulate collective action, instead of causing demobilisation (Loveman, 1998). This thesis goes beyond this notion, to posit that conditions of high risk lead to the creation of a feminist identity that catalyses mobilisation. The literature gap emerges, then, when it comes to linking analyses of feminism and mobilisation in situations of violence.

Indeed, this identity is strengthened through participation in mobilisation; recursive repertoires entrench a feminist identity for a feminist mobilisation. That women's behaviour transgresses traditional gender boundaries (particularly in *machista* Latin America) makes it feminist. Such transgression augments the existing risks of mobilising in the first place, as opposing actors seek to repress women's transformational aspirations. Furthermore, the pursuit of gender justice puts a target on organisation members' heads, as their strategies that denounce perpetrators of violence create a challenge to the status quo of violence.

This thesis examines three cases of communities of women who have been displaced by Colombia's conflict. Spaces traditionally considered safe, now no longer safe because of historical and ongoing patterns of violence, continue to be dangerous. In the case of displacement, the domestic sphere is essentially obliterated as women and their families are pushed out of their communities, into the streets (Meertens & Stoller, 2001). With the

insecurity of displacement comes further violence, what Oslender refers to as "geographies of terror" (2008). Feminist mobilisation becomes the solution to protecting women from ongoing violences and for recreating spaces for women's agency.

This thesis employs and refines the High Risk Feminism framework (Zulver, 2016). The framework identifies the gendered dimensions of a violent environment and explains women's resulting mobilisation. It gives us a way to shape our understanding of the strategies women employ to recreate community and safety in their new homes. It is important to note that HRF does not only pertain to displaced people (see ibid., about El Salvador). The present case studies, however, offer new perspectives when it comes to examining women's mobilisation in high risk conditions.

B. The Research Question

The questions that this thesis will answer are:

Why and how do women mobilise in contexts of high violence and insecurity?

In my MPhil project, I developed an original framework that uses a gendered lens to explain mobilisation as a rational reaction to a perceived context of high risk in El Salvador. High-Risk Feminism (HRF) will be outlined and applied in the coming chapters. This thesis is both descriptive and explanatory – the empirical data will help

suggest causal mechanisms[1], as is the trend in the social sciences right now (Pearce, 2012).

The present thesis applies HRF to three cases of women's mobilisation in Colombia, a country engaged in a transition towards peace but that still represents a high-risk space for women. It will compare two cases of HRF mobilisation (in El Pozón/Turbaco and Bogotá). It will further examine a negative case in Riohacha – where HRF mobilisation does *not* take place. Indeed, that the neighbourhood in Riohacha experiences similar levels of violence and is home to women with similar profiles as the positive cases makes it illustrative in terms of illuminating what is missing in terms of overcoming barriers to mobilisation.

Mobilisation in contexts of high violence exposes participants to the risks of further violence; leaving the relative shelter of the private domain and going into patriarchal, *machista,* public domains with an accepted culture of violence against women opens participants to new vulnerabilities (see Thomas, 2017). In the Colombian case, women are literally forced out of the domestic sphere during acts of displacement.

Moreover, *feminist* mobilisation in contexts of high violence (i.e., mobilisation not imbibed with social protections resulting from traditional understandings of gender roles[2]) peels away yet another layer of safety and security for participants, as this can be seen as transgressing social norms. At the same time, however, feminist mobilisation

[1] Indeed, while the thesis aims to uncover the dynamics of why women mobilise in risky situations, the research design and case selection do not allow me to make explicitly causal claims.
[2] See (Elshtain, 1996; Navarro, 1989).

sometimes becomes a form of *resistance* against violence.

As I note in a previous article: "resistance in the case of the [League of Displaced Women] is the act of rejecting the marginality caused by displacement and the resulting manifold forms of violence" (Zulver, 2017). While some scholars advocate for the need for a gendered lens when approaching puzzles that deal with women mobilising in violent contexts (Hume, 2009; Moser, 2001; Moser & Clark, 2001), they do not necessarily present us with alternative frameworks for understanding mobilisation, thus creating the gap this thesis will fill. Examining the dynamics that exist between the way men and women experience daily life poses challenges to the current ways in which we understand violence, and moreover, to our responses to this violence (Moser, 2001, 25). As such, my use of social movement theory to explain mobilisation is firmly grounded in a feminist understanding of the many gendered power dynamics that exist in conditions of high violence.

C. The Framework: High Risk Feminism

I developed High-Risk Feminism as a way to describe to why women in El Salvador have continued their mobilisation through the years, facing different violent obstacles. For the purposes of this thesis, "high risk" manifests itself as gendered violence against women, in both the public and private spheres.[3] A comprehensive definition of the concept is presented in the following chapter. The word "violence" can encompass an enormous

[3] More on the binary divisions between "public domain" vs. "private domain" will be discussed presently. See (Hume, 2009).

number of social experiences, be they physical, psychological, economic, or social (see Moser, 2001).

Building on existing literature (see Chapter 2), the thesis articulates the idea that Colombia, despite its recent peace process, is still in a state where pervasive violence and risk are experienced in differential ways by marginalised groups such as displaced women. How such groups respond, resist, and actively construct a space protected from pernicious forms of gender violence is the topic of the thesis. It is argued that the way in which women leverage their identity, draw on social ties, and pursue strategic collective action as feminists in order to resist violence and construct peace has to be understood.

While there exists research that speaks to the ways that women can actively participate in forging peace in their daily environments, feminism as a mobilisational strategy is not wideley theorised within the literature on women and conflict/post-conflict. Moosa et al. (2013) acknowledge that women have a unique ability to build peace at local levels. Violence against women, then, poses a signficiant barrier to peace-building. In an article on gender, conflict, and peace-building, Arostegui notes that in the aftermath of conflict, women often become activists, and use these experiences to "reshape societies, rewrite the rules, and advance women's rights" (2013, 535). She further proposes the idea that "the trauma of the conflict experience also provides an opportunity for women to come together with a common agenda" (ibid.).

Recently authors have begun to pay attention to women's mobilisation around violence against women. Speaking about the role of feminism in mobilising for peace Cockburn (2013, 445) notes:

> Feminist activism for peace … proposes a transformation of gender relations. Unless purposeful steps are taken to interrupt and change the social shaping of genders, the gender regime that emerges from war is likely in the short run to disturb the peace with continuing violence, and in the long run to maintain militarism and war-readiness.

Despite this important strand of the literature, this thesis argues that a gap exists in the understanding of how women in post-conflict – but continuing high risk – settings choose to come together in organisations to protect themsleves. Moreover, the groups studied in this thesis formed at the height of the conflict, using a gender justice project to shape their collective action.

In a previous article, I note that in a context of high violence and in the absence of effective state measures for protection, women in El Salvador employ feminist mobilisation as a base by which to generate social ties that provide them with "strength in numbers" that make them their own protagonists (Zulver, 2016). I explain that women who live in locations of high risk "[create] oportunties and avenues for mobilisation in defence of their own safety and well-being" (ibid., 172), using a generalised collective, *feminist* identity. This thesis builds on the High-Risk Feminism framework by applying it to the cases of three groups of women in Colombia. The component parts of the framework itself, as well as their operationalisation, will be discussed at length in Chapter 2.

To provide a brief introduction, however, HRF is based on the idea that whether danger comes in the form of physical threats, murder, torture, disappearance, displacement, targeting activists, or revictimisation, women who may not otherwise have engaged with feminism draw on repertoires and modify them according to the specific situation. These repertoires include: (1) collective identity building, (2) construction of social capital, (3)

legal framing techniques, and (4) certification practices, all of which will be outlined in the theory chapter. In order to operationalise this set of mechanisms, I draw on McAdam et al.'s book, *Dynamics of Contention* (2001), and further incorporate empirical data gathered during fieldwork.

In order to get to the point where women overcome barriers to mobilisation (such as fear of violent reprisals), however, they need a specific type of leader to frame why engaging in collective action is justifiable. A charismatic leader has the ability to frame the material and non-material benefits of mobilisation to potential participants. When everyone occupies the same domain of losses and inaction does not necessarily offer protection, displaced women can be convinced that there is value in joining a collective that allows them agency in an otherwise dire situation. These dynamics will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

The second-wave feminist notion that the personal is political captures the concept that relationships usually conceived of as personal are in fact shaped by larger power relations in society, and that experiences and frustrations previously understood as individual are in fact shared by other women. This thesis will articulate an understanding of a highly violent context that has unique and gendered dimensions that impact women in a manner differently from men. The use of the term "gendered lens" implies that this thesis is being written from a point of view that appreciates the need for critical reflection on socially constructed power relations when analysing women's mobilisation. This thesis does not, however, take a uniquely second-wave view, as will become apparent presently.[4] Rather,

[4] Indeed, some feminist scholars suggest reconceptualising the wave narrative as an "affective temporality", focusing on both feeling and historically specific form of activism. See (Chamberlain,

an intersectional understanding of the influence of gender, race, culture, and class will also be examined.

In terms of theorising HRF, this thesis looks to Jasper, who notes that social movement theorists are moving away from grand theories, and rather seek to bridge the gaps between materialism and structuralism. He predicts that the future of social movement theory will be based in approaches that offer a cultural and emotional theory of action (2010, 965). He highlights that "serious efforts to grapple with agency must remain close to agents' *lived experience*", and that we "must add emotions and moral visions to the cognitive apparatus that all frameworks have tried to adopt" (2010, 973). This thesis uses methods that aim to give this "meaning" to an understanding of women's mobilisation in high-risk contexts, therefore contributing to social movement theory.

D. Research Design

1. Case Selection: Qualitative Comparative Methods

This thesis will use three case studies to illustrate the dynamics of how and why women mobilise in high risk contexts. Moses and Knutsen highlight that comparative case studies allow the analyst to "trace out the proposed causal mechanisms in their natural contexts" (2012, 96). In Ragin's seminal work, *The Comparative Method*, he discusses the "use comparative methods[5] to conduct "parallel demonstrations of theory" or to analyse causal

2016).

[5] For the sake of clarity, I turn to Moses & Knutsen (2012), who tell us: "one of the most confusing aspects of the comparative method is the many names given to it," all of which have their base in MMA.

mechanism of comparable cases" (1987, 34). He comments on Mill's Method of Agreement (MMA) (1843), an approach widely used by sociologists to determine the shared causal mechanisms that lead to a shared outcome.

MMA is a "search for patterns of invariance," in which the investigator attempts to "determine which of the possible causal variables is constant across all cases" (Ragin, 1987, 37). Similarly, MMA's younger cousin[6], Most Different Systems Analysis (MDSA) (Przeworski & Teune, 1970), is an approach in which "the researcher tries to identify cases where just one independent variable...as well as the dependent variable... co-vary, while all other plausible factors...show different values" (Gerring, 2007, 139).

Although MMA and MDSA can be criticised for having too many variables that apply to too few cases (a criticism directed at small-N studies in general), and of selecting cases in a non-random way ("unabashedly [selecting]…on the dependent variable" (Moses & Knutsen, 2012, 96)), they have the benefit of "drawing attention to similar or identical processes in a wide variety of cases… expand or limit the scope conditions of established research findings" (McAdam et al., 2001, in Tarrow, 2010, 234). They are therefore theory-generating in nature; if objects A and B are different, but both experience outcome Y, "what causally relevant similarities between A and B explain this common outcome?" (Ragin, 1987, 45).

[6] "Przeworski and Teune advocate the use of what they call the "most similar" design and the "most different" design. These designs are variations on Mill's methods. The first is a version of Mill's Method of Agreement, and the second is a weak version of Mill's Direct Method of Difference" (Sekhon, 2004, 282).

Methodologically speaking, the use of Mill's Indirect Method of Difference (IMD) has the potential to make this study stronger. This method is considered the most reliable comparative method, as it avoids MMA's problems of revealing over-determined relationships (Moses & Knutsen, 2012, 105). In its essence, IMD relies on a double application of MMA; it extends the cases being analysed to include "negative cases", resulting in a juxtaposition that can begin to suggest causality in a more certain way. This was the methodological approach famously adopted by Theda Skocpol in *States and Social Revolutions* (1979), and Barrington Moore in *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1966).

In Skocpol's book (1979) she makes the case for combining Mill's two comparative logics by "using at once several positive cases with suitable negative cases as contrast" (i.e., Mill's IMD) (ibid., 37). In order to explain social revolutions in France, Russia, and China, then, she draws from cases where social revolutions did not occur in England, Japan, and Germany, despite seemingly comparable social and political contexts. Such a methodological approach provides the "valuable check, or anchor" for theoretical speculation (ibid., 39).

While this opens Skocpol to criticisms of choosing on the depending variable (Geddes, 1990), many authors have argued that when interested in the cause of effects (i.e. specific outcomes) instead of the effects of causes (i.e. average effects), this is unavoidable and even recommendable for much of qualitative research (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). For example, Tarrow attempts to dig us out of the "pitfalls "of comparative studies (insufficient degrees of freedom, non-representativeness, atheoretical case selection, and ignoring scope conditions (2010, 246-248)) by noting that "the function of case studies

is not always to represent larger universes: they may be "crucial cases" to demonstrate a theory, or they may be deliberately chosen because they are outliers" (ibid., 249).

This thesis uses qualitative comparative methods to examine three case studies. The positive cases share a common dependent variable (DV), while the negative case lacks it: women's mobilisation in high-risk contexts. The reason for this is that it does not make sense to look at any negative case to compare and contrast with positive cases. There is little to learn from cases where the outcome we are interested in could not have occurred to begin with. Indeed, Goertz notes that explaining outcomes is the point of in-depth case studies that use process tracing (2008). Goertz and Mahoney suggest that selecting on the dependent variable is not necessarily appropriate for drawing large scale conclusions or generalisations, but does have the advantage of allowing the researcher to select cases where one is most likely to see the causal mechanism to be explained in action (2012).

Furthermore, in order to effectively analyse the cause of effects, Mahoney and Goertz offer us the "Possibility Principle" (2004, 653). This idea holds that only "cases where the outcome of interest is *possible* should be included in the set of negative cases; cases where the outcome is *impossible* should be relegated to a set of uninformative and hence irrelevant observations" (ibid.). The Possibility Principle states that, "negative cases should be those where the outcome has a real possibility of occurring – not just those where the outcome has a nonzero probability" (ibid., 654). This means to say: "[t]racing a non-existent mechanism in a case where we *a priori* knew it was not present tells us nothing about how the mechanism works in cases where it is present" (Beach & Pedersen, 2016, 4).

The question arises, then, how does one select a relevant negative case from among a universe of high-risk cases where women do *not* mobilise as feminists. Using varying language, scholars suggest that the negative cases be as similar as possible to the positive cases, barring their value on the dependent variable (Przeworski & Teune, 1970; Skocpol & Somers, 1980). That is, to choose a relevant negative case, that case must fit within the scope conditions ("parameters within which a given theory is expected to be valid")(Mahoney & Goertz, 2004, 660).

In selecting case studies for the present thesis, I chose two organisations (*La Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas* and AFROMUPAZ) whose members have suffered multiple types of violence, including displacement, and who continue to live and work in violent contexts. To ensure comparability, both groups possess similar qualities, including size, socio-economic status, ethnic make-up, experiences of displacement, experiences of sexual/physical violence, and time since establishment. In keeping with Mills' Indirect Method of Difference (IMD), and by selecting within the parameters of the Possibility Principle), I also chose a case whereby a group of displaced women (in Riohacha, La Guajira) possess a similar set of characteristics (when it comes to the violent social context, experiences with displacement ongoing violence, and profiles of potential participants), but have *not* formed any type of organisation, nor engage in collective action.

The units of analysis for this study will be the women's groups themselves. These groups are formed of individuals whose collective discourse will be seen as representative of the opinions and beliefs of the organisation as a whole. Naturally, there are power dynamics *within* the group. Empirical evidence was collected from all ranks within the

organisations and has been collated and triangulated in order to present a comprehensive narrative.

2. Research Methods

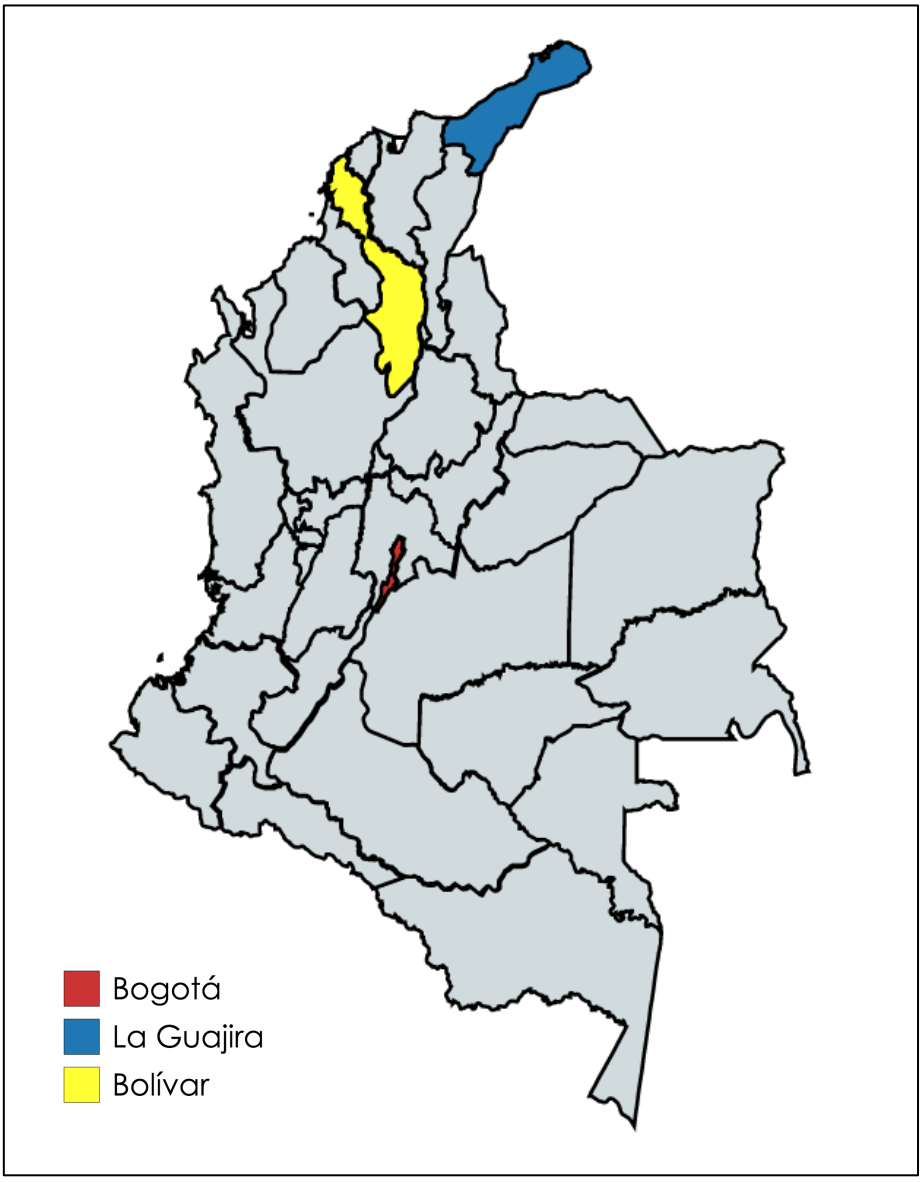


Figure 1.1 Map of Fieldwork Sites in Colombia

When it comes to the type of research undertaken in the coming chapters, it is important to highlight that:

> The goal of those who advocate for feminist research is to make women's experiences visible, render them important, and use them to correct distortions from previous empirical research and theoretical assumptions that fail to recognise the centrality of gender to social life (Taylor, 1998, 360).

Accordingly, the research methods employed in this thesis were selected based on their ability to shed light on experiences, voices, and opinions that are not always included – or at least included effectively and constructively – in mainstream analyses of high risk settings. Indeed, while investigator neutrality is important in qualitative projects, it would be disingenuous not to admit that the project design was done in such a way to facilitate the "challenging of gender inequality and empowering [of] women" (ibid., 358).

Data for this current project were gathered over a period of 18 months in three different regions of Colombia: Turbaco (Bolívar), Usme (Bogotá), and Riohacha (La Guajira). The fieldwork took the form of interviews, participant observation, archival work, qualitative data analysis, and process tracing. I then used triangulation to gain a hermeneutic understanding (that is, an understanding that considers written, spoken, and non-spoken data holistically) of the situation of women's mobilisation in Colombia.

I engaged in field research in Bolívar from July to November 2017, Bogotá from February to October 2017, and Riohacha in May and June 2017 and again in January and February 2018. In these locations I carried out 23 individual and 12 group interviews (Bolívar), 21 individual and 7 group interviews (Bogotá), and 19 individual and 7 group interviews (Riohacha).

This process of using different methods and sources to gather and validate evidence is cited as "one of the central ways of validating qualitative research" (Richie, 2003, 43). In her work on *Negotiating the Muddiness of Grassroots Field Research*, Viterna notes that triangulation can sometimes be difficult when a lack of formal or informal documentation exists (especially, for example, when factions of the organisation are illiterate or only basically educated). She suggests that in these situations, comparing interview data with statements of past behaviours, comparing past with present actions, and conducting interviews with associated actors (about the interviewees themselves) can be a way to "check" statements (2009, 293).

All research was cleared by the University of Oxford's Central University Research Ethics Council (CUREC). Participants were given an informed consent form to sign. I explained this orally (in case of illiteracy or partial literacy), and also allowed them to read the document. The document outlined the aims of the project and explained how their data would be used.

Sections of Chapter 4 have been published in *Gender, Place and Culture* (Zulver, 2017) and section of Chapter 5 have been accepted for publication in a special issue of *Latin American Perspectives* (Zulver, forthcoming-b).

a. Purposeful Sampling: Interviews

Interviews are "by their very nature, social encounters where speakers collaborate in producing retrospective (and prospective) accounts of their past (or future) actions, experiences, feelings, or thoughts" (Rapley, 2004). As such, I have selected this method

to gather data about "contemporary ways of understanding, experiencing, and talking about the specific interview topic" (ibid.).

One of the main objectives of undertaking research in Colombia was to conduct interviews with key players in women's organisations. Interviews were held with leaders and rank-and-file members of women's organisations, as well as functionaries at various state institutions, including the Victim's Unit and Ombudsman's Office. Initial contact was made with individuals from each organisation; the specificities of each case will be discussed in the corresponding chapter. Once initial contact was made, however, subsequent interviews were facilitated by the interviewees themselves. As such, the project's methods followed Rapley's general guidelines for recruitment: finding a knowledgeable informant, getting a range of views, testing emerging themes with new interviewees, and choosing new interviewees to extend results. Given that all interviewees were selected based on their current or former participation in women's organisations or their institutional positions (which I attempted to verify through other sources), this technique is constitutive of purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990).

When it comes to a study on violence, Robben reminds us, we need to ask:

> What is the influence of the violence to which the informants have been exposed on their relationships with ethnographers, and what methodological adjustments should researchers make in these emotionally charged encounters? (1996, 71).

In terms of my fieldwork, I aim to avoid the quagmire of overly-personalised accounts of action by employing alternate methods as well (see below). For situations in which individuals felt uncomfortable discussing their stories with me, I suggested that a friend be present in the interview. I also took note of individuals' responses in group

settings/meetings, that is, in situations where they may have felt more comfortable sharing their experiences.

Furthermore, I apply a gendered lens to the methodological techniques I employed during fieldwork. Huggins and Glebbeek's book *Women Fielding Danger* looks at the methods undertaken by various female academics in dangerous settings. They note, "whether studying women or men, and whether a researcher defines herself as a feminist or not, being a woman profoundly shaped the researchers' interactions with interviewees and associated actors" (2009, 5). Extrapolating from my experiences conducting research, I can provide a twofold answer to the question as to how I guaranteed access to data during my project.

Firstly, as a young, foreign woman operating alone, I did not represent a threat of violence to women's groups, and therefore gained unique access to women's group members. As I have no obvious ties to the government or dangerous groups (gangs, paramilitaries, etc.), I am not seen as a threat to women's safety, and thus am seen as someone that women (usually) feel comfortable talking to about their experiences.

Second, as an outsider, participants see that I have the potential to amplify their voices above and beyond their local contexts. During interviews in the City of Women in Colombia, women even seemed keen to talk to me, as they knew that my research was going to be one of the first about the City published in English, and they wanted to have a voice in international coverage of their movement. In an email correspondence, Patricia Guerrero said: "We are very thankful for the international resonance that you have created about the Liga" (2015).

This guarantee of information, however, comes with a caveat; I need to be careful not to fall prey to what Robben calls "ethnographic seduction", whereby:

> Seduction empowers the interviewee in relation to the ethnographer. Ethnographic seduction is the combination of a deliberate manoeuvring of the dialogic alliance by the interviewee and the unconscious countertransferential reaction by the interviewer. The adjective "ethnographic" refers to the intention of people to achieve the most favourable description of themselves and their social group within the expressed context of their culture and society. The ethnographer is not a passive subject in this manipulation (Robben, 1996, 84).

This is far from an easy feat (to avoid this seduction), especially when it comes to taking a neutral stance in the post-fieldwork analysis of information. *Fielding Danger* discusses the way that ethnographic research does not usually allow "neutrals." That is, "whether or not you take sides, those actively involved in the situation are going to define whose side they think you're on. They will act toward you on the basis of this definition, regardless of your professions of neutrality" (Sluka, 1995, 287, quoted in Huggins & Glebbeek, 2009, 22). As a woman coming to study violence against women, it is often automatically assumed that I am sympathetic to the organisations' strategies. In the past, interviewees have sometimes framed their accounts within the assumption that I am an ally to their movement.[7] There is often an assumption – particularly from movement leaders – of specific terms or events that *should* be known to me because I am a feminist[8], thus making conversations nuanced based on a shared background of the women's movement regionally and internationally.

The very nature of my questions often assumes that with violent contexts come unequal gendered power dynamics. As part of being assumed to be an ally to the movement, I

[7] For more on feminist activism and its relationship to research, see Shayne and Randalls's edited volume, *Taking Risks* (2015).

[8] For example, interviewees often reference conventions like Belem do Para, in the assumed knowledge that I am aware that this refers to the OAS's Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women, and also am aware of the significance that this convention has legally.

often feel that bonds of friendship begin to develop between me and members of the organisations. Robben goes so far as to tell us: "ethnographers can *only* conduct proper research when they succeed in establishing and maintaining genuine social relationships with people" (emphasis added, 1996, 82). This is something I want to declare from the beginning: I do not presume a perfectly neutral subjectivity in my research.

All of this has been to say that as a Western, foreign feminist, I do not enter fieldwork contexts neutrally. While I try to mitigate any biases, there are some unavoidable roles and identities put upon me by research subjects, and these will necessarily be reflected in the data I collect. With these considerations in mind, I need to remember to recognise power dynamics during research. As Viterna reminds us:

> It is not always possible to eliminate power differentials between researcher and researched, although these can be lessened, albeit often within the boundaries of an existing system of patriarchy. Power is dynamic and negotiable; it is most effective and honest to openly acknowledge power differentials (2009, 293).

This section has served to show the ways in which research on violence – and violence against women – is not neutral. Especially in conflict zones, where there is a need to ensure my own safety by ensuring that the spaces in which I conduct research guarantee (to the best of my ability) both my own safety as well as that of interviewees, the lines between professional neutrality and taking pragmatic measures (like making friends in the community) can become blurred. Viterna notes that it can be difficult to balance "personal safety and well-being with effective and equitable research relationships" (2009, 271). In this project, I attempt to engage in value-free research as much as possible. Sometimes, however, there is a need to use intuition to build "emotional trust" rooted in personal relationships, for as Idler says when talking about research on the Colombian-

Venezuelan border, "in 'normal' circumstances, intuiting wrongly may lead to a lost opportunity; in conflict zones and other violent contexts, this may cost one's life" (2015).

Interviews lasted between fifteen minutes and three hours. These interviews involved asking a set of open-ended base questions, and then allowing interviewees to have an opportunity to follow up with any other information they wanted to tell me. Interviews were intentionally held in informal locations that were supposed to serve as (somewhat) "safe spaces" where women felt comfortable. For the most part, this involved sitting on the front porches or living rooms of women's houses, or in the organisations' meeting rooms.

In terms of the safety of interviewees[9], I have used pseudonyms in this thesis. While I have, in previous research, used people's names and photos if they gave me permission, I have decided to adopt a policy of anonymity for the present project, given the high-risk contexts in which participants live. All names will be modified, even retroactively (that is, in work I have already published using real names). The only exceptions are leaders María Eugenia Urrutia (AFROMUPAZ) and Patricia Guerrero (LMD) as their names are widely published in various academic and non-academic literature, and I wish to avoid confusion.

b. Participant Observation – Ethnographic Hanging Out

Part of the fieldwork process also involved participant observation techniques. Such

[9] For more about informant vulnerability, see (Huggins & Glebbeek, 2009, 4).

techniques involve "[taking] on a role in the social situation under observation" in order to observe the group in its "natural setting" (Pearson, 2005). An example of participant observation includes being present at conferences or meetings with institutional personnel.

My fieldwork also involves a lot of "hanging out." Indeed, as Murdock notes, "seeking intimacy and friendship is an essential component of good fieldwork" (2008, 13). In doing so, I am able to participate in and observe social acts that allow me to capture the nature of social reality more holistically. The research is thus partially ethnographic, in that it requires integrating myself within a community, making friendships, and helping out (for example, with childcare or cooking). This is consistent with what I call "ethnographic hanging out", the purpose of which is (a) showing my worth and usefulness to the community; (b) creating friendships with people, thus facilitating access to more information about their feelings and thoughts; (c) getting an insider insight into the dynamics of the group.

Given that women in organisations are often wives and mothers, they have household chores which cultural gender norms dictate are mandatory. This double burden of being a worker and a homemaker colours and organises daily life. Interviews in Colombia rarely happened without punctuations of a crying child or a barking dog, and once, as a woman washed her hair before going to work. In his article about the violence of ethnography in Nicaragua, Rodgers describes the way he idled in a gang controlled neighbourhood, smoking cigarettes, and eventually gaining the respect of the gang members due to this "hanging out" (449, 2007). My own work requires a similar practice; women do not often have two hours to sit down and dedicate themselves to interviews.

Instead, interviews – conversations – happen on the bus, in the kitchen, or setting up for work.

Some ethnographers refer to their work as "deep hanging out" (Geertz, 2001, discussed in Wogan, 2004). What "looks like loitering to the untrained eye is actually work" (MacQueen, 2011). For Geertz, this type of field work is "localised, long-term, close-in, [and] vernacular" (2001). This thesis is not purely an ethnographic study. It is in part, however, an attempt to understand the meanings behind the actions. As Auyero presents in *Patients of the State*, people in shanty towns are always waiting for something (2014). It is in the "routine and mundane interactions" of waiting that a sociologist can draw insights about the relationships between the poor and the state (ibid., 8-9). My fieldwork often involved being bored with my interviewees – sitting for hours in a back patio, or waiting for a meeting to begin, or waiting for a phone call from a government official. These experiences constitute ethnographic hanging out and were a rich source of contextualising information for this thesis, including a better understanding of group dynamics. Spending mundane time in the communities allowed me to build rapport and confidence with group members, to the extent that my presence in other organisational activities was not viewed as in any way threatening.

Porter (2016, 35) tell us:

> Everyday stories inform knowledge of post-conflict societies. They describe the personal effects of violence, suffering, and loss. The stories men and women tell about dealing with their trauma highlights the human effects of dealing with the past and explain differentiated requirements that are needed for gender-just outcomes in transitional justice processes.

She further promotes a "defence of paying attention to everyday lived experiences, so that when the stories situated within life narratives are told and listened to, the

particularised needs of women, men, girls, and boys become evident" (ibid). Ethnographic hanging out affords the researcher access to these everyday stories.

c. Archival Work and Qualitative Data Analysis

The project will further entrench the triangulation process by backing up data gathered in interviews and from participant observation with pre-existing data. The organisations I work with have websites or publications exploring their histories, timelines of important events, current activities, and multimedia additional resources. These data will provide information to fill in the gaps in interview and observation data. I was also given access to the *Plan Integral de Reparación Colectiva* (PIRC, Comprehensive Plan for Collective Reparation) for both the Liga and AFROMUPAZ. These documents outline the organisations' demands for government reparations, based on a damage audit which assesses everything that was collectively lost during the conflict.

During fieldwork, I interviewed non-members of organisations, including members of different levels of government, legal institutions, and international agencies, among others, to gain a wider view of the context in which women are mobilising. I also read online reports and documents produced by these entities.

d. Process Tracing

As with my previous thesis, I consistently used process tracing techniques during the writing phase of my work. According to Collier, this is a "fundamental tool of qualitative analysis [and] is defined as the systematic examination of diagnostic evidence selected

and analysed in light of research questions and hypotheses posed by the investigator" (2011, 823). Part of his approach to process tracing is based on description, and the idea of analysing "trajectories of change" and causation. In all, this method highlights that in order to explain change over time, one must be able to descriptively explain singular moments in time.

Bennett adds that process tracing is concerned with the "sequences and mechanisms in the unfolding of hypothesised causal processes" (2010, 180). The researcher is like a detective piecing together clues, or a doctor making a diagnosis based on a history and medical tests (ibid.). By taking "snapshots" at various points in time can explain change and transformation, instead of trying to explain the change itself. That is, "to characterise a process, we must be able to characterise key steps in the process, which in turn permits good analysis of change and sequence" (Collier, 2011, 824). Instead of treating the ultimate outcome as the dependent variable, new dependent variables are created (Keohane, King, & Verba, 1994, 226). These new dependent variables could be, for example, each decision in a sequence, or each set of measurable perceptions by decision-makers of others' actions and intentions (ibid.). Process tracing, then, involves searching for evidence at the "snapshot" level that is consistent with the overall causal theory.

For the purposes of this thesis, the method itself involved reading into interviewees' explanations for their actions. Given my access to previous research undertaken at key moments in the histories of the women's movements in Colombia, as well as my own research which creates a snapshot of mobilisation in 2016-2018, I use process tracing as a way to attempt to explain the changes and adaptations that have taken place in the intervening years.

C. Chapter Outline

The rest of the thesis will proceed as follows. The next chapter will provide an overview of the existing literature about both high risk collective action and women's social movement, including those that exist during moments of conflict or violence. Through a review of the literature, it will again reinforce the need for a framework that can describe and explain women's feminist mobilisation in high-risk settings – that is, mobilisation that might not take place if it were not for this context. The second part of the chapter outlines the theoretical underpinnings of High-Risk Feminism (HRF). It conceptually defines "high-risk," in order to proceed with an understanding of what this term mean in the context of the HRF framework. It then looks at the dynamics of the charismatic bond in order to explain how a charismatic leader can convince potential participants to overcome barriers to mobilisation (fear of violence) by highlighting the material and non-material benefits of doing so within a domain of losses. The rest of the chapter will look at the four pillars or strategies of the framework: collective identity, social capital, framing, and certification.

After outlining the theoretical explanations for how and why women mobilise in high risk contexts, the third chapter will look at the specificities of the Colombian case. It will describe dynamics of violence over time (to the present day) and will provide an overview of the leading narratives about the role of women in these contexts. As such, it further highlights the need for a framework that accounts for women's gendered agency in situations of risk.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters apply HRF to women's mobilisation to the thesis' case studies (Turbaco, Usme, and Riohacha). All chapters will give detailed case backgrounds and engage with past literature in order to outline how different authors have understood mobilisation over time. More centrally, however, the chapters will engage with the HRF framework. Using data gathered from fieldwork, the main emphasis will be to place women's mobilisation within the HRF framework. I will examine each of the mechanisms in turn. I will also use each chapter to further refine the explanation for *why* women engage in HRF mobilisation. The sixth chapter (about Riohacha) is a negative case, which will provide "inferential leverage" about the casual mechanisms of HRF as a strategy of feminist resistance (Collier, Mahoney, & Seawright, 2010).

The conclusion will offer final reflections about the utility of HRF to social movement theory more broadly. It will then make overall comments on both *why* and *how* do women mobilise in contexts of high risk. It will provide a summary of findings, and an overview of the thesis' contribution to theory. Finally, it will postulate on potential comparative cases that could further nuance and circumscribe the utility of HRF.

Chapter II: Theory

A. What is the Puzzle?

When the risks of mobilising could be death or grievous bodily harm, why do some women choose to engage in grassroots mobilisation anyway? As outlined in the previous chapter, the questions this thesis answers are *why* and *how* do women mobilise in high risk contexts. While we might expect women to protect themselves from further exposure to violence (that is, *not mobilise*), against the odds, we see groups of women organising in the streets of marginalised, dangerous neighbourhoods to defend themselves. In this way, we see that some women are mobilising *because of* the violence they face; rather than violence presenting an obstacle or disincentive to mobilise, it in fact gives rise to a specific kind of gendered resistance, in which women make gendered calculations about particularly gendered risks.

This work is not novel in terms of trying to explain high risk mobilisation; there is a long academic tradition of investigating this very question, to varying degrees of success (see for example Loveman, 1998; McAdam, 1982, 1986, 1988). What is novel about this thesis, however, is its application of feminism as a strategy of resistance in the face of high risk. Moreover, it combines the use of two existing theories to explain how women move from inaction to action; the combination of the charismatic bond (whereby a charismatic leader creates a specific bond with potential participants) and Prospect Theory (whereby taking on a level of risk is framed as justifiable within a domain of losses) allow us to see this shift in participants' behaviour.

To begin, the following section will examine two streams of thought that emerge in the literature: (1) that collective action may in fact be stimulated by repression, and (2) that women might mobilise for others in high risk conditions but stay silent when it comes to protecting themselves. In doing so, it becomes apparent that there is a gap when it comes to understanding *women's feminist* mobilisation under specific contexts of high risk. From there, I will grapple with the two elements of the research question separately. In asking *why* women mobilise, it becomes clear that a charismatic leader is able, within a domain of losses (i.e. where non-participation does not guarantee safety), to highlight the material and non-material benefits of participation. Then, in examining *how* women mobilise, we see a four-part strategy that includes collective identity building, social capital forming, legal framing, and engaging in acts of certification, that in concert combine to form High Risk Feminism, a mobilisation strategy consistent with a gender justice project.

1. Existing Literature

a. Repression Stifles Collective Action

According to classical social movement theorists, people would not choose to participate in social movements if there is risk involved in doing so (Olson, 1965). This is the common-sense explanation: people will not engage in activities that expose them to personal danger because this is irrational (Muller & Opp, 1986). In order for action to be justifiable, the participant would have to have the expectation of a positive and measureable outcome to outweigh the cost of action. Risking death or likely personal injury, therefore, defies the logic of collective action.

The empirical studies in this thesis clearly shows that this is not the case. I am not the first to try and explain why individuals mobilise in high risk situations. In *Freedom Summer*, McAdam investigates just this question. In an article that precedes the book, he definitively outlines, "certain instances of activism are clearly more costly and/or risky than others" (1986, 67). He concludes that those people engaging in high-risk action must "be relatively free of personal constraints that would make participation especially risky" (ibid., 71). This by itself is not a satisfying explanation; the implication here is that a person who engages in a rational choice-based calculation of costs and benefits and decides to mobilise anyway is not, in fact, as susceptible to the risks of participation as someone else.

Loveman's 1998 study on human rights defenders mobilising in the Southern Cone despite authoritarian repression further seeks to answer the question, noting that participants were *not* free of McAdam's personal constraints. She engages in a social movement theory literature view in her attempt to explain action. Initially, she rejects a purely rational choice explanation for participation, because "fear" as a psychosocial process is not formally theorised. Moreover,

> If risk or cost is calculated as a high probability of "death," while benefit is calculated at a minimal probability of "maintenance of honour" or "respect for human rights," how is this "ratio" to be assessed in the grammar of rational calculation in order to predict the outcome? If the likely result of action is death, rational choice models would predict inaction, unless they determine ex post facto, with reference to the individual's behaviour, that the first order preference is a certain "value" that requires such a sacrifice. This, of course, is tautological (1998, 481).

She then presents a host of potential explanations for high risk mobilisation, including new social movement theories, micromechanisms (including framing and identity), social network theory, resource mobilisation, and political opportunity structures. In all, she

highlights that there is utility in synthetic theory building rather than "pseudoparadigmatic intellectual warfare" (1998, 518).

One of Loveman's key points is that participants mobilise *in response to*, and not despite repression. This is in keeping with Calhoun's (1991) identity-based explanation that action is the result of commitment to an identity that involves participation. That is, he argues that there are non-material benefits (or goods) that lie in the conception of oneself (identity) that are generated from the performance of an action (and not necessarily even from the success of the action). Other social movement scholars further assert that identity has explanatory power, whereby moral, political, and social contradictions that emerge from repression catalyse action (Calhoun, 1991; Gould, 1995; Melucci, 1988; Viterna, 2013). Snow et al. further explain this phenomenon in terms of the interpretation of grievances, that is, the way that the repression and subsequent mobilisation is framed (1986).

Moving beyond purely identity-based explanations for mobilisation, Goodwin and Pfaff call for the development of what they call *emotional sociology.* For them, many of the key causal factors emphasised by social movement analysts "…derive much of their causal power from the strong emotions that they embody or evoke among actors" (2001, 283). When it comes to emotion and high risk social movements, then, there is value in assessing Hochschild's notion of "emotion management" (1983). Her key idea is that people "induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (ibid., 7). The ways in which people manage their emotional displays is shaped by norms about what is considered appropriate or legitimate.

Moreover, Goodwin and Pfaff point out that Tilly's repertoires of collective action, in fact, require a great deal of emotion management. For example, they state, "when protest is extremely risky or dangerous, fear may inhibit collective action (or certain forms of collective action), and so it must be suppressed or at least mitigated, not necessarily in purposive or self-conscious ways, if such action is to occur at all" (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001, 284). The important point here is that those who mobilise in a context of risk are not confused, irrational, or mistaken about the risks of their participation Rather, there are ways that people actively manage such emotions as fear.

For example, in an article that examines why Human Rights Defenders (HRD) in Russia mobilise despite considerable risk to personal safety in Russia, van der Vet and Lyytikäinen note that a participant's decision to become a high-risk activist involves more than a rational choice: "participation often involves a deep emotional engagement and, in dangerous environments, a management of fear despite the high costs" (2015). Emotions can be seen as a logical explanation for joining and maintaining membership in high-risk movements:

> For example, ongoing participation in "high-risk" movements typically requires the mitigation of participants' of violent reprisals against one's self or family, or of losing one's job. [(Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001)]… show that factors and processes that movement analysts have typically invoked for other explanatory purposes—including networks, mass gatherings, rituals, and new collective identities—also helped participants deal with their fears (sometimes as unanticipated consequences of these processes) and thereby helped sustain participation in these movements (Goodwin et al., 2001b).

Beyond individual-level factors, some scholars engage with social network theories in attempts to explain high risk mobilisation (della Porta, 1988; Gould, 1995; Loveman, 1998; McAdam, 1986, 1988; Wickham-Crowley, 1992). For example, they would assert that activists must have access to certain basic resources in order to start a mobilisation. These resources can be institutional links or personal links to, for example, churches,

political parties, unions, universities, and NGOs. These can offer resources like funding, information, and physical and symbolic space (Morris, 1984). Taking a resource mobilisation position, Loveman uses her case studies in the Southern Cone to highlight the need for access to external financial and material capital in order to sustain mobilisation in repressive conditions (1998, 484).

Alternatively, other scholars would advocate for a political opportunity structure (POS) argument. Without examining POS, simply having access to resources, existing social networks and socio-political space cannot sufficiently explain when social movement emerge (McAdam et al., 2001; Sidney Tarrow, 1998; Tilly, 1978). Rather, as Tarrow (1994) notes, the political opportunity is "external" to the potential actor in a social movement, meaning that even weak actors can take advantage of changing opportunities to mount their mobilisation. In this way, Loveman sees political repression and increased human rights violations as creating new political opportunities for previously un-mobilised actors; "excessive abuses by the state may *directly stimulate* the emergence of *certain types* of contentious collective action," meaning that as grievances skyrocket, people "mobilise *in response to*… severe repression" (1998, 485, original emphasis).

Works about El Salvador (Viterna, 2009; Wood, 2015) the Southern Cone (Loveman, 1998), West Germany (Opp & Roehl, 1990), Northern Ireland (O'Hearn, 2009), Jordan (Moss, 2014), Palestine (Alimi, 2009), Egypt (Rizzo, Price, & Meyer, 2012), the West Bank (Khawaja, 1993), and Liberia (Press, 2014) represent but a few of the articles dedicated to using case studies to explain mobilisation in high risk contexts. Most of these rely on some combination of identity-based, POS, and/or resource mobilisation explanations. The lines of thinking explored, however, are also not enough to explain

specifically women's mobilisation in high risk. I agree with Loveman's assertion that participants "mobilise *in response to*, not despite, severe repression" (1998, 485), however, I do not think that her article gives us a sufficient answer to the question of why *women mobilise as women* in the high risk conditions at hand.

As stated, this thesis is not the first to grapple with the question of why people choose to mobilise in high risk settings. The logical thinking about the relationship between repression and mobilisation is that it falls on a normal distribution curve (an inverted parabola). Indeed, Van Dyke suggests that repression might have a curvilinear effect on protest: "some arrests may anger activists and mobilise them for additional protest" (2003, 229). Severe levels of repression, however, may effectively "squelch" mobilisation. This argument is further articulated by other scholars, within an emphasis on the political opportunity structure model (Brockett, 1991; Eisinger, 1973; Khawaja, 1993; Opp, 2009). Without repression, people do not need to mobilise against it. As repression begins, people resist, until they assess that is too dangerous to continue. Then we would expect to see mobilisation trickle away. What this thesis proposes, however, is that the curve can be shifted to the right by a leader who can encourage people primed *not* to mobilise to engage in collective action.

Given the nature of qualitative research, and the small sample size of the study, I cannot put numbers to this phenomenon, but rather point to its existence. Indeed, I do not see that a lack of quantitative data detracts from the findings of this thesis. What is more important than quantifying mobilisation in a high risk context is understanding *why* and *how* it comes about, despite the obvious and grave dangers that this implies for participants.

b. When Women Mobilise

Before presenting my contribution to social movement theory, however, it is important to engage with the existing literature around women's mobilisation.[10] Indeed, this thesis is premised on the idea that a gendered lens is imperative to an understanding of the mobilisation we see in the upcoming case studies; the women in question had the opportunity to mobilise as part of mixed groups yet were only spurred into action by a women's group. Moreover, they could have mobilised around a whole host of other injustices they previously faced (poverty, lack of education, IPV, racism), but were only spurred into action in the context of high risk and the resulting ubiquity of gender violence (in its multiple forms). As such, further lacunae emerge when we look at existing explanations of specifically women's mobilisation, or lack thereof, in nominally risky situations.

In Latin America, the natural place to begin is with the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, the heroic image of mothers in politics (Jaquette, 1994). During the military dictatorship in Argentina (1976-1983), a cross-class group of mothers engaged in peaceful protest to find their children who had been disappeared by the state. They marched around the statue at the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, calling on the military junta to give them information about their children. They did so despite the great personal risk this implied: the dictatorship was notoriously violent against anyone who dared dissent. Moreover, they had personal knowledge of the violence they risked because of what had happened to their children.

[10] For a comprehensive analysis of women's movements and the dynamics of gender politics in developing countries, see (Molyneux, 1998).

Navarro (1989) explains that the women were able to engage in collective action against the repressive state because they created a new political opportunity by mobilising from their social location as mothers. That is, acting as mothers allowed the women to "achieve new identities and roles" (Jaquette, 1994, 225). Elshtain (1996), for example, theorises about the transformations that these mothers underwent *as a function of* their mobilisation. She says that in fact, it was their mobilisation – the act of coming together in the first place –that gave them the ability to manage their emotions and generate change through action. By talking about human rights, they were:

> Afforded … a framework within which to canalise their grief – to make it do political work. And those Mothers who seemed to me to be coping best were those who had been able to transcend somewhat the vortex of personal devastation and make common cause, through human rights efforts, with their fellow Argentines and human rights activists internationally (1996, 141).

More than just a "sorority bound by loss" (ibid., 131) the Mothers became a force to be reckoned with, by using their disobedience to transform their roles as mothers (supposedly powerless and weak) into a strategic strength that could confront a brutal dictatorship.

It is clear that the Mothers perceived themselves as less likely to face repression than fathers, for example, would. Despite this, it is important to highlight that they did not think they were safe; they were keenly aware of what the regime was capable of doing because of their losses (their children). They knew that they had a *certain* cultural legitimacy to mobilise as mothers looking for their children but also recognised that the regime would not necessarily avoid repressing them, as was evidenced by the disappearance of three of the founders and the French nuns.

Safa (1990) and Jelin (1987) both note the phenomenon of Latin American women organising in their roles as wives and mothers, but in a transformational way that actually seeks to challenge and transgress traditional ideas about women as secluded to the "private sphere" of the family. As women move their domestic concerns into a public space, they are able to "[redefine] the meaning associated with domesticity to include participation and struggle rather than obedience and passivity" (Safa, 1990, 362). Despite the fact that the original motive of the mobilisation may not have been to change traditional ideas about gender roles and/or subordination, Safa notes that participation in these movements has apparently "led to great self-esteem and recognition by women of their rights" (ibid., 363). Here, Safa is drawing on Molyneux's practical vs. strategic gender interest debate, whereby women who originally mobilise for a practical need (like housing, food, or childcare) gain consciousness about the broader arena of their subordination, and thus transform their protest into a broader quest for gender equality, thus pursuing what Molyneux calls "strategic gender interests" (1985). In all, Safa's article asserts that participation over the 1980s led to an irreversible change in gender roles.

Moving forward, Jaquette questions, even despite the shift from practical to strategic gender interests, whether women can be "citizens if they always act in the interest of *others*" (1994, 255). That is, the above shift may be geared more towards the greater goals of feminism, but not in a "feminist way." This may not be a bad thing, she notes, as in certain societies it might be rational to take advantage of the powerful rhetoric of "political motherhood" (ibid., 228).

Around the same time, scholars began to talk about popular feminism. This concept is somewhat broad. In outlining the history of the term, Maier notes:

> During the decade of the eighties, small groups of feminists, originally from the left of the political spectrum, formed the first associations dedicated to addressing the specific needs of women from the most vulnerable strata of urban society. Committed to social justice and convinced that the secret to a mass women's movement in Latin America lay in the intersection of gender and class, *popular feminists* saw the women of the neighborhood organizations through the lens of gender-consciousness solidarity and with prospects of growing the movement (2010: 35).

She continues:

> The methodologies used by popular feminists rested on the shared identification, systematization, analysis, and comprehension of women's personal experiences as the source of collective knowledge about the meaning of gender, which then served as the reference for the development of political agendas based on a gender-class perspective (ibid, 36).

Lebon further notes that the new millenium (and its critiques of entrenched neoliberal agendas) allowed a new set of popular feminisms (including black women's feminisms) that do not easily fit within professionalized feminist projects or feminist NGOs (see Murdock, 2008) to become more dynamic within the larger women's movement (2010: 12-13). Issues including reproductive and sexual rights also came to the fore within these organizations. Alvarez further notes that feminism in Latin America today has been "'sidestreamed'…spreading horizontally into a wide array of class and racial-ethnic communities and social and cultural spaces" (2009, 177). Groups of working class, Afro-descendant, indigenous, and/or lesbian women have

> translated and radically transformed some of [feminisms] core tenets and fashioned 'other feminisms' that are deeply entwined… with national and global struggles against all forms of inequality and for social, sexual, and racial justice" (ibid., 182).

Another line of thinking about women's organisations in violent contexts is based around

concepts of their inherent 'peacefulness'. For example, Restrepo's study on Colombian women explores the ways in which some victims overcome their victimhood, emerging as leaders in peacebuilding, despite the significant risks associated with the ongoing violence (2016). In fact, I agree wholeheartedly with her assessment that "against all odds, these unsung [women victim] leaders have proven to be powerful agents of change" (ibid., 1). Where I diverge, slightly, is in her framing of women leaders as "capable of healing, empowering, and even reconciling broader society" (ibid.). I hesitate to necessarily link women with peacebuilding, even if this is an outcome of the mobilisation.

Indeed, Aroussi presents a feminist critique of the stereotypical associations of women and peacefulness that are so often included in the literature, suggesting that these are mythical and linked to maternal ideologies and sociological and biological traits (2009). Her argument suggests that we tend to focus on women as nurturing peacebuilders (or mobilising on behalf of others), and that this does not allow the necessary space to understand where women's agency fits within this narrative. The HRF framework offers this space, allowing an analysis of the motivations with which women justify their mobilisation. These are not necessarily related to the wider landscape of healing society more broadly. It is important to see women's mobilisation as an act of resistance to protect themselves, and not necessarily in the interest of others. While Restrepo aims to change the narrative of women as needy, helpless victims by painting them as potential peacebuilders, my research shows that a further step can be taken; women can overcome victimhood and claim a feminist agency to resist the specific violences they face. This is a specifically feminist project, not necessarily predicated on the greater good of peacebuilding.

A final category of literature about when women mobilise focuses on women-as-revolutionaries (for examples in Latin America, see González & Kampwirth, 2001; Kampwirth, 2004, 2006; Lobao, 1990; Luciak, 2001; Moghadam, 1997; Molyneux, 1985; Shekhawat, 2015; Stephen, 1997; Viterna, 2013; Viterna, 2006). There are two different camps when it comes to this body of literature, which correspond to Moghadam's two models of revolution: one in which traditional gender roles are reinforced (the patriarchal model), and one in which women's emancipation is fundamental to the project (the emancipation or modernising model)(1997).

In the first stream, women participate as revolutionaries in a way that corresponds to traditional gendered division of labour.[11] Shayne documents the ways that women played strategic roles in the Salvadoran Civil War, yet ultimately admits that they were not fully acknowledged (particularly by their male comrades) as actors in the revolutionary process (1999, 99). Viterna also notes that in some cases, rather than breaking gender barriers, women combatants are seen as pawns in larger struggles for power, and emerge in the aftermath of warfare "traumatised, resource-poor, and with great difficulties in meeting the basic necessities of life" (2013, 5). In all, despite women's ability to act as revolutionaries, Molyneux highlights that participation in these types of movements rarely involves the pursuit of "gender-specific interests" (1998, 72).

On the other hand, there is a body of work that focuses on distinctly feminist mobilisations born out of experiences of revolution (see Shayne's work on "revolutionary

[11] As an example, in the process of demobilisation in El Salvador, collected data showed that of the women in the FMLN (rebel group) – about 30 per cent of total forces – only 15 per cent were armed combatants, while the rest filled logistical roles. See (Luciak, 2001).

feminism" (2004, 10, 159)). As interviewees from Kampwirth's fieldwork explain, women who participated in revolutions did not join the guerrilla struggle with the goal of revolutionising gender relations. Years later, however, they found themselves critical of the sexual inequality that existed within the guerrilla forces (despite the guerrilla's public commitment to reduce inequality at large within their society) and began to come together as feminists (2004, 2).

This literature review has highlighted that there is a lack of research when it comes to explaining how and why women mobilise in high risk settings. While there is value in the study of the transformative nature of mobilising (for women), the case studies in this thesis move beyond what Safa and Jelin were telling us about women mobilising from traditional positions in the 1980s and 1990s, or about what Maier, Alvarez, and Lebon tell us about popular feminist mobilisation in the 2000s. They do not have experiences as revolutionaries that shape their current relationship to feminism. They also do not fit within Navarro's assessment that motherhood creates a (relatively) safe position from which to mobilise. How, then, can we conceptualise the collective action of the women mobilising in the case studies examined here?

It is further important to note that the women discussed in the coming chapters *could* have mobilised under any of these categories. They had grievances that could have led to them mobilising as mothers (protecting their children from violence), or as popular feminists (critiquing economic injustice from a gender and class-based perspective). Notably, however, they did not. Perhaps the risks of doing so were not seen as justifiable – the cost-balance calculation did not fall in favour of organising collectively. It would thus be inaccurate to categorise the organisations studied in this thesis are purely falling

under the umbrella of popular, racialised/intersectional feminism[12], or even Lebon's "feminism of shifting identities" (2010). While each organisation may have elements of these, they are also characterised by factors contingent on the context (high risk).

In reviewing the ways in which women mobilise, we have not encountered explanations that adequately explain why women might act collectively *as feminists* despite the associated risks of doing so. In high risk conditions (such as those seen in gang-controlled neighbourhoods in El Salvador, and in paramilitary controlled barrios of displaced people in Colombia, for example), previously safe spaces for women (like the home) become unsafe.[13] It is here that women are making the decision to (re)claim their access to safety. In doing so, their encounters of and experiences with violence – themselves deeply gendered – mean that this mobilisation necessarily involves challenging gendered power dynamics. Fundamentally, then, participating in a mobilisation under these circumstances is a feminist act.

2. What is Left Out: The Gap this Thesis Fills

[12] See Gargallo Celentani (2012).

[13] Indeed, this opens up an interesting discussion about violence in the "public" vs. "private" sphere. Is intimate partner violence (IPV) included in a definition of high risk? In the Colombian case, being expelled from one's home (displaced) naturally involves a blending of public and private domains. Hume's study on El Salvador notes that although violence against women traditionally (and more frequently) takes place in the public sphere, the phenomenon is increasingly leaving the private sphere and entering the public eye. She argues that violence against women lies on the knife's edge between public and private and adds says that women's experiences are often invalidated by wider society for violating a system of 'patriarchal privacy' (2009, 117). In the present case studies, high risk (as defined below) is a subjective category that lies in participants' understandings of how particular actions will expose them to violent reprisals. It is not beyond the realm of possibilities that augmented rates of IPV might influence a woman's perception of the risk she is undertaking by engaging in collective action. Indeed, further research on the linkages between public and private violence and subsequent assessments of risk would be illuminating for future studies on HRF.

This thesis argues that there is a specific interplay between the social dynamics that facilitate and spur action and the various gendered opportunities and constraints under which women suffer and act against violence. Indeed, one can ask the question: what does gender have to do with it? Are men (and mixed groups) not mobilising in the face of displacement as well? The immediate answer is yes. As we will see in the empirical chapters, men and mixed groups *did* mobilise in El Pozón and in Usme. This thesis, however, focuses specifically on *women's* mobilisation. Why did the women in the case studies choose to mobilise at all? Why did they choose to *specifically* join a group of other women (as opposed to a mixed organisation)?

The problem with the above streams of literature is that they do not capture *both* the specifically gendered identities of the participants involved *and* the ways in which a high risk environment influences action. The organisations studied in this thesis mobilise not just against war and resulting violence, but against gendered violence and the gendered impacts of war. Doing so puts them at risk for continued violence.

Indeed, when it comes to the way people study women and women's lived realities in high risk settings, we need to accept that "political circumstances…have both nourished and reinforced a sense of gender identity based on polarisation, exclusion, and hegemony", creating what Hume calls "myths of violence" (2008). She continues: "the implicit tension between the act of violence and its representation compels us to address the multi-layered silences that nourish hegemonic "truths" about violence" (ibid., 60), referring to the case of El Salvador. This view is influenced by Spivak (1988) who notes that "common-sense notions of violence…rest upon subaltern silences for their reproduction" (2008, 60).

High-Risk Feminism (hereafter, HRF) is the term I give to my framework for women's mobilisation. HRF is an original framework that applies a gendered lens to a composite of social movement theories in order to examine women's mobilisation in high-risk contexts. What makes this framework unique is its examination of *feminism* as colouring women's mobilisational strategies in high risk settings.

HRF combines resistance to violence with a gender justice project. It is novel in the sense that it does not rely on narratives of women as vulnerable victims, nor maternal peacebuilders, nor female combatants in a largely male and macho revolutionary movement. Rather, it casts them as protagonists in their own stories; by coming together with other women living in the same domain of losses, participants learn to contextualise their experiences with gendered violence within a larger frame of women's rights. Their subsequent actions are self-serving (in that they allow for participants to reap material and non-material benefits of participation), but also contribute to a wider societal project of gender equality. HRF is about women gaining agency and using it to change the dominant power dynamics that colour their daily lives.

The component parts of the framework can explain the adaptation of a mobilisational strategy within these violent contexts; the dynamic interactions between the mechanisms explain action – feminist mobilisation. The four pillars of the framework (collective identity, social capital, legal framing, and certification) further allow for an understanding of mobilisation that is able to consider the importance of emotions and lived realities in action.

I first developed the High Risk Feminism framework in the context of women's mobilisation in the face of high violence in contemporary El Salvador (Zulver, 2016). Many of the existing studies about women's movements in that country focus on the context of Civil War (1980-1992), or the post-war period, drawing on an extensive gender-and-revolution literature (as detailed in the previous section). In the context of my own research, however, I became aware that such frameworks (e.g., Shayne's "revolutionary feminism") no longer adequately explain what is happening in El Salvador today. Nearly three decades have passed, new generations of women (with no experience of the war) have begun to mobilise, and violence has a different face (see Hume, 2009; Hume & Wilding, 2015; ISDEMU, 2012; Zulver, 2016).

There existed a need to develop a framework that accounts for sustained and adapted mobilisation today, not only in El Salvador, but also other cases in which women mobilise despite and because of high-risk conditions. My MPhil project aimed to reconsider the entire period of women's mobilisation in El Salvador in order to show that this new framework can serve as a gendered lens that overlays not just historical or contemporary action, but also connects the two by focusing on the high-risk contexts in which women act. Developing my DPhil project offered an opportunity to test and refine the HRF approach in cases other than El Salvador. This thesis compares different cases of women's mobilisation in three high risk contexts in Colombia, both in a historical sense, and as the country moves forward in the transition to peace.

The framework draws on different social movement theories to tie together a comprehensive way of understanding mobilisation under a specific set of circumstances, shaped by the power dynamics of gender relations. This thesis updates and refines the

HRF framework, further contributing to existing social movement theoretical developments in order to fill the gaps in the literature – especially as they relate to strategies of feminist resistance – and create a platform of analysis for contemporary situations of women's mobilisation in high-risk contexts.

As mentioned above, the existing ways that we study women's mobilisation do not account for feminist mobilisation against gendered dynamics of violence, particularly when the act of mobilising itself further puts a target on participants' heads. HRF thus provides descriptive utility – how do we explain what is going on when we see women (who we might not expect to organise) acting collectively. Indeed, HRF is premised on the idea that contexts of high risk give rise to identities shaped by fear and trauma (i.e. identities borne of a domain of losses). In turn, as will be highlighted in the coming section, these identities can be transformed into mobilisational identities that seek agency amidst feelings of impotence.

Next, the chapter will engage with the *why* part of the research question: why do women mobilise in high risk contexts? It will then look at the *how* part of the research question in order to describe the strategies and tactics women use in their gender justice project. Finally, it will connect the two questions in order to explain the relationship between the mechanisms and the dynamics of mobilisation.

B. Why Do Women Mobilise in High Risk Contexts?

That women participate in HRF mobilisation requires explanation. As noted above, it is logical to assume that a context of high violence would be a barrier to mobilisation. What is it then, that catalyses action that can effectively overcome these barriers?

My research inductively shows that the reason we see high risk mobilisation has to do the creation of a bond between an auspicious leader and a population looking for leadership. In a certain context of high risk, a specific population finds itself unable or barely able to cope with daily life. At this moment, the rise or appearance of a particular type of leader forges a particular type of bond with the community. This dynamic is consistent with what Madsen and Snow call the "charismatic bond" (1991).

Figure 2.1 (below) shows us the connection between the dynamics of mobilisation ("the why") and the pillars of action ("the how") of High Risk Feminism. My research has revealed that leadership is key when it comes to explaining the specific types of mobilisation outlined in this thesis. A leader has to have the ability to convince people to mobilise, despite the risks associated with doing so. She does so by highlighting that in a domain of losses (where even inaction does not guarantee safety), the non-material benefits of collective identity and belonging make it *worth it*. Moreover, she orchestrates collective actions that lead to small successes over time; in this way, participants are reassured that their participation has the ability to modify what Nordstrom refers to as the "tomorrows of violence" (2004).[14] This reaffirms an individual's participation and also

[14] Nordstrom notes: "[violence] isn't a passing phenomenon that momentarily challenges a stable system, leaving a scar but no lasting effects after it has passed. Violence becomes a determining fact in

encourages new recruitment. It is important to highlight that once a bond is built between a leader and her followers, the non-material benefits and incremental successes of participation reinforce continued participation. The ensuing collective action is shaped around ideas of gender justice – projects that aim to ameliorate the situation of women by restoring their ability to live dignified lives.

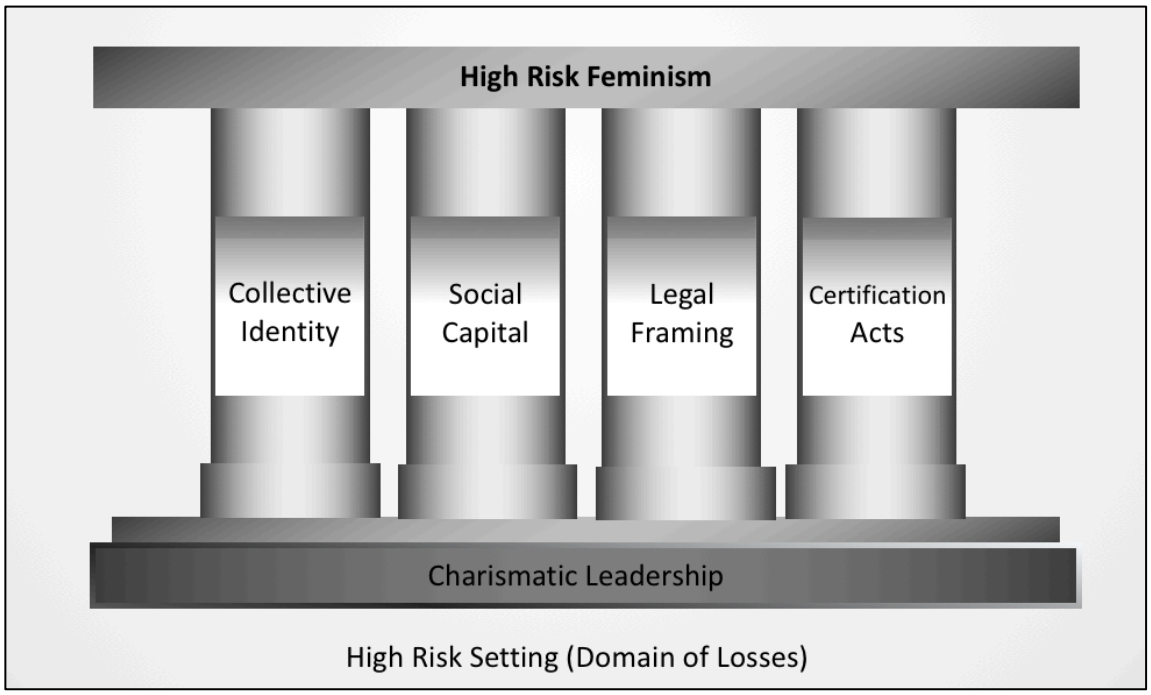


Figure 2.1. High Risk Feminism rests upon four pillars or strategies of action. These pillars/strategies are formulated and guided by a charismatic leader who, operating in a domain of losses, can convince potential participants of the benefits of collective action, thus overcoming barriers to mobilisation (like fears of violence).

This chapter proceeds by outlining the dynamics of HRF mobilisation in detail. It begins by defining high risk, then discusses the effect of a new social context on previously isolated individuals. Next, it outlines the characteristics of a charismatic leader and engages with Prospect Theory to show how this figure is able to create a charismatic bond with potential participants. It then examines the way that non-material benefits (like

shaping reality as people *will* know it, in the future. Part of the way violence is carried into the future is through creating a hegemony of enduring violence across the length and breadth of the commonplace world, present and future" (2004, 226).

feelings of belonging and meaning), as well as the successes of incremental gains, further reinforce continued participation. The following section then looks at each of the four pillars of High Risk Feminism in turn, highlighting that collective identity, social capital, legal framing, and acts of certification are strategies that in concert allow participants to strive for their goals of gender justice.

1. Defining High Risk

This thesis has consistently invoked the concept of "high risk" as a contextual factor for the particular type of mobilisation at hand. For the purpose of wider applicability (and not just in the Colombian case), what exactly does this mean? For Loveman, what differentiated normal collective action from the high risk variety in the Southern Cone was the characterisation of a "culture of fear" (Corradi, Fagen, and Garretón, 1992), where:

> The intentional propagation by a regime of a climate of uncertainty, insecurity, and terror aims to paralyze forms of collective action. Threats of persecution, arrest, torture, disappearance, or assassination of opponents of the regime are meant to create insurmountable obstacles to collective action; they exacerbate existing incentives to free ride (Loveman, 1998, 487).

For the purposes of this thesis, a subjective definition of "high risk" is applied (see Ball, 2005). Do participants themselves consider that they are engaging in activities that put them and their families at risk of harm? These harms can (and have) been documented over time (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2017; Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2013; Meertens, 2012; Moser & McIlwaine, 2000; Ramírez Boscán, 2007), and include disappearances, torture, sexual violence, and death.

What is important is whether the conditions on the ground are such that an individual

perceives that engaging in collective action is a dangerous activity. A personal communication with Mara Loveman highlights her understanding that "high risk" is a continuous concept, not a binary one, and one that varies across time and space for differently-positioned individuals (2017). Perceptions of high risk are present for women who mobilise in gang-controlled neighbourhoods of El Salvador, as well as displaced Colombian women who mobilise in neighbourhoods rife with paramilitaries and criminal gangs.[15]

Making a critical identifier contingent on context opens itself to criticism; if violence exists on a continuum does this mean that HRF also exists on a continuum? If this is the case, are we likely to see variations of HRF along this scale, including "low" and "medium" risk feminism? Just as Loveman studied incidents of HROs mobilising in high risk settings, yet did not expand her findings to HROs mobilising in low risk settings, I think there is value in applying the HRF as not only a tool for description, but also for explanation. Indeed, McAdam notes that "the mobilization dynamics of high-risk movements are likely to be qualitatively different from those of low-risk movements" (1986, in Loveman, 1998, 487).

This thesis argues that we would not expect women who live in a domain of losses so severe that organising in any sort of collective could be seen by powerful actors

[15] It is not the case, for example, for women who mobilise against feminicide in Argentina. While feminicide is indeed a threat in society, the majority of women who mobilise against it are not categorically and strategically targeted on a daily basis. That is, they are not necessarily making the conscious decision to overcome or disregard a specific risk by participating. Nor are participants necessarily *further* targeted for subsequent acts of victimisation for their participation. Finally, (and again, without in any way minimising the gravity of the phenomenon), women who mobilise against feminicide mobilise against *machismo* writ large, and not against a specific adversary (like a specific paramilitary group or youth gang, who could, in theory, target them for their participation).

(guerrillas, paramilitaries, BACRIM) as transgressing social order, and therefore make them targets of increased and exceptional violence, to organise at all. Against all odds, though, they do. If the threat of violence were decreased or not present, these women may, like their counterparts throughout the (more peaceful parts of the) region, mobilise against inequalities using different strategies (for example, employing the class-based critiques inherent to popular feminism (see Lebon, 2010, and Maier, 2010). In a domain of losses, however, this is not seen as justifiable.

What is important about a high risk context is the way in which is gives rise to a particular type of leader who is then able to form a special bond with participants. Indeed, as Madsen and Snow note, when it comes to the charismatic bond (which will be discussed at length in the following section), "the right moment comes when the incipient followers, feeling rather abruptly unable to cope with the fundamental problems, are ready – and indeed anxious – to assign responsibility for solving these problems to a relative proxy" (1991,143).

What the above means to say is that over time, women living in domains of losses develop identities based on fear and trauma; their day-to-day lives are characterised by uncertainty and a lack of power to control their surroundings. This in turn shapes feelings of impotence that result in the individual particularly primed to follow a leader who promises the ability to regain agency over one's own life.

The authors argue that psychological crisis is essential to the emergence of a charismatic bond, and that the contextual crisis is relatively abrupt: "A more prolonged crisis would have the effect of wholly undermining self-efficacy – not even through a proxy could

control be regained," resulting in a response of despondency and withdrawal (ibid., 143). In the case of HRF mobilisation, I do not agree with this assertion. Rather, as will be described in the below section on leadership, I think that the leader's active use of Prospect Theory to frame the benefits of mobilisation within a domain of losses is key to overcoming the barriers to mobilisation. This initial mobilisation does not necessarily rest within a circumscribed temporal aperture (at least in terms of how long an individual has lived within said domain of losses).

The authors do not detail the characteristics of a community likely to form a charismatic bond with a leader. There is something about the *new* neighbourhoods where women find themselves (after displacement) that facilitates their mobilisation. Indeed, these women did not mobilise as parts of women's organisations when they were living in their houses in the *campo* (countryside), despite the fact that these areas were also at risk of paramilitary and guerrilla violence (it was from these locations that women were displaced in the first place). What about coming together in new settings made their mobilisation possible?

2. Neighbourhood and Social Context

Firstly, when women who previously lived in the countryside suddenly find themselves in urban centres, surrounded by other people who have suffered similar episodes of violent displacement, they are more likely to cooperate. Most of the women interviewed previously lived in rural areas. While not always isolated on their farms, they were not necessarily living in close quarters with others. The networks of neighbourhoods therefore facilitated mobilisation, as the physical barriers to entry (for example, travel)

are removed as an obstacle to participation. Whereas before they may have only seen other women in similar situations of vulnerability when they went into town (to market or to church, for example), once they were displaced they lived in densely-packed neighbourhoods. This agglomeration effect, then, is directly related the forming of kinship bonds and social networks. As we will see in the chapter about the *Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas*, getting to know one's neighbour was not just an act of friendliness, but rather of survival. Without engaging in networks of communal cooking or childcare, it would have been impossible for many of the new residents of El Pozón to make ends meet.

Indeed, Marx and Engels' discussions of working-class culture notes that physical proximity "guarantees face-to-face relationships that facilitate common concern" (in Bantjes, 2007, 12). In the absence of aid from anyone else (the state, a capitalist society), people help each other out, building a sense of community solidarity. While Marx saw these communities as "spontaneous expressions of the communist spirit", in the case of displaced women, we can see these as the initial source of women coming into daily contact with other women suffering the same ongoing violences.

Second, as a collective, these women operate in the same domain of losses, which they discover when they are in physical proximity. Importantly, they may not know or identify this shared condition until it is revealed through the experiences of finding solidarity, voice, and action (as directed by the charismatic leader). Interviewees in Turbaco discuss their first realisations that they were not alone in their struggle: "When we started to talk, we realised that each of us wasn't alone. This is something crucial, fundamental ... it was the process that gave the organisation its strength" (quoted in Thomas Davis & Zulver,

2015). Living in the same neighbourhood facilitated individuals coming to the realisation that they are *all* living in an environment whereby in order to avoid (further) violence their decision-making should involve minimising losses of necessarily maximising gains (see Elster, 1987). Such a realisation becomes important in the context of how leaders frame mobilisation.

Third, for many of these women, living as displaced people in their new neighbourhoods was the first time they interacted with aid organisations. As will be discussed in the following chapters, however, these interactions left much to be desired when it came to specifically women's issues. Both Guerrero and Urrutia (leaders of the organisations discussed presently) note that the aid environments in El Pozón and Usme did not recognise the differential impact that war has on women. The victims in question were able to see this with their own eyes, and, when presented with an alternative (i.e., mobilising as women for women), were more inclined to do so.

To return to the conversation begun by Madsen and Snow, then, we can recognise that a specific community of individuals who no longer feel they can cope is ripe for the appearance of a charismatic leader to whom they can supplicate for change. In this way, the charismatic bond is a "product of circumstance" whereby a would-be leader must "provide for [her] audience through a combination of personal attributes and seemingly effective actions" (1991,142).

As mentioned above, Madsen and Snow note that a charismatic bond is contingent on a community suffering a "psychological crisis." I do not think that this descriptor is the most apt way to describe the reality of what is going on. The women indeed have lived

through crisis, where, through acts of horrific violence, they have been shown that they are individually unable to escape the domain of losses. They feel powerless on their own and are therefore uniquely receptive to a leader who shows them ways to regain agency, as will be discussed in the following section.

3. Charismatic Leadership

The previous section began to adapt the concept of the charismatic bond to the present study without necessarily engaging with the idea to its full extent; indeed, leadership is the central feature of HRF mobilisation. It is not, however, just any leadership that functions as a necessary condition for mobilisation. This section will proceed with a discussion of other studies on leadership and collective action and will then explain what theory of leadership reveals itself as most pertinent to the present thesis.

McAdam's studies of mobilisation suggest that leaders are recycled from other movements. In the context of a political opportunity, there is a need for recognised leaders, who can be "called upon to lend their prestige and organising skills to the incipient movement" (1982, 47). Leaders, for him, come from existing organisations, which form the base of a new insurgency. Without someone with prior experience to guide collective action, an aggrieved population will lack the capacity to act, even if they have the chance to do so. This is a resource-based explanation, with the existing skills (like organising, education levels, personal connections, and experience) representing the resource that the leaders bring to the new movement.

Erickson Nepstad and Bob ask: when do leaders matter? (2006). They begin their article like many other authors, by noting that the significance of leadership in collective action is relatively understudied (Eatwell, 2006; Ganz, 2009, 2010; Morris & Staggenborg, 2004; Robnett, 2013). Consequently, we talk about recruitment, resource mobilising processes, protest events, and frames without reference to the leaders who invent these strategies (ibid., 1). Erickson Nepstad and Bob talk about "leadership capital", a broad term that has cultural (knowledge, skills, and abilities), social (ties to activist communities), and symbolic aspects (charisma, respect, and moral authority). Like McAdam and Morris and Staggenborg, however, they hypothesise that leaders will be more likely to successfully mobilise pre-existing organisations (rather than establish an organisation from scratch) at opportune political movements (providing they have leadership capital) (ibid., 8).

While there exist studies on leadership and social movements, these prove insufficient when it comes to explaining the high risk action studied in this thesis. Notably, my research shows that not all leaders have previous organisational experience (as McAdam might suggest). It is also not enough to uncritically posit that a 'good' or 'strong' leader can convince a community to mobilise, particularly when this involves exposing oneself to ongoing and augmented dangers. A leader needs to be sufficiently persuasive to encourage mobilisation, meaning that they need to be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the community. Moreover, as theorists from the resource mobilisation tradition would tell us, a leader also needs to be able to gain access to (at least basic) organisational and other resources in order to make sustained collective action possible (McCarthy & Zald, 1977).

Here is where we see the utility of Weber's trifold typology of leadership. For him, the third type of leader that will rise in a time of crisis is a charismatic leader.[16] This individual gains legitimacy on the grounds of "the devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by [her]" (1978, 215).

Baker notes that in order to move beyond Weber, "scholars need to construct empirically based typologies that can tap the kinds of leadership within SMOs over time and can also relate to organisational characteristics to expected bases of authority" (1982, 335). Robnett cites Ganz's study (2009, 2010) of agricultural movements in California as a good basis upon which further research may be built (2013, 3). This is one of the theoretical contributions of the present thesis: an investigation of leadership in high risk settings where we would expect aggrieved individuals *not* to mobilise.

Ganz notes that "in times of crisis, particularly talented leaders may become symbols of hope, sources of inspiration for their constituents" (2009, 8). He further explains that leadership, organisation, and strategy are the factors that allow small groups of actors (the Davids) to win against their adversaries (the Goliaths). In terms of leadership, he tells us:

> The greater an organisation's strategic capacity [the ability to devise good strategy], the more informed, creative, and responsive its strategic choices can be and the better able it is to take advantage of moments of unique opportunity to reconfigure itself for effective action. An organisation's strategic capacity…is a function of who its leaders are – their identities, networks, and tactical experiences – and how they structure their interactions with each other and their environment with respect to resource flows, accountability, and deliberation (ibid.).

[16] Weber's other styles of authority – traditional and legal-rational – are not helpful for an analysis of HRF, particularly given the high risk context in which this type of mobilisation takes place.

When it comes to charismatic leadership, however, Eatwell presents another voice that admits that the theory of charisma has moved on very little since Weber's formulations (2006, 153). His work on explaining fascism in twentieth century Europe points out the shortcomings of the Weberian charismatic figure but concludes by admitting that there is no need to do away with the concept in its totality. Thus, while Ganz makes a throw-away comment that we have moved beyond the need to talk about charismatic leaders (2010), this is not necessarily the case when it comes to HRF. While our definition can perhaps move beyond Weber's archetypal definition (and will do so descriptively throughout the remainder of this thesis), for the purposes of HRF mobilisation we can talk about the need for a charismatic leader.

Just as it is unsatisfying to posit that a 'good' or 'strong' leader can convince a population to mobilise, it is further insufficient to uncritically state that a *charismatic* leader is able to do the same task. What Madsen and Snow add to the discussion is the context in which these charismatic leaders emerge. Importantly, they further focus on the nature of the "following which rallies to the emergent leader's banner" (1991, 1). If we take as given that individuals do not make irrational decisions, we must assume that the followers of a charismatic leader – in the present circumstances, those who choose to join a HRF organisation – see it as in their best interests to do so (see Muller & Opp, 1986). What, then, is it about the followers that make them willing to expose themselves to risk through mobilisation? What are the dynamics at play?

Here is where Madsen and Snow outline what they call the charismatic bond. The crux of this concept is that people are willing to accept a proxy control as part of a strategy of psychological self-preservation. That is:

> [People] in despair restore their own sense of coping ability by linking themselves to a dominant and seemingly effective figure – a leader who seems to be acting in their behalf, but also seems to be not beyond their influence (if only because that leader is "known" to be devoted to their interests and therefore reachable through petition and supplication)(1991, 15).

During this process, the individual bonds with the leader and also develops a group identification with other followers. This bonding "with the leader, and also with the group, restores a sense of security and of competency, which ultimately may provide the foundation for renewed autonomy" (ibid., 15). A potential leader, then, must be able to fix (or at least be perceived as able to fix) the problems that are associated with the stress or chaos. She must possess strong rhetorical skills and "project an aura of knowledge, strength, and effectiveness" (ibid., 21). By incorporating Ganz's argument about strategic capacity and the ability to creatively mobilise resources, we see that a charismatic leader has the unique ability to mobilise a population that otherwise may not have participated in collective action. As he says (and I repeat from above), "an organisation's strategic capacity…is a function of who its leaders are" (2009, 8).

In high risk contexts, women worry about the constant fear of violence in its many forms. The idea of mobilising as women necessarily implies exposing oneself to even more violence. In the case of displaced women Colombia, leadership is the key factor in explaining the *why* dynamic of mobilisation. Fieldwork for this thesis inductively shows that strong leadership is an important factor for beginning an organisation. As will be discussed in the coming empirical chapters, without the leadership of Patricia Guerrero (in the LMD) and María Eugenia Urrutia (in AFROMUPAZ), it is likely that these organisations would not have come into existence. This, of course, involves hypothesising on counterfactuals. With that said, as will be further discussed in Chapter

6, the women in Riohacha living in similar circumstances to those in both Turbaco and Usme *have not* mobilised. Crucially, they also lack a source of charismatic leadership. The way that rank and file members of the organisations speak about their leaders falls within Weber's definition of a charismatic leader. In fact, when I once asked a member of the *Liga* what would happen if Guerrero died or was no longer able to lead the organisation, she became visibly upset and replied:

> I can't even think about that. *La Doctora* [Guerrero] is a fundamental part of the organisation and we love her very much. She has offered us love and kindness and we all recognise the capacities/skills that she has. She is a very wise woman and everything that we do as an organisation, we ask her to give her point of view on it first. There is a good team within the *Liga* but it wouldn't be the same without her. (Interview, 12 October 2016).

It is insufficient, however, to say that we can explain the *why* of HRF social movements based on the random/lucky appearance of a charismatic leader, without whom the organisation would either cease to exist or never would have existed in the first place. What is important, then, within the Colombian context of high risk and displacement, is the need for a charismatic leader who has the foresight to develop a charismatic bond through creative and strategic framing of the benefits of doing so. What is key in case of HRF mobilisation is a leader's ability to frame participation as *worthwhile* to potential members. To a certain extent, this also involves successful strategising and the ability to accrue at least basic resources for mobilisation. Such recruitment is particularly difficult in a high risk situation, where it is difficult to convince a person to take part in an activity that may expose her to further sources of violence. In colloquial terms, leaders need to show potential participants why it is worth them sticking their necks out.

What this thesis adds to the discussion, then, is an articulated discussion of the dynamics that constitute the charismatic bond. That is, by examining how a charismatic leader convinces participants to mobilise, we can better understand the inner workings of *why*

women mobilise despite the risks that doing so naturally entails. Moreover, it attempts to take away some of the saint-like zeal with which scholars sometimes speak about charismatic leaders and replace this with grounded explanations and descriptions of how these leaders are able to build bonds with a community in need. Ganz succinctly summarises this by noting: "commitment to a shared future and the consequence of a shared past transform an exchange into a relationship" (2010, 4).

To end this section, I want to dedicate some attention to what a HRF charismatic leader looks like – what do we mean by "charismatic"?[17] While I do not pretend to provide a generalisable definition, my research does suggest a set of traits that are integral to this role. Certain skills contribute to the rise (or adoption) of particular individuals in communities, which then leads to the construction of the charismatic bond. For example, a specific ability to communicate with potential participants on an emotional plane, a broader vision of how to make connections and networks with institutions and other organisations (bridging social capital), and Madsen and Snow's "aura of knowledge, strength, and effectiveness" are traits shared by the leaders studied in this thesis. Leaders furthermore have the ability to effectively strategise and gain access to mobilisational resources.

The upcoming empirical chapters document how members of the LMD provide multiple examples of how Guerrero always offers them *cariño* (love/affection/care), especially in times of need (Interview, 12 October 2016), and how she always fights for their dignity (Interview, 5 November 2016). AFROMUPAZ members refer to Urrutia as a "very

[17] Defined in the dictionary as "attractiveness or charm that can inspire admiration or enthusiasm in other people" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2013).

humane person" (Interview, 23 June 2017) and their "mother hen figure" (Interview, 31 June 2017). Moreover, in the case of both leaders, participants and institutional officials alike speak of their specific and creative abilities to connect and link institutions and organisations in a way that others do not.

All of this means to say that leadership is crucial for explaining these specific types of movements. Again, I do not claim that these traits are generalisable to all leaders of women's movements in Colombia, nor that they represent an exhaustive list. This thesis, however, opens up the possibility for future research that develops a profile of charismatic leaders (based on their particular skill sets, personality traits, and motivations). As will be discussed in the concluding chapter, this may have important policy implications, especially in terms of teaching and transferring leadership in high risk contexts.

4. Building the Charismatic Bond: Using Prospect Theory to Spur Action

As the previous section highlighted, there is value not only in examining the charismatic leader, but also in the bond she creates with her followers. Indeed, as Viterna notes, a movement's power lies in its ability to amass participants, and that therefore understanding how individuals initially come to participate in a movement is key to better understanding the episode of social mobilisation (2013, 6). How does a charismatic leader convince a group to mobilise in a high risk context?

Prospect Theory offers us a useful tool for understanding a charismatic leader's framing strategies. First outlined by Kahneman and Tversky (1979), and later revised by the same authors (1992), Prospect Theory provides insight into why people show inconsistent preferences when the same choice is presented in different forms. The key elements of Prospect Theory are:

1) A value function that is concave for gains, convex for losses, and steeper for losses than gains, and
2) A nonlinear transformation of the probability scale, which overweights small probabilities and underweights moderate and high probabilities (1992, 297-298).

Practically, we see a creative application of Prospect Theory in Weyland's book *The Politics of Market Reform in Fragile Democracies*. This book attempts to answer: "why do some leaders of fragile democracies attain political success when pursuing drastic, painful economic reforms while others see their political careers implode?" (2004). Using the cases of Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Venezuela, Weyland asserts that Prospect Theory (rather than rational choice) is able to answer the above question; "if actors perceive themselves to be in a losing situation they are inclined toward risks; if they see a winning situation around them, they prefer caution" (ibid.).

What Prospect Theory adds to this thesis is an understanding of *why* women might decide to join an organisation – despite the further risks that this might incur – in a high risk context. At its core, then, this thesis puts forward the idea that women operating in the domain of losses (in high risk situations) value incremental material and non-materials benefits over inaction (which also does not guarantee safety). This is further key to refuting Olson's free rider problem (1965). Non-participation is an option, but (1) a person can still be targeted for further violence even if not participating and (2), the potential benefits of participation (emotional and identity-based) are accrued *through*

participation, and not as mobilisational outcomes. Therefore, while participation in a women's organisation might make someone more of a target, it is preferable to non-participation because everyone is operating in the same domain of losses (a high risk environment), and benefits only come to those involved and not the community as a whole.

The reward system here is not outcome-based, but actions-based. As is demonstrated empirically in the coming chapters, it is the role of the charismatic leader to show participants that they will get something out of joining (that is, before they have actually experienced this yet). As such, participants' calculus for action is based on trust (inherent to the charismatic bond) that what the leader has promised will actually come true.

Following Weyland's explanation – if actors (women) perceive themselves to be in a losing situation (displacement, lack of security both in public and private spheres, no protection from the state), they are more inclined toward HRF mobilisation (the outcome). The losing situation here is represented by an inability to control the external violence. Non-participation does not guarantee safety. A context of violence and conflict is therefore necessary for this sort of mobilisation, as a winning situation (that is, a peaceful situation) would influence women's decisions to pursue a more cautious path (i.e. no mobilisation). The right leader can overcome the perceived risks of mobilisation, and individuals will likely remain involved if they begin to perceive (and acquire) the rewards of solidarity.

This is not an *a priori* understandings for victims of the conflict, particularly as they have already suffered at the hands of armed actors.[18] As Nussbaum says, we make choices based on values we experience via emotion (2001). It is the job of the charismatic leader to demonstrate to a potential participant that there can be positive and reaffirming emotions that result from participation in collective action. As Ganz says, "social movement leaders mobilise the emotions that make agency possible" (2010, 6). He continues by noting that a choice to act in spite of fear constitutes courage, and that we get courage from hope. We get hope from "credible solutions… reports not only of success elsewhere, but direct experience of small successes and small victories" (ibid., 7). When it comes to the Colombian context, the stakes are arguably much higher than those experienced in Ganz's study of Californian agricultural workers. For this reason, the strategic use of Prospect Theory by a charismatic leader is key. Framed this way, Ganz's idea of small successes and small victories remains salient. How do these play out in the case of HRF mobilisation?

5. Non-material benefits: Belonging and Meaning

What are the benefits that leaders like Guerrero and Urrutia use to entice potential participants? Kahneman and Tversky note, in behavioural economics there are inconsistent patterns of behaviour based when the same choice is presented in different forms. As such, we see that women joining HRF organisations do not encourage others

[18] Indeed, one of Guerrero's main observations when she first arrived in El Pozón was that although women were sad and defeated, they had no understanding of the larger dynamics of their displacement within the context of the civil conflict (Sandvik et al., 2014, 75).

to do so by highlighting the fact that their membership will expose them to more danger, but rather, by emphasising the benefits of coming together.

We can borrow here from Muller and Opp's article about rational choice and rebellious collective action. They note that from a conventional rational choice perspective, people who engage in this behaviour would appear to be acting non-rationally, particularly given that free-riding is an option and the benefits of the outcome will apply to all (i.e. not just participants). Given that citizens *do* participate in this behaviour, however, they note that there must be other incentives that form part of their cost-benefit calculation: "private personal rewards that the individual can expect to receive only by participating" (Muller & Opp, 1986, 472). Tullock (1971) refers to these incentives as "psychic income" and Silver talks about the value of "the individual's sense of duty to class, country, democratic institutions, the law, race, humanity…" (1974, 64). In sum, they note that a rational choice model should include the private psychological benefits (private interest theory) of participation.

Part I briefly touched on identity as a mobilising factor for collective action in repressive situations. This section, however, highlights the ways in which leaders peddle potential participants the idea of collective identity as a non-material benefit (or "psychic income") to participation. Leaders were able to recruit participants by highlighting that collective action would not only give *meaning* to their daily struggle but would also foster a sense of *belonging* or *solidarity*.

This sentiment is echoed in Wood's study of participation in the Salvadoran Civil War:

> In the early years of the war, when the circumstances of risk and the uncertainty of material benefits meant that other reasons for acting were insufficient, acting against the state – in defiance, in outrage, for revenge, for justice, against the fear that could be paralysing – brough emotional "benefits" to exactly that subset of campesinos who participated (2015, 279).

Madsen and Snow also outline that joining a group that follows a charismatic leader forges bonds between the leader and the participant, and also between the participants themselves. Emotions matter, as do feelings of belonging to a group. Tied in with this is the concept of giving meaning to your daily struggle. O'Hearn's study of cultures of resistance in Ireland notes that emotions are important to the construction of collective contention because "affective emotions facilitate respect and trust, which enable effective leadership and solidarity" (2009, 498). This solidarity generates the morale necessary to continue to act collectively. Goodwin's Freudian approach (which he terms a "libidinal-economy perspective") to group ties posits that "[group members] form a collective identity on the basis of their common attachment – emotional as well as cognitive – to a project, leader, or ideal" (1997, 55). Beyond simple measures of shared interests of goals, ideologies, or frames, "groups…may be held together…by powerful affectual ties of empathy, friendship, and camaraderie that spring from, and are reinforced by, face-to-face interactions" (ibid.).

Still other scholars note that emotions are mobilised and framed by leaders to recruit potential participants. Gould's idea of "emotion management" suggests that activists try to induce emotions when they think they are good for the overall cause, actively working to generate feelings like "outrage, excitement, joy, guilt, hope for the future, solidarity, and/or commitment to the cause", while simultaneously attempting to mitigate fear, depression, or hopelessness (Gould, 2015, 259). Tarrow includes emotions in his ideas of collective action frames, noting that emotions can be used to orient people, and that

they can "[convert] passivity into action" (1998, 112). Benford continues with the instrumentalisation of emotions/feelings, noting that leaders can use this "vital social movement resource" strategically (1997, 419).

Gould aptly notes, however, that studying emotions as just another resource in the social movement entrepreneur's framing toolkit risks skimming over some of their "bodily noncognitive, non-instrumental attributes" (2015, 259). In the case of HRF mobilisation, there is something to be said about individuals' feelings of validation that emerge from group membership. Not only were their experiences of violence and displacement painful, but others who experienced the same thing want to come together to commiserate. An interviewee from AFROMUPAZ recounts the extreme sadness she experienced when her daughter died: "I didn't know anyone. I suffered alone" (Interview, 31 May 2017). When her son-in-law was murdered recently, however, "it was hard, but not as hard because I had the support and strength of AFROMUPAZ" (ibid.). Again, we see the utility of Goodwin's libidinal-economy perspective, which he notes "is especially useful for understanding the discipline and commitment…of activists who are involved in…high-risk movements" (1997, 66).

The words of an interviewee in Turbaco serve as a motto: "the pain of one is the pain of all" (Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015). When Guerrero entered the neighbourhood, she began to coordinate group conversations for women about women's issues/problems. This was an "attractive discourse" to the displaced women who had "already felt direct discrimination for being women, as well as the disinterest of other civic organisations in regards to their specific problems as women" (Sandvik et al., 2014, 17). Indeed, the official narrative of the *Liga* notes that the first years of the organisation were dedicated

to "creating consciousness" and developing "mutual trust between group members" (ibid.). Here we see a leader demonstrating potential non-material benefits of participation – "psychic income": the ability to connect, bond, commiserate, and share. In doing so, participants develop bonds of friendship; "it is [these] affective ties that bind and preserve the networks in the first place, as well as give them much of their causal impact" (Goodwin, Jasper, & Polletta, 2001, 8).

As well as a feeling of belonging, participation gives meaning to daily struggles. Ganz notes:

> The intrinsic rewards associated with doing work one loves to do, work one finds inherently meaningful, are far more motivating than extrinsic rewards. For social movement leaders, whose work is deeply rooted in what moral philosopher Charles Taylor calls their "moral sources," their work is not a job but a "vocation" or a "calling." As such, its rewards are intrinsic and highly motivating (Ganz, 2009, 12).

In the case of displaced women living in precarious situations, there is value for participants in resisting the daily violences to which they are exposed.

As in the case of Wood's study of *campesinos* in El Salvador, "the key to the logic of insurgent collective action…is the assertion of dignity and defiance through the act of rebelling" (2015, 268). It is no coincidence that the women of the *Liga* refer to their housing project as their *sueño de vida digna*, their dream of a dignified life. Wood continues to explain, in the case of El Salvador, that, while certain actions were intended to realise certain interests, emotional in-process benefits (i.e. those "emotion-laden consequences of action experienced only by those participating in that action") served to express "moral outrage, asserted a claim to dignity, and gave grounds for pride" (ibid.). Participation gives meaning to suffering: "to express rage at the arbitrary and brutal violence of authorities [is for some] … a necessary expression of being human", and this

impels action despite high risk and uncertainty (ibid.).

For women living in high risk conditions, the ability to mobilise and make claims for dignity is a good in itself – Wood's emotional in-process benefit. Leaders use this as a recruitment tool, especially when all participants are acting in the same domain of losses. If non-participation does not guarantee safety, and participation can bring feelings of agency, belonging, identity, and dignity, why would you choose *not* to participate? There is a cascade element to this: as Goodwin and Jasper highlight, once the initial activists form a group and begin to think of themselves as a movement, they try to recruit others to join their cause (2015, 53).

6. Success of Incremental Gains

In a continued effort to explain the *why* of women's participation in HRF movements, we further need to look at the successes of incremental gains. While initially, as discussed, leaders recruit participants based on the leveraging of non-material benefits like identity and emotions (belonging and meaning), there is also something to be said about, over time, the way that they frame the successes of incremental gains.[19] That is, while participation in a HRF movement will likely not end the situation of violence in the community, it may bring other successes. These successes are club goods – they are only available to participants, thus eliminating the free rider problem.

[19] Indeed, Bandura notes that vicarious reinforcement (the perception of positive outcomes accruing to others) is a powerful source of motivation (1973).

Gamson outlines the idea that it is useful to think of success as "a set of outcomes, recognizing that a given challenging group may receive different scores on equally valid, different measures of outcome" (2015, 414). He designs a schema which classifies outcomes as falling into two basic clusters: "one concerned with the fate of the challenging group as an organisation and one with the distribution of new advantages to the group's beneficiary" (ibid.). 'New advantages' can be assessed from the perspective of the group, and the aspirations it held at the starting point of the mobilisation (1990, 34). When it comes to HRF mobilisation, what do these successes look like?

An earlier study of the *Liga* notes that over time, the women:

> Showed… their appreciation of community organizing as having a positive effect on their lives. They mentioned not only the material gains, especially having their own house, but also a sense of community and a transformation of negative ideas about women and their role in politics and society. Some also pointed to a stronger sense of their own value, and the consequent renegotiation of family relations While acknowledging the many difficulties, they also considered that challenging the system is a possibility, resources can be mobilised to do so, and danger can be carefully managed to eventually achieve common goals (Lemaitre & Sandvik, 2015, 24-25).

My own research confirms as much, as will be detailed in Chapter 4. What is missing from the above assessment, however, is the fact that these benefits allow women to overcome barriers to mobilisation, including fear of violence.

We saw earlier that Nussbaum's work highlights the logical and discriminating role emotions can play in decision-making (2001). Moreover, Ganz highlights the need for small successes to generate the hope necessary to overcome fear of mobilisation. In another of his works, he further hones in on the question: how does David (the ostensibly powerless participant) beat Goliath (the powerful participant)? Through strategic and creative framing strategies, he notes, they are able to generate motivation:

> Motivation enhances creativity by inspiring concentration, enthusiasm, risk taking, persistence, and learning. We think more critically when intensely interested in a problem, dissatisfied with the status quo, or experiencing a breach in our expectations. And when we have small successes, they can enhance our creativity, in part because they generate greater motivation (Ganz, 2009, 12).

Nordstrom's "tomorrows of violence" offer insight into the utility of the successes of incremental gains to participation in a HRF organisation. The war in Colombia lasted for 52 years[20], yet as Nordstrom (2004) notes, cessation to formal violence does not necessarily translate to a lessening of the violent realities for individuals. The women who participate in HRF suffered various violences before they were displaced. The change, however, from having a home to not having a home means that the exposure to violence becomes constant rather than intermittent (or even frequent). In El Salvador, gang control of neighbourhoods strips women of safe spaces – domestic violence in the home increases[21] and previous refuges are now potential zones of danger.

In a context where violence is perceived as inevitable and constant, the hope for a better tomorrow is crucial. In macro terms, the reality of the situation is that ongoing violence might go up or down on any given week, month, or year, but does not fundamentally change even with the advent of the Colombian Peace Accords (discussed in Chapter 3). In order to encourage women to participate in a HRF organisation, then, leaders and early risers do not focus on escalating or declining violence writ large, but rather, on a possible world in which action leads to *certain protections* from violence.

[20] Here, I am referring to the war between the Colombian government and the FARC. At the time of writing, new dynamics of violence are emerging, including violence with the ELN, dissident FARC, and criminal gangs see (InSight Crime & Universidad del Rosario, 2018).

[21] A phenomenon also documented in Nordstrom's research in conflict zones.

The *Ciudad de las Mujeres* (City of Women) in Turbaco is an example of this. Over time, the women of the *Liga* dedicated themselves to a specific project – building a housing development. The women knew that owning a house would not necessarily put an end to the daily violences they face, nor necessarily prevent paramilitary groups from targeting them, but it tied in with the idea of a mitigated "tomorrow of violence". That is, building houses would do *something* to improve their quality of life, despite not being able to eradicate exposure to violence.

One member of the *Liga* told me definitively during fieldwork: "we had the dream of building a *dignified* house… and we could only achieve this through [participation in] the organisation" (Interview, 19 October 2016). Her statement was in response to my question about why she had continued to participate in the organisation after the murder of the husband of a *compañera* for his participation (discussed in detail in Chapter 4). Here, we see that she is committed to the idea of achieving a better future *through* participation in the organisation.

Indeed, the housing complex has not ended violence. As Chapter 4 highlights, members of the *Liga* still face threats and violence from paramilitaries (among other groups). Despite this, the success of achieving a goal – of homeownership – is seen as an incremental gain that justifies continued participation in the organisation over time.

C. How do Women Mobilise? High Risk Feminism Framework

Having outlined the *why* of mobilisation, the chapter will conclude by outlining the *how* of mobilisation. That is, what are the tactics and strategies that (in this case) displaced women use to express their grievances and meet their goals in a high risk context? Moreover, within the dynamic of the charismatic bond, how do these strategies reinforce a participants' ongoing justification of her action in a high risk setting? These strategies – which I refer to as pillars of the High Risk Feminism framework – were first identified in El Salvador, and then refined through research for this thesis in Colombia. The framework includes four modified pillars underpinning ideas of HRF action: collective identity, social capital, framing techniques, and certification.[22]

Mobilisation does not occur in a vacuum. Indeed, patterns are learned and modified over time. In Tilly's book, *Regimes and Repertoires,* he asserts that, "like a jazz trio or an improvisatory theatre group, people who participate in contentious politics normally can play several pieces, but not an infinity" (2006, 35). He goes on to outline his view that social movements are often characterised by varying repertoires of collective action – that is, the recurrent, and historically embedded character of contentious politics. For him, repertoires can vary over time and space, but "on the whole, they innovate within limits … already established for their place, time, and pair" (ibid.). McAdam et al. further convey the idea that the term "repertoire" implies that participants in public claim-making adopt scripts they have performed or at least observed before (although different circumstances require different improvisations of the original) (2001, 138). They "rework

[22] These loosely correspond to McAdam et al.'s ideas of brokerage, category formation, object shift, and certification as elements of the dynamics of contention (2001)

known routines in response to current circumstances. In doing so, they acquire the ability to coordinate, anticipate, represent, and interpret each other's actions" (ibid.). When it comes to women specifically, the term repertoire involves the development of a "feminine collective consciousness...through years of conflict" (Skjelsbaek, 2001, 58).

Accepting that women use learned patterns of action implies that daily social life, existing social relations, shared memories, and the logistics of social settings is important in understanding the forms of contention. In Tilly's understanding of repertoires, the women's movements in contexts of high conflict are both cultural and structural, resting on "shared understandings and their representations in symbols and practices (that is, on culture), but also [responding] to the organisation of their social settings" (2006, 43). These understandings, however, do not come *a priori*, and must be nurtured, first by a charismatic leader, then (as the charismatic bond develops) by participants themselves.

The HRF framework operates on the supposition that past and present mobilisation can be connected not only by a context of "high risk", but also by a series of learned rhetorical and mobilisational acts and tactics constitutive of a repertoire of action. In concert, these experiences mould and shape the ways in which certain strategies are used, based on lessons learned from previous mobilisational efforts. It is charismatic leaders who know about repertoires of action and can translate these into the local context.

Moreover, it is charismatic leaders who are able to devise effective strategies and accrue mobilisational resources in a way that is essential to the ongoing actions of the organisation. McCarthy and Zald highlight the utility of adopting a resource mobilisation approach, which "examines the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages

of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success…" (1977, 1213). As mentioned above, Ganz also talks about "strategic capacity" and the ways in which the underdog can sometimes use strategic resourcefulness to compensate for lack of actual resources (2009, vii). In the cases discussed in the following chapters, we will see the ways that charismatic leaders have been able to develop effective strategies for mobilisation that are able to mobilise (basic) resources in times of great scarcity.

For example, Patricia Guerrero (leader of the LMD) writes that when she first arrived in El Pozón, she met with displaced women who were suffering, sad, and fearful, but did not have an understanding of the wider gendered dynamics of power that had led to their displacement. She discusses initiating a dialogue (that continues to this day) to explain the linkages between the wider context of conflict and the impact it has on women's daily lives. She began to run meetings in which she would talk to women about their experiences and about the rights as women and as victims. Moreover, as part of this discussion she was able to awake consciousness about the potential for creative strategies of resistance against this violence (Sandvik et al., 2014, 75). Here, we see that Guerrero was exercising what Ganz would call "strategic capacity" through the depth of her motivation, the breadth of her salient knowledge about the situation, and the robustness of her reflective practices (2009, 14).

Resistance in the case of the HRF is the act of rejecting the marginality caused by displacement and the resulting manifold forms of violence. The HRF approach explains that the successful employment of particular strategies by women (as directed by charismatic leaders) allow them to mobilise as feminists to defend and secure rights,

overcoming significant barriers in the process. Those strategies include: collective identity creation, social capital building, (legal) framing, and acts of certification. The rest of this chapter is dedicated to outlining these component parts of HRF.

1. Consciousness Raising Creates Collective Identity

In the context of HRF, when a charismatic leader emerges in a particular neighbourhood, she first has to show potential participants that they share certain identities that make their collective action compatible. In a domain of losses, these are based around fear and trauma. As outlined in studies by Moser and McIlwaine, this fear can serve to motivate or to paralyse (C. Moser & McIlwaine, 2001). The subsequent adoption and transformation of their identity as displaced women/victims/survivors is an active strategy of the organisation, as "activists have to work hard to get a certain category of people to think of themselves as belonging to a group with distinctive problems and interests" (Whittier, 2015, 115).

This is consistent with Friedman and McAdam's work on collective identity and activism, which considers different existing theories to explain the life of a social movement. They look at the concept of collective identity itself as an incentive that encourages an individual's participation in a movement. Defining collective identity as a set of communally-held values, attitudes, commitments, and rules for behaviour to which an individual subscribes, they posit that the act of joining a movement implies that the individual sees value in assuming the shared identity. Collective identity, therefore, functions as a selective incentive that motivates participation (ibid., 157).

Loveman asserts that in a high risk setting, sometimes mobilisation becomes "the only choice" 1998, 482). This is clearly an exaggeration. Women can choose *not* to mobilise, and indeed many do make this choice. When they *do* choose to mobilise, however, their sense of self can become tied up in their new mobilisational identity.

For example, Calhoun discusses the issue of identity in collective action, noting that: "bravery to the point of apparent foolishness is essential to many social movements, especially the most radical" (1991, 51). He goes on to say that given the low odds of a desirable outcome, given the lengthiness of some actions, and the high risks of involvement, those who engage in radical actions are held to be either psychologically crazy, acting on inadequate information (completely unaware of historical precedents), or forced into seeming bravery by being involved in a situation with no room for individual will. These explanations, however, are falsifiable. Rather, he states:

> The risk may be borne not because of the likelihood of success in manifest goals, but because participation in a course of action has over time committed one to an identity that would be irretrievably violated by pulling back from the risk (ibid, 1991, 51).

Loveman notes that identity can both influence and be influenced by the process of struggle. As Calhoun (1991, 52) says: "identity is, in many cases, forged in and out of struggle, including participation in social movements." Moreover, a person's embeddedness in social networks can impact whether she participates in collective action:

> Personal ties are particularly important for sustaining contentious collective action in extremely repressive contexts because they provide a foundation of constructing the types of dense and insulated social networks required for effective resistance (Loveman, 1998, 482, citing Wickham-Crowley, 1992).

Accepting that identity is not given or immutable but adapted and re-forged through struggle, when it comes to high risk conditions, what is the value of identity based

explanations of mobilisation? Participants in HRF in Colombia are women. They are vulnerable women, often further discriminated against based on class, race, and sex. They are responsible for families, for children, for housework. Often, they must work – particularly if they have been widowed. They are un- or under-educated and usually work in the informal sector. Their social locations mean that extracting themselves from contexts of high risk is not an option; if they could leave El Pozón or Usme or Claudia Catalina, they would.

At the same time, however, the construction of collective identity is a *strategy* of HRF. Part of understanding HRF involves an understanding of how collective identity is created, and why it brings perceived utility to members. Taylor and Whittier note that movements are able to establish consciousness by attaching meaning to their group affiliation and collective action (1992, 169). Their study uses the example of the lesbian feminist movements to track how different communities are able to generate a collective identity that encourages the group to engage in a wide range of social and political actions that challenge the dominant system (ibid., 170). Their research is based in new social movement theory and accordingly categorises itself as an approach that utilises an "identity-oriented paradigm" (ibid., 179). They further state that when examining any politicised identity community, it is necessary to analyse the social and political struggle that created this identity. In a context of high risk, it is pervasive violence that creates the conditions for HRF to emerge.

When it comes to *feminist* identities, Padilla's work in popular neighbourhoods in Lima, shows that: "women who are actively involved in popular organisations gain gender consciousness which, through activism, leads them to develop gender identities" (2001, 94). Whittier explains further: "Participating in consciousness-raising groups, activist

organisations, and political actions such as boycotts or pickets gave women a new interpretation of themselves and the events around them." (2015, 115).

Taylor and Whittier's study explores the idea of boundaries in terms of locating some people as members of a group. For the purposes of this thesis, such boundary-drawing is relatively simple – displaced women are the 'in-group'. The gendered lens, when applied to the HRF framework, puts this clearly into focus. What moves beyond drawing borders around those included and those excluded from membership is the idea of group consciousness, a phenomenon that "imparts a larger significance to a collectivity" (1992). This concept of consciousness refers to the interpretative frameworks that a group uses in its articulation of a struggle against a dominant order. In the case of HRF, this can be as simple as showing women that they are not alone in their suffering, and that others have also experienced various acts of violence during forced displacement. That is:

> Although participants construct their consciousness interactively in a movement context, individuals internalise it…At root it is about seeing oneself as part of a group, a collectivity. The mechanism by which this is accomplished is the construction of group boundaries, or symbolic and material distinctions between members of the collectivity and others." (Whittier, 2015, 119).

Moreover, as was the case with women in El Salvador (Zulver, 2014, 2016), there is something to be said for informing women that not only are their situations uncomfortable and painful, but they are legally considered to be legal subjects in need of protection and reparation (see Lemaitre et al , 2014; Lemaitre & Sandvik, 2015; Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2015). Interviews consistently reveal that before joining a HRF organisation, women were aware that they were living in near-unbearable situations, but they did not necessarily know that they pertained to the legal category of 'victims'.[23]

[23] For more on the legal construction of victimhood in Colombia, see (Arango Olaya, 2010; Lemaitre et al, 2014). Interestingly, women interviewed for this thesis highlighted on multiple occasions that they no longer consider themselves victims, but rather, survivors. The transformational element of

Holston has written about "insurgent citizenship", an understanding of citizenship that rests on the idea that participants understand, crave, and demand their *right to rights* (2008). In a personal correspondence with Dr Holston, he explained that "insurgent citizenship" requires a conceptual elaboration in addition to an experiential elaboration – "both are crucial" (2013). Identity formation and the ascription of value found in collective identity involves both an understanding of the lived reality of being a woman in a violent context, and also the conceptual understanding that the risk of mobilising is seen as appropriate given the perceived greater risk of *not* mobilising. Essentially, both experientially (through lived experience) and conceptually (through a desire for gender equality), women are able to join together in a type of collective action in which they can frame (and indeed justify) the high risks of mobilising as being in their best interests. This is captured by McGarry and Jasper, who call collective identity a "banner" under which people can be mobilised, one in which "identification can follow from collective action as well as contribute to it" (2015, 1).[24]

All of this goes to say that the formation of collective identity is key to the success of HRF mobilisation. That women are better able to minimise their losses by adopting a strategic and feminist identity of resistance facilitates HRF mobilisation. That women are able to see that they are not alone in their struggle, and that they are validated in rejecting

collective identity will be discussed in the empirical chapters.

[24] The same authors note that in recent years scholars have started to highlight the restrictive nature of collective identities in social movements. The book, *the Identity Dilemma*, then examines both the advantages and disadvantages of the concept. Collective identities, some scholars note, are "traps that distort complex realities, "naturalise" labels and deceive individuals about their own goals and desires" (McGarry & Jasper, 2015, 4). This thesis, however, asserts that this *dilemma* is not pertinent to HRF mobilisation. While there are problems with an essentialising identity that looks only at the lack of agency and victimhood, in the case of HRF, victims do not have the luxury of expanding beyond the immediacy of their identities as targets of ongoing acts of violence. These remain constant, and thus looking for an organisation that fits better with one's identity extends too far beyond the lowest common denominator here – seeking protection from violence.

the conditions of marginality to which they are exposed is a product of participation in this same organisation. The scope conditions of HRF mobilisation mean that McAdam's *Identity Dilemma* (see footnote above) is not applicable to the specific collective identities adopted, modified, and leveraged by participants.

2. Social Capital Building

Within this framework of identity creation and consciousness building, the idea of social capital can be employed as a further component part of the HRF framework. Putnam defines it as the "connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (2000, 19). He outlines the ways in which social capital can be simultaneously a 'private good' and a 'public good,' bringing benefit to both the individual involved in a specific network, and to the community at large.

Social capital varies, with *bonding* social capital and *bridging* social capital representing the most important distinctions. The former is about bringing people together, for "undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilising solidarity" and can involve providing social and psychological support for members of a community (ibid., 20). Bridging capital, on the other hand, is about creating linkages to external assets and for information diffusion. There is a worry that bonding social capital has the potential to make a group insular and antagonistic to out-groups. In certain situations, though, it can have positive social effects. This is the case for women living in high risk contexts; coming together as a collective allows for solidarity, healing, and belonging. Putnam notes that a group can bond and bridge at the same time. We will further see this in the case studies, where

organisations like the LMD and AFROMUPAZ try to link themselves to institutions of the state (like the Victims' Unit and the Mayor's Office) in order to get the support and help the women need.

In her gendered continuum of violence, Moser articulates the idea that assessments of the impacts of violence on a country and its society's capital can provide insight into the true cost of violence (2001, 41). The more assets that an individual or a community acquires and the better they manage them, the less is their vulnerability and exclusion. Social capital, for her, is defined as the "rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity, and trust embedded in social relations, social structures, and a society's institutional arrangements that enables its members to achieve their individual and community objectives" (ibid., 43, quoting Narayan, 1997). Moreover, this definition recognises that social capital "is generated and provides benefits through the membership of social networks or structures" (Moser & McIlwaine, 2001, quoting Portes, 1998). In situations of high levels of violence, Moser outlines that the relationship between violence and social capital is highly complex: "violence can erode productive social capital when it reduces trust and cooperation within formal and informal social organisations that are critical for a society to function" (2001, 44).

Women fleeing displacement and other violences in Colombia often arrive to their new homes without knowing anyone else. Women in gang controlled zones in El Salvador are afraid to leave the house for fear of violence (Zulver, 2016). Fear of further violence can erode women's ability to connect with each other and with their community. For this reason, leaders try to build social capital as a strategy of resistance in HRF mobilisation. In communities where residents describe their lack of trust in terms of "lack of social

fabric" (Moser, 2001, 159), women's groups have the potential to forge new networks that have the dual purpose of producing a private good (the benefits of support and kinship gained by individual membership) and a public good (rebuilding trust in state institutions, which may eventually serve to lessen structural violence that results, in the first place, in contexts of high violence). Here, the benefits of bonding social capital become evident.

We can again draw on Gould's 'emotion work': "More than *manage* emotions – a term that implies a preexisting emotional state that then is amplified or dampened – the emotion work of movements frequently *generates* feelings" (2015, 254). The active *building* of social capital fills this same role. Padilla refers to the way that women who participate actively in a community generate an increase in their self-esteem and in their development of a sense of empowerment, as well as other consquences like "happiness, feelings of accomplishement, and satisfaction" (2001, 103).

The idea that consciousness-building strategies employed by women's groups build social capital constitutes "connecting, empowering, and integrating people and organisations" and can serve to build communities that are resilient in the face of pervasive violence (Colletta & Cullen, 2000, 113). In the context of HRF, participation in women's organisations brings personal satisfaction that then provides the incentive for women to continue to remain active in the organisation, thus increasing the capacity of said organisation. At the beginning, this social capital falls under the *bonding* category. With time and as groups become established, they begin to engage in *bridging* social capital with institutions of the state and other organisations.

Moreover, the bonds of being part of a social network provide communal services that an individual alone might not be able to access, particularly when the presence of the state is weak. This particular phenomenon is not unique to high risk settings. For example, the literature shows that over the years women have come together in collectives that focus on cooking or providing childcare when women are unable to individually find the resources to survive (see Fernandes, 2007; Safa, 1990, 357; Schroeder, 2006). What changes this in the case of high risk conditions, however, is that the bonds of trust with neighbours and community members do not necessarily *a priori* exist. Meertens and Stoller remind us that women who have fled displacement are often seeking anonymity in their new homes so that they cannot be revictimised (2001, 140).

Finally, the social goods that come from being part of a community of women who have also experienced (and continue to experience) the violence(s) that come with conflict situations are a good in themselves. Learning that one is not alone in one's suffering and being able to share stories and memories that have previously been too painful to recount is an integral part of healing. This will be discussed in detail in the coming case studies, but for now it is important to mention that building social capital – forging a context in which women feel safe (physically, psychologically, and emotionally) to connect to other people – can be considered one of the strategic acts of feminist resistance that forms part of HRF mobilisation.

Meertens and Stoller note the female victims of displacement are often widows, and have to dedicate themselves to taking care of their children, which "leaves no time for emotions or for memories, so the necessary mourning for the loss of their loved ones is postponed almost indefinitely" (2001, 142). This remains true outside of the context of

displacement; suffering the trauma of violence (sexual, physical, or emotional) is widely known to be underreported. Especially in a context where the perpetrators of this violence still have social dominance, it is not surprising that victims are reticent to report or even discuss their ordeals. Being part of a group and growing the bonds of confidentially and security is therefore a strategy that allows empowerment for women who were disempowered through (often repeated) acts of violence and victimisation.

Indeed, in post-conflict contexts, Porter (2016, 36) tells us:

> When the voices of women and men are suppressed, silenced, excluded, or ignored, agency is undermined. When space is created for these stories to be told, and they are listened to respectfully, not only is dignity affirmed, but the possibility of a gender-sensitive approach to responding to these stories is enhanced. …Listening to stories that are told about individual versions of trauma and personal experiences of violence requires compassionate responses if these stories are to be given significance in individual, communal, and national narratives on the violent past.

In terms of *bridging* social capital, we can see the ways in which the organisations studied in this thesis try to create alliances with state institutions and other purveyors of resources. This is particularly evident when it comes to the collective reparations process. There is a critical need for organisations to create linkages with national and government actors if they are to finance projects, which is fundamental to the ability to generate incremental material benefits over time (Lemaitre & Sandvik, 2015, 13). We will see how the LMD and AFROMUPAZ negotiate these relationships in coming chapters (see also, Zulver, 2017, forthcoming-c).

Creating social capital therefore represents a strategy that empowers women and gives them back agency. This involves both solidifying the norms of trust and reciprocity that facilitate sharing and healing, as well as establishing efficacious connections with actors

who provide external resources. This is essential to a gender justice project in the context of (and aftermath of) a context of high violence.

3. (Legal) Framing Adds Value to Collective Identity

Snow and Benford articulate the idea that social movement actors draw on collective action frames that "underscore the injustice of a social situation" and "articulate a narrative that constitutes a liberating interpretative framework" (1992). Ryan and Gamson further outline:

> Facts take on their meaning by being embedded in frames, which render them relevant and significant or irrelevant and trivial. The contest is lost at the outset if we allow our adversaries to define what facts are relevant. To be conscious of framing strategy is not to be manipulative. It is a necessary part of giving coherent meaning to what is happening in the world, and one can either do it unconsciously or with deliberation and conscious thought" (2015, 137).

I propose that HRF organisations perform such actions: participants unite to draw attention to the illegal nature of the social injustices they have faced and create a narrative of consciousness in an attempt to rectify these injustices. Leaders encourage and teach participants to use legal measures to underscore and legitimise what they have suffered.

Snow et al. (1986) seek to explain support for and participation in social movement organisations (SMOs) by expanding on Goffman's idea of framing (1959). Through 'frame alignment processes', they show the process of linking individual interests, values and beliefs such that they become compatible with SMO activities, goals and ideologies. Framing explains the nuts and bolts of *how* a social movement adds value to its associated collective identity.

For Goffman, a frame is a way for individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space (1959). Doing so allows experiences to gain a certain meaning, and then directs further action, both individually and collectively. In their article, Snow et al. critique the static view of participation adopted by many social movement theorists. They argue:

> Just as movement activities and campaigns change with developments in a movement's career and environment of operation, similarly there is variation in the individual's stake in participating in new or emergent activities. Decisions to participate over time are thus subject to frequent reassessment and renegotiation (1986, 467).

Enloe's seminal work on international politics using a gendered lens notes that when a government or international organisation assumes that women and girls are "somehow less valuable, less responsible, less fully citizens than boys and men," it follows that the officials within these governments and organisations "treat threats to women and girls as trivial, as not worthy of serious attention" (2000, xiv). Research in both El Salvador and Colombia shows that to combat this, women's organisations invest time in registering injustices with the legal mechanisms of the state. This has the dual function of seeking justice for those whose rights have been violated, and also making these cases visible within a framework set out by the same state that then has the responsibility to investigate them. In this way, legal framing legitimises women's victimhood by using the state's own *lingua franca.*

The first step of this is to use collective identity processes and bonding social capital creation to get women to identify not just as a displaced, but as victims (a special legal category that affords particular rights).[25] We will see in the coming chapters the ways in

[25] The report *De Desplazados a Víctimas* (From Displaced People to Victims) looks at the changes that legally categorise people as victims with a specific set of rights to which they are entitled (Lemaitre, López, et al., 2014).

which HRF organisations then encourage group members to register as victims of displacement and violence(s) with the Victims' Unit, as well as denounce crimes before the institutions of the state (including the Attorney General's Office and the Ombudsman's Office), as well as before international bodies like the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR). By framing their experiences as illegal acts that are not being seriously considered by the law, members and leaders are able to direct at least some of their mobilisation resources towards confronting a system that *should* be able to make a difference to the ways they experience violence. They do this by (a) calling on women to make demands on state institutions to comply with their duties (i.e., claiming their right to rights), (b) using the state's own language and mechanisms to define their experiences as unjust within the defined rights and responsibilities (in the Colombian case, included in the 2011 Victim's Law).

Indeed, this process in the Colombian case is well documented in Lemaitre and Sandovik's large study of women's movements' use of legal norms within the transitional justice context (Lemaitre et al., 2014; Sandvik et al., 2014; Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2013, 2015). For example, in the report "From Displaced People to Victims" (English translation of the Spanish title), the authors outline the strategic adoption of the label "victims" by people who had previously not considered themselves as such. By doing so, they framed their identities within the new Victims' Law (2011), meaning that they qualified for transitional justice measures offered by the state. In this way, they were better able to negotiate their inclusion and presence in institutional spaces (Lemaitre et al., 2014, 15)

This strategy of framing highlights that violence against women is not just perpetrated by the actors we might expect (gang members, paramilitaries, traffickers, husbands, common criminals, etc.), but also by the judicial and legal arms of the state that fail to address women's experiences with violence as illegal. This is what, in the context of Ciudad Juárez in Mexico, Ensalaco calls the "failure to exercise due diligence" in terms of failure to investigate and prosecute (2006), and what Sanford says differentiates the term *feminicide* from *femicide* (2008).[26]

The idea of frame *transformation* is also important in terms of explaining continued mobilisation over time. Beyond the legal categories, research shows that HRF organisations also encourage members not to identify solely as victims, but rather as *survivors*. This goes beyond the legal nature of framing but is still important to mention as it is an example of feminist resistance against violent circumstances. What it means to say is that victims of violence do not always need to consider themselves as actors without agency. Indeed, adopting the 'survivor' identity is a way of empowering women[27], transforming them from passive individuals acted upon to protagonists of change.

4. Contentious Actions: Certification as the Action Items

What remains, then, is *certification*, the action item. Certification refers to the "validation of actors, their performances, and their claims by external authorities" (McAdam et al.,

[26] As Sanford outlines in the case of feminicide, the crime of murdering a woman also has political implications; the murderer is guilty, but so are the state and judicial structures that normalise misogyny via impunity, silence, and indifference when it comes to prevention, investigation, and prosecution (2008).

[27] For more on the empowering impact of adopting a feminist label, see (Padilla, 2001).

2001, 145). The authors say that processes of certification explain why members of social movements spend energy in "public affirmations of shared identities: marching together, displaying shared symbols, acting out of solidarity" (ibid., 147). They explain that certification needs to be distinguished from ideas of the intrinsic value brought by social capital and collective identity. Solidarity in terms of certification, in fact, is about making a successful claim of collective worthiness, of gaining recognition as a credible political player with the capacity to make a difference.

In terms of HRF, certification further addresses the question of why women participate despite the risks incurred by doing so. Acts of solidarity – marching in the streets, engaging in *plantónes* (sit-ins) in state buildings, and making claims before state and institutional officials – indeed have the potential to bring further suffering to participants and leaders. When members frame certain types of violence as illegal and certain responses from the state and judiciary as remiss or negligent – and take these claims to international bodies or the media[28] – this is an act of certification. When women publicly keep their own violence observatories as watchdog institutions because they do not trust the state's records or conduct their own investigations into crimes because the state is not doing so[29] – this is an act of certification. When women call on the Inter-American Court for Human Rights because the state is not guaranteeing the protections it is obliged to provide, this is an act of certification.[30]

[28] For more, refer to the "Boomerang Effect" in Keck and Sikkink (1998); and the "NGOisation of feminist movements" in Alvarez (1999).
[29] These examples both come from research in El Salvador. See (Zulver, 2014, 2016).
[30] This example comes from the Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas, and will be discussed in the empirical chapter. For more, see (Sandvik et al., 2014; Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2013; Organisation of American States, 2009, 2011; Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women, 2006).

Claiming a voice and a right to have rights is a key factor in transforming a group from being politically and socially invisible, to becoming a legitimate force with which other actors (the state, institutions, individuals) will engage in dialogue. Certification provides an active way for women's organisations to continually define and redefine themselves in relation to their immediate perceived dangers and make their identities public. Making an act public has a few functions, including presenting the group as legitimate and requiring answers and explanations.

A charismatic leader sees that engaging in acts of certification is one of the ways to bring about an incremental gain that encourages continued participation over time and new recruitment. For example, we will see in the case of the LMD that building a City of Women was not only a physical, but also a symbolic act that showed women their ability to change the "tomorrows of violence" by making their day to day lives safer. The material benefits of the City are obvious, and the non-material bonds of pride and satisfaction at completing an action further add justification for why a woman would decide to participate in a potentially risky undertaking.

D. Conclusion: Linking the Why and the How of HRF

This chapter has explained why women (who we might expect not to mobilise) *do* act collectively in high risk contexts. The simplest explanation is that a charismatic leader has the ability to convince potential participants of the material and non-material benefits of participation within a domain of losses. That is, when inaction does not guarantee safety, and action has the ability to create a sense of agency over the "tomorrows of

violence", women can be convinced that mobilising is something they can justify. The strategies she chooses are able to bring about the material and non-material benefits required to encourage participation in the first place.

The more complex reading of the dynamics at play, however, show that the presence of a charismatic leader does not reveal the whole picture. Indeed, it is the *bond* between the leader and the participant – and then the participants themselves – which allows participants to overcome original barriers to mobilisation, and also sustains action over time. This bond is reflexive and recursive; once someone decides to participate their identity becomes fundamentally tied up with the collective. This is where the pillars of action (the *how*) allow the participant to experientially understand why they should continue to mobilise and encourage others to do the same. There are benefits to doing so, both material and non-material, and these supersede any potential for a lower risk of violence, especially when the social context does not guarantee that non-participation is linked to increased safety.

This means to say that a charismatic leader is not a grand puppeteer in charge of the entire fate of the collective. Indeed, she may initially play a strong role in generating participation, and then continue to direct action in ways that she thinks has the potential to bring about success. The bonds between participants become a good in themselves (part of the "psychic income"). Moreover, when past mobilisation has led to material gains, women might expect ongoing material gains in the future. In periods without material gains, psycho-social benefits can sustain mobilisation. This combination of non-material benefits and incremental gains creates a positive feedback loop, leading to continued and dedicated ongoing participation. Indeed, Madsen and Snow talk about the

evolution of the charismatic bond, noting that over time followers lose some of their emotional fervour and become more committed to the movement than to the leader (1991, 147).

Why women join *and remain* in organisations over the years can be explained, then, by some combination of expected or delivered material rewards and psychosocial support. It should be highlighted that this sustained participation continues in an ongoing context of violence; while levels of violence have varied over the years and conflict actors have reconfigured (Idler, forthcoming), what remains constant is that there are daily risks of violence associated with being a woman living in particular communities. Consequently, there are also risks associated with mobilising as part of a women's organisation in these same communities. As subsequent chapters document, these risks are not only threatened; some members of these communities have suffered sexual and physical violence as a direct result of their participation in the organisation.

Continued participation and continued exposure to risk, then, becomes part of the way that women define themselves and are able to exert agency in what is otherwise a dire and hopeless situation. During fieldwork one woman expressed that she feels obligated to continue with her work: "I have to keep moving forward. After everything we've suffered… I don't have any option but to continue my work… I have to keep going (Interview, 31 January 2018). What she is expressing here is that her life project is now so strongly tied up with HRF mobilisation that abandoning the project is unthinkable. Indeed, Elcheroth and Reicher argue:

> Collective identities in the aftermath of violence…represent the bonds of solidarity and sociality that are left over once many, if not most, of people's ordinary social connections have been broken….As a consequence, one typical feature of identities re-shaped by violence is their

> rigidity: by giving up alternative ways to define themselves, people also lose…their capacity to navigate flexibly between a variety of relevant identities (2017, 100).

By this, they mean that during conflict, new identities and patterns of mobilisation emerge out of extraordinary circumstances and then become the norm. Auyero expands on this in his work about contentious identities; even after revolts subside, protestors (with no previous experience of collective action) think of these episodes in personal terms – "their lives have radically changed" (2003, 2). Especially given the protracted power dynamics of the conflict, high risk mobilisation is a way that women can gain a semblance of control over their own lives; mobilisation is therefore sustained because it has proven successful in the past, and this reinforces its ability to modify the "tomorrows of violence" that women might otherwise feel are inevitable.

Moreover, there is also a question of irreversibility of participation; if joining an organisation increases the risk a person faces, this risk would be even further augmented if they were to eventually leave the organisation. That is, publicly associating with an organisation that is targeted for ongoing violence is one thing if you have the support or "strength in numbers" of the other participants. It is another thing to have *left* the group (and the protections it affords, whether these are real or perceived) but to remain associated with it in the mind's eye of the perpetrators. More than just the "loyalty question" outlined by Hirschman (1970), the decision to "exit" or "voice" in the light of grievances is influenced by the ongoing and real danger that (continuing to) mobilise presents.[31]

[31] Further research might draw on literature about the slim possibilities of leaving organisations in situations of high risk (for example, gangs) in order to understand how women weigh up the irreversibility of their participation in their decision to sustain mobilisation.

The remainder of this thesis examines three case studies (two positive and one negative) in order to illustrate the above dynamics. First, we will look at the case of the *Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas*, an organisation of displaced women in Bolívar department. Then, we will look at AFROMUPAZ, a collective of Afro-Colombian women displaced from the Pacific coast to Bogotá. Finally, we will examine a neighbourhood in Riohacha, La Guajira, where women do *not* mobilise, despite similarities in both the social environment and the residents' profiles to the other cases. By looking at the both the history of how these organisations began and sustained themselves, as well as the tactics they have used, it will become clear that HRF is a useful framework for this particular type of resistance to gendered violence.

Chapter III: HRF in the Colombian Context

> *Internally displaced women in Colombia… must mobilise in the intersection of displacement, poverty, and women's subordinate status in society (Lemaitre & Sandvik, 2015, 33).*

The previous chapter engaged with why and how women mobilise despite high risk conditions. It did this mainly from a general perspective. With the theoretical underpinnings of High Risk Feminism and HRF mobilisation now established, the purpose of this chapter is to outline the specificities of the Colombian context. Doing so will further impress the relevance of the selected case studies to the phenomenon at hand.

Before entering a specific discussion of the domains of losses faced by displaced women in Colombia, this chapter will begin by contextualising the larger theatre of the country's armed conflict. Next, it will discuss the intersectional and gendered impacts of the conflict. Finally, it will look at the current arena of women's mobilisation, describing the social and legal environments in which this takes place.

In all, this chapter serves to paint a picture of violence and high risk for women in Colombia. This will allow for a better understanding of the environment in which the women in the forthcoming case studies have mobilised – and continue to mobilise – over time. My fieldwork took place from 2016-2018, as the civil conflict with the FARC was reaching an official end. Despite this, it is important to note that the women discussed in this thesis were mobilising during the height of the conflict (in the late 1990s). The following chapters document their historical trajectories as compiled from interviews and secondary literature. They also examine their contemporary strategies of mobilisation within in a specific, transitional context (for example, in terms of the legal opportunity

landscape). This transitional period does not mean that the women's groups studied in this thesis have fundamentally changed their strategies, but rather, have adapted them to the new opportunities available.

A. War in Colombia

The National Centre for Historical Memory notes that the Colombia's armed conflict has been one of the bloodiest in the history of Latin America (2013). Between 1958 to the time of writing, the conflict caused the deaths of more than 267,000 people[32] (Unidad para las Víctimas, 2018). Indeed, the conflict is problematic to measure and analyse given the complexity of documenting victims, the difficulty of differentiating armed actors, and the magnitude of decades of violence (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2017; Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2013; Wirtz et al., 2014).

The conflict began in the 1960s with the creation of the FARC, the (formerly) largest and oldest guerrilla group in Latin America. Inspired by Marxist-Leninist teachings, they came together under the banner of land redistribution for Colombia's poor peasants. They engaged in guerrilla warfare against the Colombian state, particularly concentrating in areas with weak state presence.

Over time, the group began to threaten the interests of Colombia's elites, which led to the creation of self-defence paramilitary units that would (in theory) protect them against the

[32] As the *Registro Unico de Víctimas* is updated on a continuous basis, this number represents data available on 27 February 2018.

Communist threat of the FARC. By 1997, these paramilitary organisations coalesced to become the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC, *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*). Added to the fray were a plethora of other actors, including the ELN (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, National Liberation Army[33]), the M-19 (now defunct), and various drugs cartels and criminal organisations.

Both the FARC and the AUC became increasingly violent during the 1990s. Both turned to illegal activities (including narco-trafficking and illegal mining) to fund themselves. For example, the AUC partnered with drugs cartels to profit from narco-trafficking, while the FARC used kidnapping, drug-trafficking, and extortion to support its activities. The groups violently vied to control territory, leaving terror in their wake. Crimes including kidnapping, forced disappearances, homicide, physical violence, sexual violence, torture, recruitment of child soldiers, and planting landmines were widespread (see Unidad para las Víctimas, 2018b).

In 2005, under the government of Álvaro Uribe, the paramilitary organisations demobilised. The legal mechanism for doing so was *Ley de Justicia y Paz, Ley 975 de 2005* (the Justice and Peace Law, or Law 975 of 2005). Officially, more than 30,000 paramilitaries completed the demobilisation process. As noted by InSight Crime, however, the shortcomings of the peace process were immediately evident, as the government lacked the infrastructure to verify who the demobilised paramilitaries were and whether they had in fact turned in their weapons. The groups began to operate under

[33] The ELN is still active. During the course of writing, it entered a ceasefire with the government (BBC, 2017), but this was suspended in January 2018 after a series of attacks orchestrated by the rebel group. At the time of submission (April 2018), peace talks were underway again.

new names even before the demobilisation process formally finished in 2006. These groups are now referred to as criminal gangs, or BACRIM (*bandas criminales*), and include the Urabeños, the Rastrojos, ERPAC, and the Aguilas Negras, among others (InSight Crime, 2017). The coming chapters will show that these groups still exert violent social control among displaced populations.

In 2016, after four years of negotiations in Havana, Cuba, representatives of the government and the FARC presented a 310-page peace agreement (FARC-EP & the National Government of Colombia, 2016). As per President Santos' public promise, on 2 October 2016, the Colombian people had the chance to cast votes to decide on the fate of the Accords. In contrast to most opinion polls (which predicted the 'Yes' vote to win by 66 per cent) (Brodzinsky, 2016), the Peace Accord was narrowly rejected in the plebiscite, with a margin of 50.2 per cent to 49.8 per cent, a difference of fewer than 54,000 votes (ibid.). After a frantic period of revision, in December 2016, Santos quietly passed the updated Accords through Congress.

Once adopted, the Accords mandated that within 180 days, the guerrilla fighters would move from their nomadic jungle and mountain camps into UN-monitored *zonas veredales* (demobilisation zones). Here, they handed in their weapons, and began a process of demobilisation that transformed them from combatants to civilians. They then began a process of reintegration into society. In return, they are guaranteed protection, reduced jail sentences if they confess, resources for reintegration, and the ability to form a political party in the national government (Associated Press, 2016). At the time of writing, the former rebels have handed in all of their weapons, formed an official political party, and ran in the 2018 parliamentary elections.

Since the signing of the Accords, however, the dynamics of violence have changed within Colombia (InSight Crime & Universidad del Rosario, 2018). Actors like the ELN rebels, dissident members of the FARC, and criminal groups are taking advantage of power vacuums left by the FARC to assert their influence and to gain economic control in industries like illegal mining and coca cultivation. The Institute for the Development of Peace (INDEPAZ) reports that since the Accords were passed 170 social leaders and human rights defenders were murdered in 2017, up more than 45 per cent since 2016 (El Tiempo, 2018a). More than 1,000 people were displaced in four days between 17-20 January 2018, and the National Ombudsman worries that unless government actions are taken, these numbers will increase (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2018). Finally, ongoing chaos in nearby Venezuela is giving rise to cross-border smuggling and criminal dynamics (InSight Crime, 2018). These new security concerns highlight the difficult task of balancing reparation for past atrocities while concomitantly preventing further acts of violence. While difficult, however, it is imperative for the success of the country's transitional justice programme and the prospects of peace more generally.

The effects of such protracted violence have changed the social landscape in Colombia. The war has left an estimated 7.4 million people displaced (Unidad para las Víctimas, 2018; See Figure 3.1 below). This represents nearly 15 per cent of the country's overall population. The majority of displaced people are women. Indeed, the case studies in this thesis document organisations of displaced women.

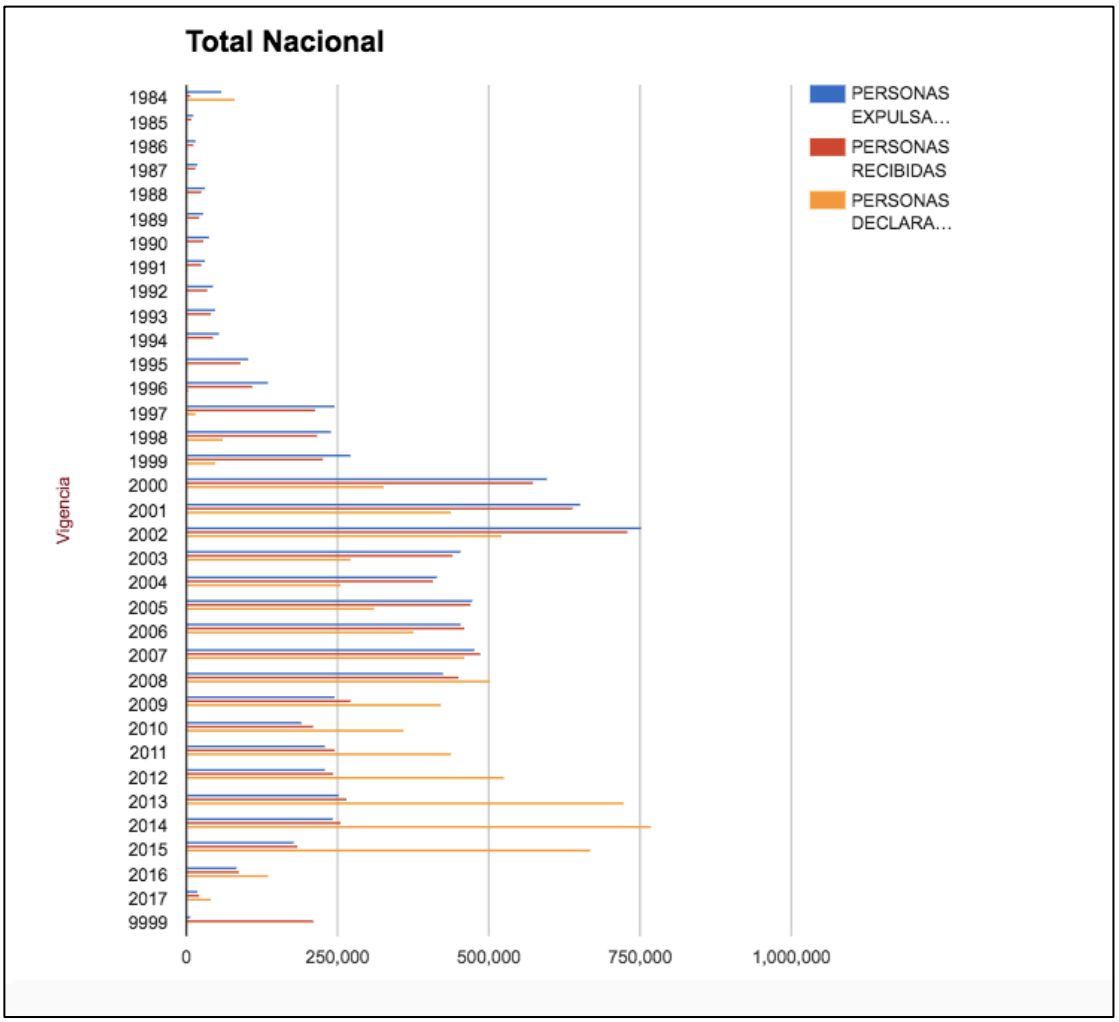


Figure 3.1: Displacement Data, taken from the *Unidad para las Víctimas* database. The blue line represents the year in which people who were displaced, and the orange line represents the year that they declared their displacement to the *Unidad*. We can see that the early 2000s (when the LMD and AFROMUPAZ began to organise) represent a spike in the levels of displacement in Colombia. Source: https://rni.unidadvictimas.gov.co/RUV [Accessed 28 August 2017].

It is important to note that when we talk of the process of displacement, we are referring to two separate domains of losses, what Wirtz et al. label the conflict setting and the displacement setting (2014). Indeed, as Lemaitre and Sandvik note in the Colombian context, displaced people's suffering does not end after the first act of violence:

> The problems confronting IDP are not limited to poverty, discrimination, and loss of livelihood and of community. Despite a favourable legal framework and an abundance of supportive institutions, IDP also face enormous difficulties when attempting to organise to claim rights, largely because of the persistent violence that characterises their environment (2015, 6)

Oslender's study of Colombia's Pacific coast region further notes the many ways that people suffer from the act of displacement: the production of landscapes of fear; restricted mobility and routine spatial practices; dramatic transformation of the sense of place (people begin to feel, think, and talk in different ways about their living places, which are now impregnated with traumatic experiences, memories, and fear); deterritorialisation (physical uprooting and forceful displacement); reterritorialisation (return to places of origin, or the process of establishing a new life in a new city); and spatial strategies of resistance (2008, summarised from 81-84). In concert, he refers to these facets of trauma as the "geographies of terror" (ibid., 77).

This section has painted a picture of ongoing conflict in Colombia, with a focus on the phenomenon of forced displacement. The following section looks at the specifically gendered dimensions of the conflict and discusses the differential ways in which women have suffered multiple violences over the years.

B. Gender, Intersectionality, and the Colombian Context

As was outlined in the previous chapter, one of the necessary but not sufficient conditions for HRF mobilisation is that the participants operate in a domain of losses. This section describes the Colombia-specific domain of losses in which women in particular have found themselves throughout the course of the country's conflict.

Generally speaking, Cockburn (2013) outlines the myriad ways that war and conflict impact women differently than men, and posits that concepts of security must also

incorporate these differential experiences in order to secure lasting peace. El-Bushra and Gardner (2016, 444) highlight the importance of using a gendered frame of reference as "gendered power relations illuminate understandings of conflict in important practical and theoretical ways." Boesten and Wilding (2015, 2) refer to a "consensus in feminist literature about the continuum of gender based violence: the idea that violence against women may take different forms and be of a different scale during periods of conflict." They further note that post-conflict settings are often unable to address the "messier [agendas]" presented by women's multiple experiences, identities, and voices.

When it comes to the Colombian conflict, we know that women have been the differentially impacted (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2017; Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2013; Meertens, 2010, 2012; Meertens & Stoller, 2001; Oslender, 2008; Zulver, 2017, forthcoming-c). For example, we see that:

> …Women continue to be a military objective insofar as they form part of the "indiscriminate acts" of terror against the civilian population… Sexual violation also continues to be a practice of war, although largely undocumented. Just like the "indiscriminate acts", it constitutes a subterranean form of gender violence (Meertens & Stoller, 2001: 134).[34]

Meertens continues:

> The armed conflict [in Colombia] has had a considerable and disproportionate impact on women, as they suffer specific risks and confront specific vulnerability because of their gender. Examples include: forced displacement in conditions of marital abandonment or widowhood (leading to an increasing number of women-headed households in displaced populations in citites); gender-based violence and especially sexual violence by armed actors as a weapon of war; the imposition of patriarchal models of social control by local power holders; and the historical lack of recognition of women's rights that has facilitate their dispossesion and violent seizure of their land (2010, 154).

[34] It is important to note, however, that the dynamics of armed conflict and gender violence (in Colombia, and generally) are not uniform. For example, women made up approximately 30 per cent of the FARC. For more on their contradictory experiences, see (Stallone & Zulver, 2017). For more on the multiple roles women play in conflict settings, see *Victims, Perpetrators, or Actors?* (Moser & Clark, 2001b) and the work by Dara Cohen (e.g., 2013).

Furthermore, Meertens reports that even after the demobilisation of the paramilitaries in Colombia (in 2005), women "still experience threats to their human security, in their intimate (sexual violence), personal (assassinations), and organisational (persecution of female leaders) lives" (2010, 159). Despite recent superficial progress towards formal peace, an "enormous security gap" persisted, meaning that the Colombian state was unable to uphold basic guarantees and the rule of law in the local settings in which many vulnerable women live (ibid.).

Meertens and Stoller further outline the specific struggles that women face when it comes to the experience of displacement in Colombia:

> Women are victims and survivors of displacement and uprooting in the first place as widows of rural violence, heads of household suddenly expelled toward the cities; in the second place as spouses, when the effects of violence and uprooting and the necessities of survival touch them differently from men; and in the third place as leaders whose experiences of participation and organisation help them to forge new life projects, individual and collective, in the city" (2001: 134).

An analysis of the gendered impact of the geographies of terror, then, can be broken down into two key moments: "that of *destruction* of lives, possessions, and social ties and that of *survival and reconstruction* of the life project and of the social fabric at the place of arrival" (Meertens and Stoller, 2001: 137).

Moreover, Marciales Montenegro puts forward the argument that *black* women in Colombia have been further targeted during the conflict for both their sex and their race. In her article, she notes how the intersection of race and gender results in a "differentiated impact" that past and present violence have on black women.[35] For her, then, the violence

[35] Crenshaw was one of the first to academically discuss the importance of intersectionality, especially when it comes to identity politics. She notes that racism and sexism do not exist on "mutually exclusive terrains", and that there is a need to consider these "intersectional identities…[of] women of color"

suffered by Afro-Colombian women is not only an expression of gender-based violence, but also one of structural racism (2015). This concept also extends to indigenous women, as discussed in a report by the Grupo de Memoria Histórica (2010), and in a document by Ramírez Boscán, now-exiled leader of *Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu*[36] (2007).

When examining the cases selected for this thesis, therefore, it is essential to take into account the element of race. The three groups studied in the coming chapters are primarily composed of ethnically Afro-Colombian women. The groups, however, identify to different extents with this heritage.[37] For AFROMUPAZ, a connection with Afro-Colombian heritage is a characterising feature of the organisation. Being Afro-Colombian is a fundamental facet of these women's identity. For the women of the LMD, racial/ethnic identity is not necessarily a defining feature of their individual and group identities. The same is the case for the women in Riohacha. Despite this, the social dynamics of racism mean that we cannot simply ignore the question of race when it comes to how the women studied in this thesis have suffered the conflict.

The literature about race, ethnicity, and multicultural citizenship in Latin America highlights that there are high degrees of "racial inequality and discrimination against Afro-Latinos and indigenous populations", despite legal measures that prohibit this sort of discrimination (Hooker, 2005: 285). Hooker emphasises: "racial discrimination is a

(1991: 1243). When considered apart, and "…in the context of violence against women, this elision of difference in identity politics is problematic, fundamentally because the violence that many women experience is often shaped by other dimensions of their identities, such as race and class" (ibid., 1242). Importantly, then, her work focuses on the intersections of race and gender, with the goal of highlighting the need to "account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed" (ibid., 1245).

[36] Further discussed in Chapter 6.

[37] It should further be noted that there are varying ethnicities that fall under the umbrella of "Afro-Colombian". For more, see (Minority Rights Group International, 2018; Ng'weno, 2007).

major cause of these inequalities in the living conditions between white and Afro-descendant Latin Americans" (2008: 282). Indeed, a report by the National Centre for Historical Memory highlights that sexual violence against Afro-Colombian and indigenous women perpetuates practices of domination that have existed since the colonial period (2017, 294).

Lemaitre and Sandvik note in regard to the Colombian conflict:

> IDP [internally displaced people] are discriminated on the basis of their rural (and often racial) origins, as well as their political ideologies: many Colombians imagine IDP to be guerrilla collaborators, paramilitary informants, or participants in the drug trade. *Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, which are disproportionally represented within the displaced population, also face culture loss* (2015, 6, emphasis added).

In the Colombian context, then, we see that the intersection between gender, race, and societal standing mean that women are impacted by the conflict on multiple planes, and must mobilise accordingly.

C. Moving Toward Peace: How Women Are Included

Colombia is currently in a state of flux, somewhere between an ongoing conflict and a nation in post-conflict, constructing a peace process. The December 2016 Peace Accords[38] signed by the government and the FARC have established the conditions for ending the longest-running armed conflict in the Western Hemisphere. Despite this, the country has much to achieve before securing a lasting peace. As Palacios notes, there are multiple actors who have been involved in the Colombian conflict (including guerrilla

[38] For more information about the Peace Process (including the success of the 'No' vote in the October 2016 Plebiscite), see (Palacios, 2016).

groups, public forces, and paramilitaries) and who are responsible for an enormous and systematic violation of human rights that has left millions of victims who now demand reparation, truth, justice, and guarantees of non-repetition (2016). The behemoth task of implementing the Peace Accords and improving the lives of the country's 8.6 million victims of the 52-year armed conflict remains (Amnesty International, 2017).

Two specific mechanisms within Colombia's transitional justice project have been designed to bring reparations to those whose lives have been irreparably transformed by the conflict. The most recent, the Peace Accords themselves, further seek to compensate victims. These include an articulated gender agenda; as women and children statistically feature among the most afflicted by the conflict, the path towards their compensation is referenced differentially. Before this, however, came the Victims' Law, which emerged in 2011 (and was institutionalised in 2012), and promises to give reparations (in varying forms) to victims.

This section describes the Victims' Law and the Peace Accords in order to paint a picture of the moment in which I conducted fieldwork for this thesis. To be clear, I am not saying that current women's mobilisation can be solely explained by the opportunities created by these legal mechanisms. Indeed, as documented in the empirical chapters, women were mobilising well before these were designed and implemented. Rather, I am highlighting the institutional incentives that existed at the moment in which I engaged with these groups. As will be outlined (particularly in the sections about legal framing), these mechanisms do represent opportunities around which women engage in legal mobilisation (see Lemaitre & Sandvik, 2015), and provided apertures for generating further incremental successes over time. Moreover, a discussion of these laws also serves

to frame the differences between the *de jure* legal environment and the *de facto* state of affairs as experienced by victims, which indeed influence the relationship between the organisations and the state.[39]

1. Ley de Víctimas

When it comes to gender equality, the Colombian Peace Accords are some of the most holistic accords in the world (McWilliams, 2016). Before the official Peace was in the process of negotiation, however, Santos' government launched another mechanism by which to begin a transition towards peace (even while the conflict raged on). In 2011, the Colombian government penned and passed the *Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras* (Victims' and Land Restitution Law). The preamble to the *Ley* notes:

> …Within a transitional justice framework, the Victims' and Land Restitution Law constitutes…an unprecedented legal framework for recomposing the social fabric, adopting effective measures for those people who have suffered the consequences of the armed conflict (Ministerio del Interior República de Colombia, 2012).

As part of this law, the government included special compensations for collective victims – collective reparations. Reparations for groups denominated as such are supposed to be *integral* – comprehensive. An umbrella term, comprehensive reparations are intended to include social, economic, cultural, and environmental provisions (Unidad para las Víctimas 2017). A collective victim is defined as:

> Ethnic [or] non-ethnic communities, groups, organisations, and social movements… [for whom] the armed conflict had a negative impact on their community organisation, culture, possibilities of access to education and health and even their livelihoods (World Bank 2016).

[39] I have written an academic article on the subject. At the time of submission, "Implementing the Gender Agenda in Colombia: *de facto* vs *de jure* Collective Reparations for Women's Organisations in the Transition Toward Peace" is undergoing peer review for the journal, *Human Rights Quarterly*. Available upon request, (Zulver, forthcoming-a).

There is a gendered element to this Law as well. Articles 114 to 118 establish norms for women in the restitution processes. The articles include norms that mandate women's preferential attention when it comes to administrative and judicial processes, processes of land restitution, the hand-over of land and properties, priority in receiving the benefits enshrined in Law 731 of 2002 (including access to land, social security, education, training, family subsidies, etc.), and women receiving land titles (Ministerio del Interior 2012, 56-57).

While on paper this law seems comprehensive, the lived reality, interviews show, is less rosy. Interviews with some victims who qualify for both individual and collective reparations show that material reparations have been elusive at best (Zulver, forthcoming-a, forthcoming-b). While this has not been the experience of all victims, these particular interviewees (of the LMD, mainly) were adamant that they had not received what they had been promised for many years by the *Ley de Víctimas* (including financial payment, security and protections, pensions, access to psychological support, etc.). They are left with a bitter taste in their mouth; one member of the *Liga* communicated via text that their collective reparation has not advanced because of a lack of will on behalf of the state administration (Text Message, 9 February 2018).

The view of the institutions in charge of distributing reparations is not blind to the realities of the Colombian context. In an interview, Andrea Ospina Quintero, assistant to Paula Gaviria Betancur (former head of the *Unidad para las Víctimas* (Victims' Unit), and current Presidential Advisor on Human Rights), highlights the way that the *Ley 1448* tried to be comprehensive and holistic. She notes:

> Taking into account the universe that we have in Colombia (with more than eight million victims) … we find that collective reparations have a much wider impact. They allow *communities* to come together and strengthen themselves. Generally, the communities that qualify for collective reparations are those … [whose rights] have not been satisfied because the state has been absent. This presents, however, a double-edged sword: [collective reparations allow] communities to empower themselves, strengthen themselves, and meet the communal needs of the group. But these needs might extend beyond the mandate of the *Unidad*… and this is the problem we are facing in this moment. (Interview, 18 November 2016).

Despite this, Paula Gaviria admits: "There is still a distance between the promises for the victims, for the vulnerable people, and the reality of their lives." This is paired, she notes, with:

> A culture within the communities of victims of *asistencialismo* [reliance on aid/support], where they feel that the state does not respond to anything, and if the state doesn't respond, there is nothing to be done. This generates an enormous dependence on the state. And at the same time, there is a culture adopted by many public officials of not seeing victims as subjects of rights…of not recognising the obligation that they have to give the victims an answer… rather, they see that they are doing the victims a favour. (Interview, 18 November 2016).

The *Ley de Víctimas* is an important mechanism by which the Colombian government aims to compensate the most vulnerable in society with the means to re-create the lives destroyed by conflict. There are vast differences in the implementation and distribution of reparations to those who are entitled to them under the *Ley de Víctimas*. Far from being uniformly or comprehensively provided, the peace dividend has reached different groups to different degrees.

In terms of displaced people, there are two important decisions that paved the way for the Victims' Law. The first is Decision T-025 of 2004 (Colombian Constitutional Court) and the second is the *Auto 092 of 2008* (Decree 092 of 2008). T-025 judicialised public policy regarding internally displaced people in Colombia as an attempt to address the flawed state policies regarding human rights violations. That is, the decision accepted that the condition of millions of IDPs were unconstitutional and determined that existing state policies did not meet the standards set by the Constitutional Court.

The provisions of T-025 laid the groundwork for the *Auto 092 de 2008*, a landmark decision in terms of recognising the disproportionate impact of the conflict on women. It was the first document to categorically outline the risks women face, including:

i) the risk of sexual violence, sexual exploitation or slavery;
ii) the risk of exploitation or slavery to exercise domestic labour and roles determined as feminine by the illegal armed actors, in a society with patriarchal traits;
iii) the risk of forced conscription of their daughters and sons by the illegal armed actors, which is enhanced when the woman is the head of the household;
iv) the risks derived of personal or affective relationships, -voluntary, accidental or alleged, with members of illegal armed groups, or the public force;
v) the risk of prosecution or murder due to strategies of coercive control of public and private behaviour;
vi) the risk of murder or disappearance of their economic provider by the disintegration of their family groups, and networks of social and material support;
vii) the risk to be more easily relinquished from their land and assets by illegal armed actors due to their historic position in relationship with property, particularly rural land;
viii) the accentuated risks derived from the status as indigenous or Afro-Colombian women; and
ix) the risk of loss or absence of their partner or economic provider during the process of internal displacement. (Outlined in Arango Olaya, 2010, 12).

All of these factors, in concert, meant that the state was not complying with its constitutional and international obligations to protect women's rights. In an effort to ameliorate the situation, the Court ordered the creation of thirteen specific programmes to address the failures of public policy when it comes to women IDPs, the establishment of two constitutional presumptions that applied to displaced women, the adoption of individual orders of protection for 600 women in the country, and the communication to the General District Attorney of the many accounts of sexual crimes committed in the context of the conflict (Arango Olaya, 2010, 8-9).

Despite these lofty aspirations and promising *de jure* provisions of *Auto 092* and the Victims' Law, it should be noted that *de facto* gaining recognition and resources has been far from easy under circumstances of continuing violence, uncertainty, and dissonance. Furthermore, the enjoyment of formal rights and guarantees are not only hampered by state inaction but threatened by actions of violent non-state actors. As Grajales (2015,

541) notes, “these formal rights suffer from prosaic, underground and violent forms of reaction…often linked to paramilitary militias.” In that sense, remarkably little has changed from when Oslender (2004) wrote over a decade ago that communities in various regions of Colombia feel trapped between different violent actors, abandoned by the State, and without the means to protect themselves. Despite the Peace Process, the ongoing violence that women face in Colombia, continues to render them vulnerable to multiple forms of marginalisation.

2. The Peace Accords

The Peace Accords also purport to include a gender agenda. The issue of female victims is specifically included, as women are overwhelmingly understood to make up those most impacted by the conflict. While gender came to be a defining category within the Accords, it was not originally included – at least explicitly – in the plan for the negotiations. Lina Céspedes’ article notes: “neither women, nor gender, nor any other differential approach were included in this roadmap” (2016). Rather, it took almost two years of “severe pressure from social movement, particularly Colombian women’s rights organisations.” Eventually, “to respond to their demands, the parties to the negotiation agreed to create a “Sub-Commission on Gender” … in which Colombian civil society and FARC would have parity in representation” (ibid).

A joint communiqué by the government and the FARC from June 2014, during the negotiations in Havana, introduces this idea of creating a Gender Sub-Commission. This committee would be “comprised by members of the delegations, to review and guarantee,

with the support of national and international experts, that the agreements reached and an eventual final agreement will have an appropriate gender approach" (Joint Communiqué, 7 June 2014). By September 2014, another communiqué discusses, the gender sub-commission was set up in order to "enable an appropriate gender approach, particularly in relation with [sic] women and the LGBTI community" (Joint Communiqué 11 September 2014). The document continues:

> The inclusion of a gender approach in a peace process such as this one has no precedents in the world and sets a milestone in the construction of the agreements already reached and yet to be reached. In order to achieve it, the texts of the agreements will be analysed and the necessary recommendations will be made regarding the inclusion of an appropriate gender approach (ibid.).

A reading of subsequent communiqués shows the progression of the included gender approach throughout the remainder of the negotiations. The 5 June 2015 'Joint Report on the Discussion of Item 5: Commission for the Elucidation of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-repetition' repeatedly mentions the use of a gender perspective, referring to the need to "ensure the cross-cutting nature of the gender approach through the *entire* scope of the work of the Commission" (emphasis added), and the need to:

> Take in account different experiences, differential impacts and particular individual conditions on the basis of sex, gender, age, ethnicity or disability, and those of the populations or sectors in vulnerable conditions or particularly affected by the conflict, among others. Special attention will be afforded to victimisation suffered by women (Joint Report, 2015).

A communiqué from 15 December 2015 notes that a differential, and gender-based approach highlights that women and children victims are particularly deprived and vulnerable, and are therefore "most affected by the conflict" (Joint Communiqué, 15 December 2015). The result of the Sub-Commission's work is evident in the Peace Accords, including the sections centring on comprehensive land reform, political participation, and the solution to the problem of illicit drugs. Some of the specific clauses look to provide special measures for land access to *campesinas* (peasants), disaggregate

data in the land registry by gender and sex, include women in the formation of political groups and movements, ensure the protection of female leaders and defenders of human rights, facilitate the creation of organisations and movements of women, and strengthen their ability to dialogue with public powers, and promote against the stigmatisation on the basis of gender diversity and sexual identity.[40]

As mentioned in the previous section, however, the 2 October 2016 plebiscite resulted in a 'No' outcome. To an extent, pundits put forward, it was the very inclusion of a gender ideology in the Accords that (in part) resulted in their rejection. Within a few hours of the victory of the 'No', Senator and former president Álvaro Uribe[41] gave a public speech about the importance of strengthening religious family values in Colombia. These words:

> Echoed an argument that gained traction in recent months in Colombia, particularly in the Evangelical Christian community: that the content of the Peace Accord dismantled traditional mores, such as the biological difference between man and woman, the importance of the heterosexual family, and the place of religion in public life (Céspedes 2016).

Céspedes' article refers to "gender panic fuelling an uncertain future" (2016). Even before the rejection of the Accords, Colombian magazine *Semana* wrote about the way that those in the 'No' camp were spreading rumours about the inclusion of gender as a strategy to ensure their victory (2016). Using "exaggerations, falsehoods, and half truths", the 'No' camp widely spoke out against a supposed 'gender ideology' that was to be included in the Accords and purportedly went against the teachings of the Catholic and Evangelical churches (ibid.).

[40] Points have been summarised from the Peace Accords (National Government of Colombia and FARC-EP 2016).

[41] Uribe was the main campaigner for the No vote. He continues to be widely supported by the Colombian population, as evidenced in the 2018 Senatorial elections, see (El Tiempo, 2018b).

The Peace Accords, do not, in fact, make reference to a "gender ideology". Rather, they refer to a "gender focus" (National Government of Colombia and FARC-EP 2016a). All that this means is that "men, women, homosexuals, heterosexuals, and people with diverse identities can participate and benefit equally from the conditions [of the Accords]" (cited in Céspedes, 2016). Under these terms, for example, violence that differentially impacted women – for example, sexual violence and forced displacement – would not be included under crimes eligible for amnesty. As *Semana* comments, the reality of the Accords "provides a much different reading to that of some members of the Catholic Church" (2016).

After the victory of the 'No', and the subsequent rejigging of the Accords, an article in national newspaper *El Tiempo* presented the major changes found in the updated Accords:

> Some religious sectors signalled that the Accords could not submit Colombian society to a so-called "gender ideology." Despite the fact that the Cartagena [original] Accords did not include this expression, the new Accords replace the majority of references to "gender focus" and "diverse sexual identity" with the terms "non-discriminatory focus", "differential perspective", or affirmative measures for "groups in conditions of vulnerability" and "historically discriminated people," or in other occasions, with a general reference to the "equality between men and women" or, to fight "against stigmatisation (2016).

As has been evidenced, the inclusion of 'gender' in the Peace Accords was controversial in the Colombian context. While the final version of the Accords did not make any substantive changes to the inclusion of a gender focus, it is important to note the ways in which factions of Colombian society were sceptical of the agenda, and the ways in which these sorts of attitudes present barriers to progress when it comes to a transitional justice project that takes the gendered dimensions of conflict and victimisation seriously.

D. Narratives of Women's Participation in Colombia

It is widely agreed that women have suffered acutely from the conflict, and that their experiences must be addressed differentially to those of their male counterparts, as is recognised by both the academic literature (see Meertens, 2010) and the Colombia government (see Ministerio del Interior, 2012). The ways in which women's organisations in Colombia have been studied, however, does not connect the specificities of their suffering as women with their subsequent mobilisation. This thesis argues that a focus solely on women as victims, or on their potential to build peace, does not accurately describe some of the collective action that has taken place over the years.

This is echoed by Weber who, in her research on communities in the Magdalena department, critiques the current transitional justice project in Colombia, noting that it relies on essentialising gender roles that do not do anything in the way of undoing structures of gender inequality (2017, 9). She highlights that the way women are included creates a narrative that is not transformative, and "as a result, everyday machismo and gender inequality… are left unaddressed, while the described temporary shifts in gender roles produced by conflict are not engaged with either" (ibid., 14). The result is that despite the nominal inclusion of gender in the Victims' Law, Weber does not see that they facilitate any real potential for the transformation of women's roles in society. For her, then, categorising women as victims is not good enough and does not advance gender justice.

Lemaitre and Sandvik write that the legal changes that ushered in an era of transitional justice created spaces for women to engage in legal mobilisation. They take on the

language of the laws in order to strategically vie for reparations. For example, the authors note, women might express "we are no longer displaced, we are *victims* of displacement" (2015, 27). Indeed, as we will see in the coming chapters, legal mobilisation is a *part* of HRF mobilisation. It does not, however, paint the complete picture. Lemaitre and Sandvik's article, while compelling, does not engage sufficiently with the specificities of women's mobilisation. Apart from engaging with some of the legal mechanisms that are specifically geared towards women, it is not convincing as to why women as opposed to all victims engage in legal mobilisation.

Still others talk about women in the Colombian conflict in terms of their roles as potential peacebuilders. Restrepo, for example, attempts to move away from the narrative of women as victims, instead casting them as leaders in the peacebuilding project (2016). She notes: "[women] are in a unique position to understand how to heal and empower other victims… [and] help reconstruct the social fabric" (ibid., 2). As mentioned in the previous chapter, Aroussi critiques this narrative, noting that so long as we essentialise women as mythical healers and peacebuilders, we are unable to properly examine women's agency in these situations.

What this thesis posits, then, is that there is a gap in the literature when it comes to studying women's use of feminism as a strategy of resistance, and that this is further the case in the specific context of Colombia. As mentioned, this feminism does not fall under liberal Western understandings of the term. To clarify, this thesis does not rely on one fixed definition of "traditional" or "Western" feminism, but rather posits that the feminism practiced by the women studied in the coming chapters is not part of a formalised, professionalised, or institutionalised project (see Alvarez, 1999; Murdock,

2008), and is further shaped by intersectional dynamics including race and class, as well as pursuits of gender justice.[42]

The cases in the following chapters highlight that women mobilise not simply as victims or as potential peacebuilders, but rather with a larger gender justice project in mind. Over the years they have done so despite the high levels of violence in Colombia. While violence may have decreased, at least quantitatively, since the signing of the Peace Accords, women still face threats – and actual acts of violence – for mobilising. Indeed, as Nordstrom would note, in Colombia there are still "tomorrows of violence" (2004). In this context of continuing violence, some Colombian women have taken it on themselves to construct a better future, using a specific narrative of gendered resistance as their banner.

E. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a thorough background on the Colombian conflict. It began by painting a general picture and then narrowed to focus on how women have been

[42] More information about the nature of AFROMUPAZ's feminism, for example can be gleaned from the following interview. When asked if she considers the organization to be feminist, María Eugenia Urrutia said:

> Yes, but a differential feminism. We defend ourselves in the body and face of a woman – from our breasts to our vaginas! [*Nosotras nos defendemos en cuerpo y en cara de mujer – de las tetas hasta la vagina!*] …AFROMUPAZ doesn't subscribe to the kinds of feminism where you wear suits. (Interview, Bogotá, 2 March 2017).

We see here that there is a tension between what Urrutia considers feminism – *en cuerpo y cara de* mujer – and what she perhaps thinks is a more standard or traditional definition of the term, or indeed what definition of feminism was implicit in the question itself. When she refers to "suit-wearing feminists", it seems that Urrutia is talking about a formalised or institutionalised feminist project within which she does not categorise herself or the organisation. Indeed, as I am of European descent, there is the chance that Urrutia was making implicit reference to her scepticism of traditionally white, middle-class feminist projects (i.e. that I *am* the kind of feminist who might wear a suit, and that this is not the same as AFROMUPAZ feminism) (see hooks, 1984; García, 1997; Gargallo Celentani, 2012).

particularly affected. It further looked at intersectional dimensions of suffering. It then documented contemporary protections for women, as outlined in the Victims' Law and the Peace Accords. Finally, it looked at the ways in which scholars have studied women specifically in Colombia, noting the gap when it comes to understanding women's agency and resistance to gendered violence.

During my fieldwork process (2016-2018), the Peace Accords were written, rejected, redrafted, and ultimately passed. Accordingly, they were not in effect when I was in Turbaco and were newly in effect when I was in Usme and Riohacha. It is important to highlight that the Accords did not modify the strategies of HRF organisations, but rather, created new opportunities for continued legal framing and acts of certification. The same is the case for the Victims' Law (already well-established at the time of research) (see Lemaitre & Sandvik, 2015).

In Colombia, HRF mobilisation operates in a political environment where women are nominally protected and included in concepts of intersectional transitional justice. This section has documented, however, that there is a gap between the *de jure* and *de facto* remit of these protections (see Zulver, forthcoming-a, forthcoming-b). Accordingly, Colombia continues to represent a context of high risk for women, particularly those who choose to act collectively. The following chapters document examples of women's organisations who choose to employ feminist resistance to this violence.

Chapter IV: Building the City of Women: Creating a Site of Feminist Resistance in a Conflict Zone[43]

A. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the *Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas,* the League of Displaced Women[44] (hereafter LMD, or the *Liga*) and their struggle to construct a more peaceful and secure existence in the midst of continuing violence. The LMD is an organisation of women who were forcibly expelled from their homes in the north of the country by various armed actors eventually arriving in Cartagena. Many arrived at El Pozón, a marginalised area on the outskirts of the city, fleeing from "guerrillas, paramilitaries, hit-men, social cleansing, forced recruitment, child prostitution, and family violence" (Sandvik et al., 2014, 14). Homeless, and often newly widowed, these women arrived with their children, and found themselves the victims of new types of violence at the hands of other paramilitaries and criminal gangs engaged in a power struggle within the city's marginalised neighbourhoods.

Since 1998, however, these women have come together under the guidance of leader Patricia Guerrero to build their dream of a dignified life, their *sueño de una vida digna.*[45] At first, this involved building social bonds of trust and belonging, which in turn facilitated the formation of a collective identity. With the non-material benefits of participation established, they then constructed the City of Women, the *Ciudad de las*

[43] This chapter is an updated and expanded version of an article published in *Gender, Place, and Culture* (Zulver, 2017).

[44] A more appropriate translation might be "League of Forcibly Displaced Women." This thesis uses "League of Displaced Women" to maintain consistency with existing publications/translations.

[45] This is both the way that interviewees consistently refer to the housing project, and also the title of the Sandvik et al. (2014) document.

Mujeres, a physical manifestation of their mobilisation. However, the City itself is more than a physical space to provide housing for displaced women; it is also a symbolic representation of their feminist mobilisational agency. In particular, the City represents peaceful resistance to violence in the middle of a conflict zone.

Today, the organisation maintains its membership of around 160 members.[46] The majority live in the City, but some live in other poor neighbourhoods close by. Most have between three and six children, and some have grandchildren. Given socio-demographic patterns, it was often difficult for me to distinguish which young person is a biological child and which is a niece/nephew, or a grandchild. The women own the deeds to the houses, but many live with male partners. Every interviewee described economic hardship. While they own their property, many do not have the funds to pay for electricity or water. The women work informally, selling food, fruits, and vegetables, "minutes" for mobile phones, or sewing or cleaning for others.[47] No one has formal employment. Moreover, as described below, violence continues to plague the neighbourhood.

This chapter answers *how* and *why* women united and acted collectively, to eventually build the City of Women, despite the real and threatened danger this implied. First, it looks at the particularities of the case study from the perspective of research methods. Second, it narrates the story of the women of the LMD, from their displacement in the north of the country to their arrival in Cartagena, to the building of the City of Women, to their contemporary mobilisation against ongoing gender injustices. This section shines

[46] The number included in the organisation's internal census, derived from those whose names were included on the application for collective reparations.
[47] For a full description about ongoing economic hardships, see (Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015).

a light on the charismatic bond that was formed between the women and Guerrero, and then between the women themselves. This bond allowed women to overcome barriers to mobilisation by encouraging collective action in a domain of losses. Third, it analyses the LMD's strategies within the High Risk Feminism (HRF) framework, highlighting the utility of this particular framework in understanding mobilisation as a specifically feminist style of resistance. Finally, the conclusion addresses problems that the LMD still faces as an organisation, and the strategies of resistance it still employs.

B. Particularities of Case Study and Methodology

Methodologically, the chapter draws on extensive fieldwork with the LMD between July and November 2016, and interviews conducted for a newspaper article in 2015 (Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015).[48] Making initial contact for the newspaper article was difficult. Security is of paramount importance for the *Liga*, and they do not easily give out phone numbers or email addresses. It took three days of sending SMS messages and cold-calling (using one phone number received from a journalist contact) before anyone would answer me. Then, I had to meet up with one member at a small shopping mall in the outskirts of Cartagena before she would agree to personally escort me to the City of Women on the local bus. By this time, I had been thoroughly vetted and the organisation determined that I was not a threat. When I returned to Cartagena in 2016 to conduct doctoral fieldwork, I was able to re-establish contact via Whatsapp and Facebook Messenger.

[48] This chapter contains some references taken from interviews originally conducted for the newspaper article. Participants were retroactively asked to give permission for these quotes to be used in the current chapter. This process was cleared with the Divisional Ethics Team (Department of Sociology, University of Oxford). Email confirmation available upon request.

During the following months, I engaged in 'ethnographic hanging out' with the women of the *Liga*. This involved daily activities sitting on porches, helping make the midday meal, or drinking Colombia's ubiquitous cups of *tinto* (sugary coffee). I also helped with shopping and running errands. Finally, I spent many hours traveling with the members of the community on public transportation. Personal relationships developed, and through this process I was able to better understand the daily challenges these women encounter.

As a function of spending time with the women of the *Liga*, I was often asked to help with various organisational tasks. For example, I helped organise the logistics for a conference[49], and gave a speech about the collective reparations process. I spent time with the woman in charge of social media for the LMD, showing her how to update Facebook statuses and create a Twitter account. At one point, I taught a class on sexual health and reproductive rights to a group of teenage girls living in the City of Women. Engaging in these tasks made me feel part of the community; my face is known in the neighbourhood, and the women are usually open to talking to me as I have become a familiar and frequently seen visitor.

Aside from these semi-ethnographic methods, I also engaged in more traditional qualitative methods, including in-depth, semi-structured interviews with both leaders and rank and file members of the LMD. These were complemented by extensive participant observations of the daily workings of the organisation, behind closed-door deliberations of its leadership and open organisation-wide meetings. Considering the context of

[49] *Intercambio de Experiencias, Avances, Retrocesos, Retos, y Desafíos de la Reparación Colectiva Integral para las Mujeres,* Exchange of Experiences, Advances, Setbacks, Goals, and Challenges of the Comprehensive Collective Reparations for Women.

violence and sensitive nature of issues discussed, unless otherwise stated, pseudonyms will be used for all organisation members.[50]

C. LMD: Narrating Experiences of Terror and Resistance[51]

1. Displacement and Arrival in El Pozón



Figure 4.1: Map of Cartagena and inset map of Turbaco. Source: https://maps.google.com/. Accessed 21 March 2018.

As mentioned in a previous chapter, women experience the marginality of displacement differently than men (Arango Olaya, 2010; Meertens, 2010, 2012; Meertens & Stoller, 2001; Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2013). The north of Colombia presented a particular intensity

[50] Patricia Guerrero is an exception to this rule. She has published on the organisation and is frequently cited in academic and non-academic literature. Her name is not being anonymised to avoid confusion.
[51] Historical details are partially based on a detailed document written by a group of Colombian academics and lawyers, and published in 2014 (Sandvik et al., 2014).

of violent crimes, as can be seen in Figure 4.2, below. The departments of Antioquia, Atlántico, Bolívar, Cesar, Chocó Córdoba, Magdalena, and Sucre – where the majority of members of the LMD come from – experienced hundreds of thousands of crimes (which include forced displacement, kidnapping, forced disappearances, homicide, physical violence, sexual violence, torture, recruitment of child soldiers, and planting landmines) (Unidad para las Víctimas, 2018b). This particular region was also known to be the home of many paramilitary groups who worsened the armed conflict between military and guerrilla forces that had been ongoing since the 1960s, especially for poor women in the region.

DEPARTAMENTO	OCURRENCIA	DECLARACION
Antioquia	1.652.200	1.639.832
Atlantico	27.473	225.587
Bolivar	634.631	482.872
Cesar	433.603	392.411
Choco	432.752	269.011
Cordoba	343.043	329.34
Magdalena	505.721	456.081
Sucre	284.847	349.735

Figure 4.2: Total number of crimes committed during Colombia's conflict, in the departments from which *Liga* members originated. Adapted from (Unidad para las Víctimas, 2018b). Source: https://rni.unidadvictimas.gov.co/RUV [Accessed 16 April 2018].

Interviewees are quick to recount their stories of displacement from various areas in rural sectors of the north of the country to vulnerable urban neighbourhoods. One interviewee discussed being displaced multiple times. Originally from Valledupar, she and her husband left their home after two of his brothers were killed by paramilitaries. Later, the paramilitary group also killed her husband, leaving her with two young children. Afraid

for her life, and that of her children, she moved to Cartagena without any money, and settled in El Pozón. She was one of the original members of the LMD and has watched it grow since 1998. Tragically, paramilitaries also murdered her second husband in the City of Women itself, leaving her widowed for a second time, with two more young children to feed and house.

Another woman and her husband – now both residents of the City of Women – discuss being present at the massacre at El Salado.[52] Considered one of the worst massacres of the conflict, the town witnessed paramilitary members attempt to oust and kill guerrilla soldiers. Instead, they tortured, sexually assaulted, and killed more than 100 local people. These interviewees were able to load a car with some of their possessions and drive away with their children before the massacre began. They have never been back to their home, where they ran a small store together.

A third woman tells the story of having to live in hiding for many months during the height of the conflict. A resident of Carmen de Bolívar, she was targeted by paramilitaries for being a community leader who condemned their violent actions. She would spend every night staying at a different friend's house, so that they could not find and kill her while she slept.

Such anecdotes are unfortunately common among the women who have been displaced and now reside in the City of Women. Their exact experiences are distinct, and stories

[52] The massacre at El Salado, a small town in northern Colombia, took place over three days in 2000. Paramilitaries brutally killed dozens of townspeople in what was described at the worst massacre of the year. 3000 people fled to nearby towns in the aftermath of the massacre. For more, see (Rohter, 2000).

diverse, but the reality itself is constant. Women (and their families) were forced to pack up what they could and flee their homes at a moment's notice. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the slum was accordingly a place of "necessity and anguish, with poor families displaced by the violence arriving daily" (Sandvik et al., 2014, 15).

The word *pozón* refers to a large well, or water source. The name is apt in the case of this neighbourhood. During the rainy season, the streets flood, leaving the women and their families vulnerable to the elements. Interviewees recount stories of waking up to find the house had flooded during the night. The walls of the temporary structures were made of cardboard, pieces of corrugated metal or plastic, or wooden pallets. Unsurprisingly, these materials would rot over time, leading to the disintegration of structures, and further exposure to the coastal weather. They were unable to store food and engaged in a constant struggle to keep their foam mattresses dry. Exposure to the elements, as outlined here, is another source of vulnerability to which displaced women were exposed.

For displaced women and children, El Pozón also represented a space of lawlessness – there was little police presence, and interviewees spoke about experiencing break-ins, robberies, threats, and regular violent encounters with. Far from constituting a safe space, the neighbourhood was overrun with common delinquency that ranged from theft and vandalism to physical harm and sexual abuse. While interviewees are usually reticent to talk about *who* constituted criminal elements, reading between the lines can infer that women were threatened by paramilitary factions and their successors, the BACRIM. Interviewees recount being physically and sexually abused in the neighbourhood. One woman retells how a group of men repeatedly assaulted her sexually before stealing her wallet.

Conditions in the slum put women in situations of extreme vulnerability. Poor security, as well as risks of natural threats like floods and heavy rains left women and their families at constant risk of physical danger. Moreover, the slum often did not have basic services like water, electricity, sewage, and medical attention (Sandvik et al., 2014, 19). The life of a displaced woman in El Pozón in the late 1990s was precarious. As Solange, a leader of the LMD, now relates: "our situation was very depressing… it was inhuman, basically" (Interview, 12 October 2016).

2. The Roots of the LMD: Patricia Guerrero and the Charismatic Bond

Despite the precariousness of their new neighbourhood, it did have the benefit of bringing women in similar situations of displacement into proximity with one another. For many of the women (who had previously lived on farms in rural areas), this was the first time that they found themselves in close quarters with other women suffering the same sorts of violence as they had. Not only did they share similar stories of displacement, but they also shared exposure to continuing forms of vulnerability at the hands of gangs and paramilitaries present in the neighbourhood. The ability to see oneself as part of a wider network of displaced victims was novel.

One of the original leaders tells the story of the first action taken by a group (of neighbours) that would go on to become the LMD. In El Pozón there was a group of eight women who met regularly to share food in a communal kitchen, an *olla comuna*. This way, each woman would contribute what she had, and could guarantee that there would be some nutritional variety in what she and her children ate.

From there, collective action expanded beyond food to other areas of daily life. For example, the women came together to share resources to get a member of the collective to the clinic when she fell ill. The absence of medical attention at the clinic meant that the woman died. As one of the members stated: "For us, this was an incredibly sad moment… and the first [conscious] action we took as a collective was to find a coffin so that we could give our *compañera* a proper burial" (Interview, 12 October 2016). This event, interviewees recounted, consolidated their understanding of their shared situation of vulnerability, and brought them closer together as an informal support system. This is consistent with Jokela-Pansini's observation (in the case of women human rights defenders in Honduras) that: "the activist's emotional connectedness with the network and its practices…is essential for constructing collective identities (2016, 1475).

It was in 1998 that Patricia Guerrero, a feminist lawyer from Bogotá, arrived in El Pozón with the idea of providing legal aid to desperate women. Through her connections with a local religious leader, she was able to make the acquaintance of the group of the local women who had come together to bury their neighbour. While these women were acting collectively, their actions were small scale and did not constitute transgressive mobilisation.

Guerrero began to have conversations with this group about the specific ways in which they experienced the situation of displacement as women. According to her, while the women expressed sadness and resignation at their situation of suffering, they had never contemplated the larger complexities of their role as victims of the armed conflict (Sandvik et al., 2014, 75). She began a basic dialogue about the situation, origin, and causes of their displacement, framing the discussion within the rights of women. Guerrero

says: “I was able to ignite a fire among these spirits, showing them the enormous discrimination against women in the conflict. And I would say to them, “Look what we have to do now: we have to organise!” (Interview in Nobel Women’s Initiative, 2016).

This discourse was appealing to the women involved, as the gendered particularities of conflict, displacement, and resettlement were ignored by the other existing social organisations. The idea of a women’s only organisation was particularly appealing – it consolidated a collective identity that allowed women to feel that they were not alone in their situation of displacement. As an interviewee notes, “the pain of one is the pain of all” (quoted in Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015).

In *Sueño de Vida Digna* (2014), Guerrero writes about the ways in which aid provided by the Catholic Church was ignorant to the specific needs of women (especially those who had suffered sexual violence). For example, the Church did not provide aid that related to women’s sexual and reproductive health (for example, condoms or sanitary products). In a zone where women were highly vulnerable to sexual abuse, she notes that the Church judged and stigmatised women who had become pregnant: “From that moment on, we decided to manage our own humanitarian aid, whose meaning would be re-defined by [the very women it was intended to reach]” (Sandvik et al., 2014, 84).

Guerrero further discusses why she and the women she first made contact with saw a need for a women’s only organisation, with a specific gender focus. Most of the base-level organisations in the neighbourhood were run by men, who did not adopt any sort of

gender focus in their requests for aid.[53] Community organisations in spaces of displacement, Guerrero continues, are historically controlled by left-leaning groups who maintain a patriarchal, authoritarian, and vertical structure that does not permit the inclusion of organised, feminist women. This came to light when organisations began to compete to receive the limited resources distributed by international agencies. The results were unequal, and did not favour women (ibid., 83).

Here we see that Guerrero developed a narrative that framed women as operating within a domain of losses, within which inaction did not protect a potential participant from both the daily grind of poverty and the ongoing risk of violent reprisal from violent actors. Moreover, by developing a specific gendered agenda, women could benefit from material and non-material benefits available only to participants.

The group began to meet more regularly. Word of mouth in El Pozón meant that numbers of participants began to increase, as members started to bring their friends and neighbours to meetings. Interviewees talk about the relief of realising that their situation (domain of losses) was not unique, and that other women were having the same struggles as they were. They found solidarity in shared experiences and were attracted to the meetings to give meaning to their daily hardships in the slum. While mobilisation might expose them to heightened levels of violence, Guerrero was able to frame collective action as justifiable given the potential for accrued benefits over time.

[53] Guerrero goes so far as to write that most of the organisations led by men looked for aid in the form of "money or [food coupons] that they could exchange for rum… or for sex with the most vulnerable, desperate displaced women" (Sandvik et al., 2014, 82).

Beyond just convincing women to mobilise under high risk conditions, Guerrero also developed an effective strategy for mobilisation. In terms of resource mobilisation (as discussed in the Theory chapter), we see here that she was able to draw on her skills as a lawyer in order to facilitate a discussion around rights. She further had the ability to organise meetings for these women, events that they had not held previously. In a domain of losses, then, she as a charismatic leader had a unique ability to accrue base-level resources to facilitate mobilisation.

3. Material and Non-Material Benefits of Collective Action

The first years of the LMD were focused on consciousness creation, the building of mutual confidence, and collective identity creation. Guerrero spent time educating the women about their human rights, their rights as women, and their rights as victims. She effectively created a charismatic bond; women living in a slum with little reason to be hopeful about the future were receptive to the appearance of a leader to whom they could supplicate for change. Group membership expanded over time, increasing to other nearby slum communities, including another settlement of displaced people in nearby Turbaco. They had their first *encuentro* (gathering) in 2001, in which workshops about human rights continued building a collective consciousness.

It was also in 2001, however, that "as the group was consolidating its identity" (Sandvik et al., 2014, 18) that they began to receive their first threats from groups associated with paramilitaries:

> [the] struggle for organisational autonomy and a position in the community worsened the threats against women, the violation of group leaders, the following [stalking of women], and the

> persecution: with more social and political empowerment came more threats of sexual violence (Sandvik et al., 2014, 85).

Unknown perpetrators raped two members of the LMD, and some of the women's sons were forcibly recruited as child soldiers. Lists with the names of women were posted on lampposts near *Liga*-run crèches, threatening rape and/or murder if the women did not leave the area within 24 hours. These threats came from paramilitary groups in the neighbourhood, who did not like the ways in which women were beginning to stand up to their situations of vulnerability.

More than one interviewee has mentioned these threats from armed groups in El Pozón. Groups would send pamphlets with paintings of firearms and make threatening phone calls to members of the LMD. They used vulgar language to tell members that they "knew who we were, that they were watching us." One interviewee recounts:

> They told us that they were going to 'disappear'[54] us… I imagine that as we were forming as a group, gaining consciousness, and empowering ourselves about our rights, well, we knew that we had rights that we wanted to gain access to… and we became a stone in their shoes (Interview, 12 October 2016).

By this time, however, collective identity building was well underway, as emphasised in an interview: "we didn't want to faint… we wanted to keep going! We knew that together, united we could achieve anything… because we were many victims together" (Interview, 12 October 2016). We can see 'togetherness' as a non-material benefit of participation in the organisation. Moreover, the woman here is directly expressing the concept that her participation facilitated a sense of protection – being united meant that despite ongoing

[54] In Latin America, 'to disappear someone' is used as verb. While in reality, this term usually means that a person has been murdered, it is used to differentiate between crimes where the body is found, and those where no evidence is every uncovered.

risks, there was a collective hope that a group of victims offered some level of insulation from violence.

In her position as leader, Guerrero framed women's particular struggles in a way that appeals to them. In keeping with the tenets of Prospect Theory outlined in the theory chapter, she highlights the increasing benefits of group membership and decreasing protections of being alone (i.e. not joining the organisation). That is, non-participation does not necessarily guarantee safety (of not being targeted), and there are potential emotional and identity benefits derived from participation. Moreover, these benefits derive from the *act* of mobilising, and not the outcome of mobilising. Therefore, while participation might make a woman a more visible target (i.e. to paramilitaries), it is preferable to inaction because everyone is operating in the same domain of losses (a high-risk context). In this way, in the early days of the *Liga,* she was able to convince women that it was to their advantage to act collectively in pursuit of gender justice.

Guerrero encouraged women to share their stories of displacement and sexual violence with each other, and to declare these crimes before the institutions of the state. An interviewee noted: "When we started to talk, we realised that each of us wasn't alone. This is something crucial, fundamental … it was the process that gave the organisation its strength" (quoted in Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015). It was in this context that the women began to frame their mobilisation in terms of their dream of living a dignified life, a life free from the multiple sources of marginality that threatened their day-to-day existence

4. Successes of Incremental Gains: Building the City of Women to Fulfil the Dream of a Dignified Life



Figure 4.3: a plaque in the City of Women reads: "We thank Doctora Patricia Guerrero, founder, ideologist, and creator of the LMD, who, through her ardent labour, dedication, love, care, and untiring struggle, was able to make the dream of a dignified life into a reality." Photo Credit: Julia Zulver

In 2003, Guerrero won a scholarship to study human rights at Columbia University in the United States, during which time she made the acquaintance of U.S. Senator Leahy whose support led to the bestowal of a USAID grant to build sustainable housing for the members of the LMD. Interviewees corroborate: "when *la Doctora*[55] came back from Washington, we had a meeting all together. She told us the surprise, and we cried with happiness. We had the initial drop [in the bucket] to start with a housing project" (Interview, 12 October 2016). Ownership of one's own house represented a possibility to

[55] How they refer to Guerrero as a sign of respect. "Doctor" and "doctora" are commonly used terms in Colombian to refer to someone who has a university education.

overcome the vulnerabilities of living in precarious shelters in El Pozón. Moreover, owning the deed to one's own home eliminated the threat of eviction by a landlord for not being able to pay the rent.

This is indeed another example of the unique position from which Guerrero was able to mobilise resources for the organisation. She was uniquely positioned to leave the country to study human rights (a feat none of the other women could have managed), and to gain access to a senator who was able to provide financial resources for the group. The success of a charismatic leader is dependent on "a mixture of style and substance, or promise and performance" (Madsen and Snow, 1991, 145). Part of Guerrero's ability to successfully function as a charismatic leader was based in her ability to mobilise resources. Here, we see that she was successfully able to make good on the promises she made to her followers, encouraging and reinforcing ongoing participation among the women of the LMD.

In a video about the project, Guerrero says "for the women, their house is an extension of their body" (Señal Colombia, 2013). What she means by this is that a house is more than just a four-walled dwelling. In the context of displacement, owning a real house means giving back a piece of life that was stolen by armed groups. It establishes a level of normalcy and control for victims and their families. It represents their ability to survive displacement and take back a level of personal dignity that comes with home ownership.

In 2004, the process of building the City of Women, began in full force.[56] Before beginning construction, the women had to apply for government subsidies.[57] As will be discussed in detail below, this is consistent with a legal framing strategy – that women applied via legal channels to receive monies they were owed is consistent with the tenets of HRF. One hundred fifty-nine women completed the procedure for the government subsidy, and on 5 November 2004, 98 women were selected to receive the funds. From January 2004 to March 2005, the women constructed the City of Women, a process that involved fabricating the cement bricks to sell to the construction company, cultivating and preparing food to sell to the builders who helped with construction, and generating a credit fund for micro-loans. By creating their own bricks, they were able to lower construction costs, and also learned a skill that might allow for future income generation.

The process of construction was an act of resistance in itself. Interviewees note that upon hiring a general contractor to oversee the project, it became clear that their participation

[56] The Sandvik et al. document is quick to highlight that despite this building project, other activities of the LMD were not abandoned. During this period, the League continued to give workshops on rights, conducting meetings for women in rural zones, working to provide food, the building of community centres for childcare, and medical workshops about sexual and reproductive health (ibid., 21,22). The League also focused on building the capacity of the *Liga Joven* (Young League), comprised of the children of LMD members. The LJ was designed to deal with problems often faced by young people living in El Pozón, including forced prostitution, links with drugs trafficking, and integration of young people into gangs.

[57] The USAID grant provided money that counted as 'personal savings', but the women still needed to apply for housing subsidies from the Colombian government to generate the necessary funds for building. It is important to note that this process took place before the implementation of Law 1448 or 2011 (the Victims' Law). Accordingly, the process for receiving benefits from the State was not the same as the process of individual and collective reparations discussed in further detail below, in the section on legal framing. For more information on the legal infrastructure regarding humanitarian aid at this time, see (Sandvik et al., 2014, 23), who note that: "Under Law 387, passed in 1997, IDPs have the right to emergency humanitarian aid for a maximum of three months; at the end of that period, a single, second renewal, for the same length of time, is permitted. The aid is designed for the rescue, care, and support of IDPs; under Articles 20–24 of the law, such support includes the provision of food, emergency transport, housing, and physical and mental healthcare, as well as inclusion in general poverty relief programmes such as subsidised health insurance. However, humanitarian aid has not reached IDPs consistently—and the response to their needs through ordinary poverty relief programmes has been insufficient, and a far cry from the rights enshrined in Law 387."

was not guaranteed. The women wanted to be involved in preparing the building lots, pouring the cement, and fabricating the bricks, but the contractor said that this sort of work was for men, not women. Eventually, the women were able to secure their participation. Constructing the houses meant more than an albeit important roof over their heads, but also (re)constructing peace and a dignified live. As the Sueño de Vida Digna report notes: "The theme of housing for these women is not just a theme of richness or poverty, but one with an important symbolic dimension" (2014).

Despite the successes of their construction project, the women of the LMD were still not free from threats. In order to intimidate the women of the City, cars filled with unknown men frequently drove around the neighbourhood, taking photos and filming videos. In the wake of the demobilisation of the paramilitaries in 2005, organised crime groups like the *Aguilas Negras* and the ERPAC (a right-wing criminal gang)[58] "declared the 'stupid women organisers' a military target, and have threatened the women with sexual violence" (Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015). As explained by Saab and Taylor (2009), however, this behaviour is consistent with various BACRIMs' fight for over control in marginalised neighbourhoods. Mobilising and empowered women most likely threatened their project of dominance (ibid.). Guerrero notes:

> A community that demands rights and makes itself visible is more difficult to intimidate and displace. So a threat becomes a tool for whichever armed actor…who start to lose control over their territories. I think that in the case of the League of Displaced Women, it was because we were carrying out this resettlement in an area controlled by paramilitarism. We are women who dare to put a stick in the wheel and obstruct organized crime (interivew in Nobel Women's Initiative, 2016).

[58] For more on these groups, see the Country Group section of the InSight Crime Colombia webpage (InSight Crime, 2017).

The violence came to a head when Don Julio, the husband of one of the LMD members, was murdered while guarding the women's cement brick factory overnight. Some of the LMD left the City, fearing for their lives. Those who stayed discuss this event as a breaking point in the LMD; those who stayed "created mutual strength" among them (Sandvik et al., 2014, 27). One interviewee emphasises:

> This was one of the events that actually strengthened me. I did not have a house, and I had to keep believing in what we were doing, that we were going to be able to move ahead and achieve our goals. They [the armed group] wanted to destroy us, to undo our structure… that we would splinter, and that the organisation would go away. They wanted to finish us. We were able to move forward, though (Interview, 12 October 2016).

Another recounts:

> We had a dream of building dignified housing, and the organisation, together, was able to achieve this. Through the organisation, we were able to move forward. Yes, I was very scared. In fact, in some of the days following the murder of Don Julio I didn't come to work… but eventually I returned. The idea is to fight, to resist. The *compañera* Simona [Julio's wife] told us "my husband and I fought for this project. They want us to stop, to end this dream that we have. But they are not going to stop us...we have to move forward, united." And this gave us the force to continue (Interview, 19 October 2016).

Despite ongoing threats and further acts of violence (including property damage[59], disappearances and murders) the women continued the construction process. When finished, the City consisted of 98 houses, each 78m^2, covering five blocks. Half an hour outside the city limits of Cartagena, in the municipality of Turbaco, the City has electricity, drinking water, garbage collection, and sewage. The houses legally belong solely to the women, although men and children also live in the City. The women talk about the days when they began to move into their houses. One interviewee describes the process of allocating houses: "We made little cardboard houses and put them in a big

[59] It was in 2007 (after the houses were finished) that a group of unknown men (described in an interview with a LMD leader as "those of the unscrupulous hands" (most likely an unidentified BACRIM group) (quoted in Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015), burned down the community centre, which contained a bakery, meeting rooms, a hall, and baby supplies.

box, and you reached your hand in and pulled one out ... 'What number are you in? You're my neighbour! It was an amazing experience'" (quoted in Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015).

The construction process was an act of resistance consistent with High Risk Feminism (as will be discussed in the section on certification, below). The risks of building the City were real. The belief that the "pain of one was the pain of all" (quoted in Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015), however, allowed the women to continue. Each small success fed back into continuing participation: when the women learned that they had received funding they were motivated to begin work on the building; when they bought the terrain for the city, they were inspired to creatively solve the obstacles they encountered; when they saw the emotional strength of their fellow member they were determined not to give up hope even in the face of violence. Here, we see the way that material benefits also strengthened resolve to participate in the LMD – indeed, membership implied gaining benefits that were only available through participation.

5. Ongoing Violence in Turbaco: the Domain of Losses Continues

Despite all the undoubtable progress made, life in the City is not necessarily without struggle for the women of the LMD. Turbaco – the municipality in which the City is located – remains violent. As mentioned, paramilitaries and their successors have had a monopoly on economic and social power since the early 2000s. Moreover, the suburb exists in a strategic location for narcotrafficking – with close access to the Bay of Cartagena. The demobilisation of the paramilitaries during the 2005 *Ley de Justicia y Paz* (Law of Justice and Peace) involved the return of many young men to Turbaco who had

been involved in paramilitary organisations, augmenting the feelings of insecurity in the neighbourhood. Interviewees note that although threats from armed groups have diminished since the late 1990s, they are still not free from violence and re-victimisation processes. This fact was further noted by the IACHR in their site visits in both 2005 and 2011 (OAS, 2011; Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women, 2006).

Indeed, even the recent demobilisation of the FARC is of concern to members of the LMD. In an interview, a woman told me that she is worried that the newly-demobilised FARC members might go the same way as the paramilitaries, forming BACRIM. "I hope this won't happen, but we can't close our eyes to the reality" (Interview, 12 October 2016).

The LMD experienced a situation of violent revictimisation during my field research in August 2016. One afternoon, soldiers from the Colombian armed forces entered the neighbourhood, and shot rubber bullets at a group of young people for allegedly selling drugs:

> On 17 August, the Navy came into our neighbourhood, chasing and abusing some young people. They entered the houses, hitting them, pulling them out [into the street]. They shot rubber bullets. The children were terrorised, they were crying and screaming. Their mothers went into the streets shouting and screaming. It was terrible. This was a way to revictimise us. We are a special population and the state is obligated to protect us… but it is this same state that violates our right to protection. And the truth is, we really see that we are being revictimised, especially with this episode. Some of the young people were injured. [Interviewer asks: why did the Navy come into the *barrio*?]. They wanted to take away a motorbike from a teenager. Many young people don't have the opportunity to study, and so can't go on to university. There is a very low level of employment. So, they have to find an informal way to work, often driving motorcycles. So, a motorcycle represents a lot for them… maybe they only have a mother, maybe their father was assassinated during displacement. This motorbike allows the young person to help his mother financially. So, you can imagine what it means to take it away from him. It is taking the bread away from his mouth. (Interview, 12 October 2016).

The LMD is currently undertaking legal measures to try to hold the Navy accountable. One interviewee, involved in this process, elaborates:

> So of course, we had to denounce this. Apparently, they're investigating the incident. We went to the Mayor and to the head of the Navy. They are going to figure out who was in charge and take disciplinary action. We are going to talk to the Victims' Unit too… they are in charge of our protection. We told them that this was a violation, a grave error. They have to take into account the population that they have harmed. We are a special population of resettled people, of women. We need their help and protection, not that they enter our neighbourhood in this [violent] way!" (Interview, 12 October 2016).

Continuing incidents of violence and victimisation lead the women to comment that their dream of a dignified life is not yet complete. Moreover, aside from direct violations of their safety, the women continue to face the vulnerabilities that come from a lack of financial security. While they own their houses, the ability to earn enough income to pay for food and bills (water, electricity, gas) is far from guaranteed. They do not have affordable transportation, nor do they have access to health care. Moreover, despite years of legal actions, the LMD have still not secured the collective reparations to which they are legally entitled.

Despite ongoing challenges, however, the story of the LMD is one of resistance – to the experience of displacement, to the various sources of marginality and insecurity in El Pozón, to the lack of state support or protection, and to the threats and acts of aggression carried out by paramilitaries, BACRIM, and even the armed forces. Against all odds, participants built a City of Women, which for them represents an act of peaceful resistance. They did so via a narrative based in feminist values, as has been elaborated via their creation of collective identity and social capital, and strategic use of framing and certification. In such a way, HRF has utility in explaining how and why these women choose to mobilise despite the risks this entails.

As we see represented in the table below, El Pozón/Turbaco represented a social context whereby displaced people were forced to live and operate in a domain of losses (Y). It

was when Guerrero (a charismatic leader (Y)) arrived, however, that she was able to frame mobilisation as a way to give women back some agency in their lives, to modify their "tomorrows of violence". She did this by highlighting – and then showing – the material and non-material gains of acting collectively (Y). Over time, these incremental successes compounded, giving women proof that their participation was worth running the risk of increased violence (Y). In the case of the LMD, all four of these factors (in the table below) are positive. The following chapters will engage in the same exercise with two other organisations. By comparing the presence of these factors (or not), the necessary and sufficient factors for HRF mobilisation will become clearer.

Factor	**Turbaco**	**Usme**	**Riohacha**
Neighbourhood	**Y**	-	-
Charismatic Leadership	**Y**	-	**-**
Non-material benefits	**Y**	-	**-**
Success of incremental gains	**Y**	-	**-**

The following section provides empirical evidence on how the LMD has transformed its narrative from one of helpless victimhood to one of political agency and survivorship. I argue that the best way to frame this strategic resistance is with the High Risk Feminism framework. Each of the pillars of this framework will be examined in turn, highlighting the deliberate and feminist resistance employed by the LMD both historically and contemporarily.

D. Discussion

As this chapter has outlined so far, the City of Women is far more than just a physical city. It is an attitude, and an act of certification. Spending time with one of the leaders of the LMD highlighted the frequency with which she referred to the organisation's strategy of peaceful resistance.[60] When asked what she meant by this, she replied:

> Peaceful resistance is the strength that we have as women. Despite so much pain, despite so many violations, so much damage, the voice of us women has always survived. We have decided not to silence ourselves. Because of this, together, each of the members of the *Liga* decided to implement a strategy, an agenda of justice, where we will denounce crimes. [This strategy also means] that we have to stay united, together. And to demand our rights… this is our form of peaceful resistance (Interview, 12 October 2017).

Another interviewee was even clearer about what she meant by peaceful resistance:

> The act of building a city in the middle of an [armed group] controlled zone is an act of peaceful resistance. Especially despite the threats, especially as Don Julio was killed here. Despite all of that, we used our voices and our actions to build peace in the middle of a war. Especially for women like [another interviewee] who survived massacres [at El Salado], living in the City of Women is a sign of hope for the rest of Colombia (Interview, 19 October 2017).

In regard to drawing on a learned repertoire of action developed through repetition and learning what works and what does not, Guerrero, founder of the LMD, discusses the way that the LMD repeats actions to achieve results:

> To get anything, anything at all, you have to fight for it - fight with sit-ins, fight by knocking on their doors. You knock on the door, they open it, they close it in your face, you knock again, they open it, they close it in your face again, you knock on the door, they open it, you push it open (in Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015).

For Guerrero and the women of the LMD, the ability to participate in these learned patterns of behaviour is, at times, exhausting, but they continue in the knowledge that in the past such determination has proved efficacious, and that (despite having to deal with rejection) are still feasible in contemporary conditions. This is in keeping with the idea

[60] For more on peaceful resistance and the way that women contest their victimisation, see (Spivak, 1988).

of incremental gains over time. Success comes *through* participation, not as a necessary outcome of mobilisation. This not only eliminates Olson's *free rider* problem (1965), but also encourages others to join, as they see others enjoying the benefits of participation. When it comes to a strategy of resistance, this thesis argues that HRF gives us the tools with which to accurately account for action. The following sections engage with each of the HRF pillars in turn, as they apply to the LMD.

1. Collective Identity

In a meeting hosted by the LMD in August 2016 to discuss the organisation's goals and challenges, the Director of Social Development for the Department of Bolívar said in a keynote speech: "we have to recognise ourselves in each other's stories… we [women] need to be the protagonists of the [Peace Process]" (Speech, 30 August 2016). A representative from the organisation *Iniciativas de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz* finished her speech with the refrain: "we need to construct peace with a woman's face" (Speech, 30 August 2016). These mantras ring true for the women of the LMD; in gaining a collective identity, they weave together stories of victimisation and stories of resistance to create a narrative that unites them in their struggle.

a. Women's Rights and Victims' Rights

Many members of the LMD highlight that before joining the organisation, they had no idea that they had special rights, both as women[61] and as victims. As Solange notes:

[61] See (Arango Olaya, 2010; Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2015; Lemaitre et al., 2014).

> [Guerrero] began to meet with the women… she began a process of training, where she gave workshops about human rights, about the rights that we have as victims. For us, this was totally new, because we did not know that as victims we have certain rights. Truthfully, we also didn't know where we should go to find help (aid). And this is how *la Doctora* helped us – she explained to us about the different state entities, and where displaced people could go (Interview, 12 October 2016).

Word spread quickly throughout El Pozón. Other women in the same situation of displacement, poverty, and misery also wanted to join a group which gave them agency in their lives:

> This is where the League of Displaced Women began to grow. Many women were interested in what they could learn. And we continued to grow. One woman would tell another, and another. 'I'll invite you, I'll invite you.' We got excited. And we spoke to other neighbours (Interview, 12 October 2016).

Another leader of the LMD discusses her experience:

> I began with the *Liga* 17 years ago, in Turbaco. I began because I was living in horrible conditions in the municipality where we arrived, as victims of forced displacement. When I learned about the *Liga* – that there was a group of women teaching other women—and that they were looking for more women…I showed up. The group had a focus on women's rights, and I identified strongly with this work. So, we began to meet up… and the *Liga* told us that we were 'displaced people' and that we had rights, and that these rights connected with various public policies. I identified strongly with this. I wanted to "re-make" myself. (Interview, 19 October 2016).

Beyond just educating women that they had rights, the early meetings of the *Liga* focused on the shared situation of these women. As was referenced earlier, the understanding that 'the pain of one is the pain of all' generates a collective identity that took away the loneliness and isolation that came with displacement. The act of coming together in meetings, of learning together, and of discovering a set of rights that a victim is entitled to receive showed the women of the LMD that they were not alone in their suffering, and that they had a lot in common with other displaced women living in the neighbourhood. These non-material benefits to participation (sharing experiences of pain and forging a sense of togetherness) are accrued *through* ongoing mobilisation, and not as an outcome of action itself. In a high-risk setting, these incremental benefits are framed by leaders

(like Guerrero, and then local women) as a reason to mobilise despite the risks that this necessarily entails.

b. Moving Toward a Political Identity

In the case of the contemporary LMD, we see women beginning to talk about political identities in new ways. During an interview, Solange revealed: "we have to change the mentality among victims so that they consider themselves political actors" (Interview, 12 October 2016). When asked to clarify, she continued:

> We have to stop being victims so that we can become women who are political actors. We want to end up in the *Cámaras* (chambers), in the *Consejos* (councils). This will require a lot of training, but these political offices will allow the LMD to influence the making of laws. We need to work so that women who were once victims of the conflict don't get held back.… If we are able to reach [political offices] it will be beneficial for *all* women because they [officials] are going to have to pay attention to us! (Interview, 22 October 2016).

When asked what she wants to see happen in the next five years, another leader within the LMD, Leydis, was enthusiastic:

> We see ourselves in the Congress! We want to be Councillors! We want political positions, at the municipal and national levels. We could do so much at the national level, for women. We're fighting for this right now – we're fighting for opportunities. (Interview, 19 October 2016).

The narrative of transformation – from victims to survivors to political actors – is a strategy being pursued to empower these victims of forced displacement who (in the case of the LMD) are still not receiving collective reparations from the state. Interviewees express how adopting roles within the political sphere will mean that their plight can no longer be ignored by higher ups. Lemaitre and Sandvik discuss the change whereby victims in Colombia move from self-identifying as displaced people (*desplazados*) to victims. Especially in the transitional justice context created by the *Ley de Víctimas,* there was a need to transform identities, argues the report, and a shift in social movement

strategies towards reclaiming social justice and reparations (2014, 15).[62] Here we see Calhoun's assertion that identity is forged in and out of struggle, including participation in social movements (1991).

Another dynamic that emerges in the transition from victims to political actors deals with the idea of protection against revictimisation. As noted in the Peace Accords, women who are community leaders and human rights defenders are at risk from attacks from contemporary armed groups.[63] Yuranis Cogollo, of the regional *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Ombudsman's Office), provided an outsider's opinion, when asked why women continue to mobilise despite the dangers this incurs:

> …it is their way to become a *political actor*. They left their homes, they were displaced, they had to leave all their things. And no one would do anything about it. But now they have the legal recourses to make demands, and they are becoming *political actors*. They are taking this role seriously. The other thing is that they're not denouncing as individuals, they're denouncing as part of an organisation, and this makes them feel safer. 'If you do something to me, you're going to have to do something to the whole group too.' That brings a level of security that outweighs any insecurity that denouncing might bring. (Interview, 13 October 2016).

Here, Cogollo ties ideas of collective safety to the adoption of a *political actor* identity. She links the idea of being a victim to passivity; a victim waits for a government hand out and feels powerless if it does not arrive. On the other hand, a survivor, a political actor has agency; a political actor protests what she thinks is unfair or illegal until she is able to obtain what she deserves. Again, this is underpinned by leaders who frame mobilisation in terms of the benefits to be gained within a high risk context[64], and participants who incorporate this identity of resistance into their daily lives.

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[62] For more on the legal framework that underpins this identity shift, see (Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2015; Lemaitre et al., 2014).

[63] For more on increasing numbers of deaths of activists in Colombia, see (Almonacid, 2017; El Tiempo, 2018a; The Guardian, 2017).

[64] In keeping with Prospect Theory, which says that "if actors perceive themselves to be in a losing situation they are inclined toward risks; if they see a winning situation around them, they prefer

2. Social Capital

Beyond the knowledge that they were not alone in their suffering, the women of the LMD quickly learned that being part of an organisation provided them with multiple benefits: emotional (identity-based) and material. Being part of the LMD offers a sense of belonging, as well as a set of more tangible benefits. One interviewee notes that participation in group meetings reinforced her understanding that "each person alone wasn't going to achieve anything" (Interview, 29 September 2016), and that in order to effectively protect herself she would benefit from being part of an organisation. She further notes: "a person begins to grow, to learn empathy, solidarity, affection. These are ties that bind us, one to the other. (ibid.).

An element of this bonding social capital generated through participation in the LMD has to do with overcoming fear. For example, multiple members told me in interviews that they did not declare their statuses as victims or displaced people before their association with the organisation. This is both a function of not necessarily knowing the logistics of how to declare, but also of feeing the support of the other members to assuage their fears. One interviewee discusses the way that membership in the group gave her the impetus to declare her status:

> Originally, I was asked to help with the logistics of the workshops. I didn't know anyone, but they wanted me to do some cooking for them When I was there, [my friend] said "I'd like you to stay and listen… these are displaced people too." I liked what I heard, and so I stayed back and listened. I didn't know *la Doctora*, I didn't know anyone. I only know my friend. I told her that I liked what I was hearing as she said, "why don't you go and declare [your displacement status] at the Mayor's office?" So, I went. And I continued going to the workshops. (Interview, 5 November 2016).

caution" (Weyland, 2004).

Another interviewee, Solmeris, highlighted that after joining the LMD she overcame the fears she felt regarding making her declaration of displacement:

> [When I arrived to El Pozón] I didn't make my declaration of displacement because I was afraid. I didn't dare to declare myself. There was a rumour that if you made a declaration, they would kill you. [After joining the *Liga*] I made my declaration. I knew that there would be benefits... (Interview, 5 November 2016).

During this interview, she attributes her ability to declare, despite threats (from unknown entities, presumably paramilitaries) that doing so would incur violence and death, to her participation in the *Liga*. Guerrero encouraged the women to declare their statuses (to legally define themselves as victims before the institutions of the state), and they gained strength by watching their *compañeras* go forward and do so.

Again, we see here that Solmeris talks about "benefits" consistent with participation, and not necessarily as a function of the outcome of mobilisation. Despite her perception of the risk of death, she legally declared her victim-status because participation in the LMD highlighted for her the non-material benefits of assuming an identity of resistance against violence.

There is also something to be said about the idea of banishing loneliness as a strategy for moving forward in strategic action. As Magaly said in an interview:

> When we started to talk, we realised that each of us wasn't alone. This was something that was crucial, fundamental – one a woman denounces, she doesn't need to be afraid. I'll take your hand, let's go! It was a process of organisational strengthening. From this moment, we started to work – we didn't stop. We haven't stopped (Interview, 3 July 2015).

By joining the group and creating a collective identity, members are encouraged to gain the strength to engage in strategies that directly benefit them. As Sandvik and Lemaitre note: "through consciousness-raising activities, members have been trained to 'speak up'

and to use a human-rights and gender-conscious discourse" (2013, 41). In doing so, the collective is able to communally fight for the implementation of legal measures, social programmes, and security details. This non-material benefit comes through participation, and not as an outcome of the collective action. A unifying identity, then, brings non-material benefits (in terms of emotions) that participants see as selective incentives to participation. There is an incremental sense of change that being part of the LMD helps lessen the burden of daily struggles, even if does not bring an end to overall violence.

As will be discussed in the coming section about legal framing, denouncing crimes is also an activity of resistance undertaken by the LMD. As Rosa said in an interview about joining the organisations:

> This form of achieving knowledge [via meetings with the LMD] helped give us the strength to denounce. We gain further strength from denouncing – we don't fall into ignorance… we all denounce because if we don't do this we will continue in the darkness of impunity. Denouncing is what makes us strong (Interview, 3 July 2015).

This shared activity of denouncing as individuals, but in the name of a collective means that the women of the LMD feel the 'strength in numbers' of their *compañeras*. As with the declaration of status (discussed above), denouncing crimes (both past and contemporary) as a group allows the fear of retribution to be dispersed between hundreds of members, and not taken on the shoulders of one individual. Despite the potential for a negative outcome (i.e., whether a participant is the victim of further violence in the future), participation leads to a sense of collective risk management and collective burden-sharing that makes joining the group seem worthwhile.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, however, social capital comes in two forms: bonding and bridging. Through Guerrero's efforts, the LMD was also able to generate bridging social

capital. For example, as noted earlier, it was through her personal contact with U.S. Senator Leahy that she was able to generate the funding for the City of Women. Moreover, Guerrero is a lawyer and was thus able to use her knowledge of the legal environment to link women to various institutions of the state, like the Victims' Unit and the regional *Mesas de Víctimas*. Furthermore, as a collective the LMD is working with the Victims' Unit to obtain collective reparations. Although these have not yet materialised, the making alliances with this purveyor of resources is another example of the strategy of bridging social capital creation. These links are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

3. Legal Framing

In terms of legal framing, Sandvik and Lemaitre talk about an earlier project undertaken with the LMD. In this project:

> "[they] hypothesised that the best way for displaced women to demand implementation of their legal rights and national and local humanitarian policies was through civic and political organisations capable of making local politicians accountable for failing (i) to respond to humanitarian emergencies and (ii) to provide the services required by law" (Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2013, 37).

They employed feminist collaborative methods in order to engage the displaced women themselves as agents in the research. One of the outcomes of this project was a collaborative census of 126 households. Interestingly, however, the women of the LMD used this data in a way not anticipated by the researchers; they used it as a foundation for "negotiations with national and international power holders" (2013, 37).[65]

[65] The requests were made to the World Food Programme, the Government of Colombia (to ask for food aid to be included in security measures), as part of a report on the status of IDP women presented to the Constitutional Court, and as part of an effort to follow up on steps taken by a municipal

The authors go on to surmise from this finding that:

(i) "Contrary to the claim that institutionalising the IDP [Internally Displaced Person] issue as a humanitarian concern has 'depoliticised' it… the discourse and institutions of internal displacement have in fact created legal and political spaces for activism, in which beneficiaries can act both within and at the margins of the humanitarian system to improve their conditions;

(ii) "Although the *Liga*'s leadership (and, to a certain extent the rank and file) ae particularly astute in their use of these spaces, they remain constrained by poverty, violence, and local processes of exclusion – which, in combination, undermine the possibilities for effective collective action;

(iii) "Further research is needed on the beneficiaries of humanitarian relief as agents in the production and management of knowledge in their predicament" (ibid., 38).

To put this in sociological, as opposed to socio-legal, language: the women of the LMD actively use legal framing as a strategy of resistance against their situations of insecurity and marginalisation. The following paragraphs document instances of legal framing that became apparent specifically during my fieldwork. These focus primarily on (i) the collective reparations process, and (ii) continuing to denounce acts of violence and victimisation against members of the LMD.

a. Collective Reparations

According to the Victims' Law and the subsequent *Resolución 2014-660198* (14 October 2014) (Guerrero, 2016), they are one of the eight women's organisation that qualify for both individual *and* collective reparations. This means that individual members of the LMD should receive personal reparations, and the group as a collective should receive holistic reparations as a collective victim. Despite this, the *Comité Ejecutivo* (Executive Committee) of the LMD notes that the group has still not received any remuneration (neither pecuniary nor in-kind). The following paragraphs will outline the history of the LMD with regards to collective reparations.

administration to implement programmes for IDPs (Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2013, 37).

The LMD has spent considerable time and effort (from 2013 onwards) articulating a PIRC (*Plan Integral de Reparación Colectiva*, Comprehensive Collective Reparation Plan). The plan is divided into: 1) Infrastructure and collective property (in the context of displacement); 2) Economic damages (including as these relate inheritance); 3) Family disintegration; 4) Damage to social fabric, and organisational strength; 5) Sexual, physical, psychosocial, and emotional violence, with a collective impact; 6) Damage caused to the LMD for the omission of or lack of due diligence in the implementation of protective actions, and public policies of public officials, the state, and former municipal mayors (Liga de las Mujeres Desplazadas 2016).

Each of these headings includes a section on restitution measures, rehabilitation measures, non-repetition measures, and satisfaction measures, as is within the mandate of the Victims' Unit. These include the specific measures – micro-credit funds, land restitution, new houses for displaced women, health clinics, pensions, among others – that will allow the LMD to feel that the collective reparations have restored their ability to live a dignified life.

An internal document elaborated by the Victims' Unit (2017b) provides a timeline of the LMD's progression towards collective reparation. It notes that in the second half of 2013, the LMD began the process of enrolment and registration, and participated in workshops to diagnose the damages suffered by the organisation. In April 2014, the LMD continued working on the Damage Diagnosis[66], which was finalised in December 2015. In 2016,

[66] The *diagnostico de daño* (damage diagnosis) is the official process of systematically assessing the damages caused by the conflict.

the LMD formalised their PIRC, which was approved by the Victims' Unit. An interviewee at the Victims' Unit notes that normally, the process of distributing the collective reparations would begin at this stage. On 24 June 2016, however, the legal representative of the organisation communicated to the Unit that the LMD decided not to sign the document approving the PIRC, as there had not been enough advances made with regards to individual compensation (as per the individual reparations). In November 2016, all parties signed the new Damage Diagnosis, as well as an updated PIRC.

According to Guerrero, in an interview: *"¡Nada se ha cumplido!"* (Nothing has been fulfilled!) (Interview, 30 September 2016). For her, one of the problems with the Victims' Law is that it designates subjects of collective reparations, but it never says *what* they are going to receive. Here emerges a fundamental difference in opinion between the Victims' Unit and Guerrero of the LMD when it comes to an interpretation of the Victims' Law. As Guerrero understands it:

> Everyone and their dog is suddenly breathing peace - because, of course, who wouldn't want to be seen to be on the side of peace? But what will it change? The original conditions of the war - inequality, fundamental ideological disputes over land ownership - still exist. Nothing is resolved. (Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015)

Here, Guerrero alludes to her strategy of pursuing reparations that will not only return the women of the LMD to the realities they lived before the conflict (before displacement), but also initiate a transformative project that tackles inequality in Colombia writ large. This is in contrast to what the Victims' Unit expresses. Says Cruz Herrera, "the process is: we diagnose the damage, we establish measures to repair this damage, and then we validate and pass these plans" (Interview, 5 April 2017). She highlights the difference between what is requested as a reparation measure and the scope and possibility of the Law. She notes that the LMD's process of collective reparation was

slowed down significantly when the legal representative decided not to approve the first PIRC. “They weren’t asking for reparations for the damage caused by the conflict, but for historical inequalities that existed beforehand” (ibid.). This is not within the scope of the Victims’ Law.

As noted by both the Victims’ Unit and Guerrero, the tension between the scope of the possible and the feelings of having rights to a certain set of reparatory measures – and furthermore that this difference is not strictly outlined in law – makes for slow-going when it comes to the LMD’s PIRC. Rank-and-file members of the LMD also express this frustration. Solange notes that the most pressing challenge that the LMD needs to overcome is “that all women in the organisation are given reparations – individually and collectively. This means that there will be justice” (Interview, 12 October 2016). Here, as in keeping with Guerrero’s idea of a project capable of transforming large-scale inequalities, victims are linking ideas of reparation to questions of justice.

b. Denouncing Crimes

The organisational and mobilisational resources of the LMD were not only used internally but to more effectively demand assistance from a state, most notable in its absence and failure to address victimising acts. Focusing framing their demands in legal terms, one arm of the LMD is dedicated to filing claims regarding collective reparations against the state. From 2006 to 2009, the women documented and compiled 159 instances of their members’ experiences of displacement and violence and filed these with the Public Prosecutor’s Office.

Furthermore, in 2010, the LMD filed a complaint of impunity with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) against the Colombian state. Given the manner in which this established the organisation as a legitimate entity before the IACHR and the Colombian state, this will be further discussed in the following section about certification. With that said, it is important to note that this act also falls within the gamut of legal framing, as it involved using legal mechanisms to underscore the injustice of the LMD's situation before the law.

According to Arango Olaya, these legal actions are consistent with the concept of "grassroots constitutionalism[67]", a process which "through a participatory scheme has mobilised a movement towards the restitution of their rights, but moreover has served as a tool and space of empowerment by shifting power relations between sufferers and the state" (2010, 4). Later in her thesis, she clarifies that the *Liga*'s experience:

> evidences how the human rights education activities and the creation of a physical space as the City of Women within the context of the legal intervention of the Decree (Auto 092) attempt to bridge the divide between legally and materially disempowered citizens to conscious citizens with tools to activate and participate in political spaces, but primarily claim and exercise their rights (ibid., 19).

Grassroots constitutionalism is based in a specific branch of legal studies, and accordingly does not fit within the scope of this chapter. With that said, taken generally, it allows us to highlight the ways in which the LMD's use of legal framing is a strategic tactic based in taking back the rights to rights, and the right to fight (as is outlined by Guerrero in the conclusion of this chapter).

[67] Arango Olaya adapted this concept from Skapska (1999), who writes about constitutionalism in Poland in the post-Cold War era.

4. Acts of Certification

Finally, certification provides the women of the LMD with a "call to action," to draw attention to their situation and redefine themselves and their situation not simply as passive victims but active protagonists in constructing their lives to keep their pasts of conflict, violence and displacement from repeating itself. As one interviewee put it:

> We were the victims of forced displacement and of the country's armed conflict. As a result of being resettled, organised, and trained, we have been the victims of various other acts of violence that have impacted us as an organisation. But we continue to resist, and we continue to organise. To continue denouncing everything that happens to us is a way of preparing ourselves…making public everything that happens to us is still clouded by impunity, but it makes us resistant… because we know that if we keep quiet, things will get worse (Interview, 19 October 2016).

a. Building a Physical Safe Space

Indeed, in terms of outward actions, the building of the City of Women is the ultimate act of certification. Constructing a physical space to meet the needs of a special population – that should supposedly be met by the government –is an outward sign of discontent and of resistance. It is a further demonstration of the way that the women of the *Liga* conceptualise dignity. One member speaks about the lead-up to building the City:

> There was a moment where the *Doctora* asked us, "what is the thing that you [women] need the most?" Almost everyone said that they needed a house. But she decided to add the word "dignified." More than just a house, we needed a dignified house, with water, with light. This way, our dream of a dignified life was born" (Interview, 5 November 2016).

What Solmeris is saying above is that building the City of Women was an outward assertion of re-taking the dignity that the women of the *Liga* lost during their experiences with displacement and subsequent revictimisation. Furthermore, the continuation of the project after the death of Don Julio shows the determination of the women; despite violent threats and acts, they did not stop their project. This is a sign against their victimisers –

those who originally displaced them, those who continued to threaten and harm them, and the agencies and institutions that failed to protect them (despite being legally obligated to) – that they would not be deterred from their project of rebuilding a dignified life.

b. Building a Legal Safe Space

While the City of Women is the most obvious act of certification, the *Liga* has also taken part in other acts that fall under this pillar of the HRF framework. For example, in 2009, the *Liga* filed a petition against the Colombian state before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights. This act also constitutes a strategy of legal framing, however, is included in the present section on certification given the way in which it was undertaken as an act designed to gain legitimate recognition before the Colombian state. On the world stage (before an international legal body, that is), the *Liga* was able to assert its needs and have them listened and responded to.

In March 2009, a woman was killed 150 metres from a military check-point located nearby to the entrance of the City of Women. This event was of particular importance given that the state was under legal obligation to provide security for IDPs generally, and the *Liga* specifically. Moreover, this came at a time when the *Liga* was receiving a high number of threats from the paramilitary group *Aguilas Negras*, who threatened violence and death (Sandvik et al., 2014, 39). Moreover, on 31 August 2009, the son of one of the women in the *Liga* (Dorís Berrio Palomino) was killed in Cartagena, presumably for his role as the leader of the *Liga Joven* (the youth arm of the LMD). The LMD presented a case to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), against the

Colombian state for not coming through on its obligation to protect the women of the organisation (OAS, 2009). In doing so, "it obtained protective measures from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights by successfully arguing that members were subject to frequent and credible death threats" (Sandvik & Lemaitre Ripoll, 2013, 41).

On 18 November 2009, the IACHR ordered the Colombian state to implement security measures for Doris and her family. There were already supposed to be security measures in place, yet the CIDH noted these were obviously insufficient, as a young man was murdered. The Colombian Constitutional Court had mentioned three times that there was a risk to members' safety, and the LMD told the Minister of the Interior that they were worried about their safety (OAS, 2009). The IACHR therefore wrote in its ruling that the Colombian government must adopt the measures necessary to guarantee life and physical security for Doris and her family, as well as other *Liga* members

After granting precautionary measures for the LMD in 2009, the IACHR expanded these measures in both 2010 and 2011, to the benefit of "all members of the LMD and 16 members of the organisation's Youth League" (OAS, 2011). According to an IACHR press release, the *Liga* informed them on multiple occasions that the Colombian authorities "have not responded in a timely manner to their situation of risk", and well as reporting "experiencing problems and delays in the implementation of the precautionary measures" (ibid.). In a 2011 visit to Colombia by the Rapporteur on the Rights of Women (Luz Patricia Mejía Guerrero), the IACHR "emphasised the need to establish a distinct approach to the measures of protection that seek to benefit women, in response to the causes and effects related to the situation of risk they face in light of their gender" (ibid.).

The IACHR further publicly reminded the Colombian State of its obligation to investigate acts of violence, and to punish perpetrators.

The above represent examples of a whole host of acts of certification in which the *Liga* has engaged, specifically related to using legal mechanisms to establish legitimacy, including before the Constitutional Court and municipal authorities.[68] This chapter, however, focuses specifically on the *Liga*'s use of the IACHR to force the Colombian State into compliance. It is of note that the organisation also engages in acts of certification in terms of its refusal to be ignored. Guerrero and other leaders of the LMD talk about the *plantones* (sit-ins) they arranged and undertook when the Victims' Unit did not answer their petitions in a certain amount of time. The *Liga* further took part in a *toma* (take-over) of the Victims' Unit buildings in Cartagena. This was their contribution to a national-level effort coordinated by various groups of women who were not receiving their collective reparations. These physical acts were public – it established the *Liga* as an organisation that cannot be ignored. While there has not been much documentation of these acts, interviewees mentioned their participation in *plantones* in passing. Here, we see certification as a creative and strong strategy of feminist resistance.

E. Conclusion

It would not be in good faith, however, to conclude without noting the growing feelings of mobilisational fatigue that I sensed during my time spent with the LMD in 2016.

[68] For more examples of the Liga's use of acts of legal certification, see (Arango Olaya, 2010; Sandvik et al., 2014; Sandvik & Lemaitre, 2013).

Leaders and rank and file members alike expressed frustrations that stemmed from stagnation, especially in regard to receiving individual and collective reparations. Furthermore, I sometimes observed tensions between LMD leaders and Guerrero. For example, in a meeting of the *Comité Tecnico* I attended with Guerrero and four leaders, she became notably frustrated. She said that over time, the women of the LMD have advanced in their ability to value themselves in their personal and family lives, but that if they do not continue with the project, the PIRC will mean nothing. She was obviously irritated, saying that the organisation is suffering from a lack of leadership. "You can't work like this, you need to be financially responsible.[69] I can't force you to work!" (Meeting, 5 November 2016).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, during an interview I conducted in 2015 Guerrero noted that she was exhausted (Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015). For the past 16 years she has been paying everything for the organisation – down to the gasoline for her bodyguards' cars – because the state will not pay. In an interview, she told me that since 2010, the women's *fuerza* (force, strength) is decreasing and that they need to find a way to be self-sustainable. "The need to resolve their own problems," she continued (Interview, 30 September 2016). What I take from all of this is that recent stagnation (in terms of a perceived lack of success related to reparations) has had a demoralising effect on both Guerrero and the members of the *Liga*.

One of the other leaders related to me that she: "sometimes feel like I'm being pulled up and down and to the side and the other side. I feel like I'm being pulled and stretched too

[69] This particular incident related to a bank account being shut down due to inactivity.

far" (Interview, 7 September 2016). Women leaders in the organisation are also experiencing mobilisation fatigue, further augmented when it comes to balancing work and home life.

All parties are frustrated with the lack of incremental successes of the organisation since the building of the City of Women in 2006. Although the collective reparations process has been initiated, no one has received any benefits from this programme yet. Rank and file members talked to me about waiting for their reparations. Guerrero talked about needing the women to continue to mobilise for these (in kind) monies. The equilibrium between mobilisation and complacency (resigning oneself to wait until the reparations appear) is off-kilter, and with it, the relationships between the members of the organisation, the leadership, and Guerrero.

By relating this phenomenon, however, I do not mean to imply that there is no mobilisation within the organisation. For example, during fieldwork I spent a day traveling to Barranquilla with approximately 40 members of the LMD for a Peace Conference (in the build-up to the Plebiscite for the Peace Accords). Later, one member told me that she did not want to attend the Conference, but that she felt obligated because as a member of the LMD she knew that she needed to show her face and represent her organisation publicly in an event that focused so heavily on victims and victims' rights. Collective action has, over the years, become fundamental to identity but also sometimes a burdensome obligation.

Indeed, the struggle continues for the members of the LMD. Feelings of frustration are shared by many, as was related to me in casual conversations with various members of

the organisation. With that said, the current climate of the transition towards Peace may lead to new developments in terms of increased opportunities for speeding up the collective reparations process. Interestingly, since submitting this thesis I have been informed that the *Liga* has recently (some time in 2018) received protection measures, including access to three cars and drivers/bodyguards, from the National Protection Unit. While these measures represent only a small gain, they reinforce the idea that if women keep mobilising and making demands, they will eventually receive some of the benefits they have requested over time.

Perhaps Guerrero should take heed of her own words, in *Sueño de Vida Digna*, where she notes: "We cannot desist in our hope that things can get better…. Because [it is true] that we have achieved projects that at the beginning seemed unimaginable" (Sandvik et al., 2014, 73). Further research in the coming years would provide interesting insight into the next steps for the LMD. Time will tell whether dwindling mobilisational motivation is transient or not. Scruples aside, an interview with Guerrero in 2015 revealed her continued faith in the organisation:

> The most important right that these women have is the right to resist. This right to fight will be passed on to their children. They have a right to rights. They have a right to fight for these rights. The City of Women is a space where they can re-dignify themselves. They can't stop resisting – there is nothing else… there are no other options, no other realities (Interview, 13 September 2015).

Moreover, while interviews over the course of fieldwork revealed frustrations with the slowness of mobilisation in the post-City of Women era, no one ever expressed any desire to abandon the project of creating a dignified life. As the leader of the Carmen de Bolívar chapter of the LMD told me: "this train is moving, and you can stay aboard, or you can get off now. I've been on this train for so long now. There's no way I'm getting off until I reach my destination" (Group interview, 6 November 2016).

Furthermore, there are ongoing efforts to include future generations in the LMD. The *Liga Joven*, for example, is a group of children and young people (some who were displaced with their mothers in the 1990s and some who were born in El Pozón or the City itself) who participate in memory-building and leadership training activities. According to a friend in Cartagena who volunteers her time to teach the *Liga Joven* about communications technologies and leadership: "the women want the next generation to learn how they can continue to fight for rights and continue the legacy of the *Liga*" (Phone call, 9 July 2018). Through intergenerational dialogue (older women telling their stories to the younger generations) and training sessions (where youth are taught about tools they can use to improve their communities), the women of the LMD are investing their time and resources into continuing their *lucha* and incorporating it into the vision that young people have for their communities in the future.

Based on these actions, experiences and accounts retold in interviews, it is argued in this chapter that, under the charismatic leadership of Guerrero, the LMD engaged in High Risk Feminism as a strategy for constructing peace in the middle of a high risk setting. This peace is internal – the knowledge that being part of a collective distributes the way that one assesses risk. It is also physical – having a house to call one's own and to shelter one's family is key to re-establishing the dignity that was stolen via the act of forced displacement. From collective identity building in El Pozón, to capitalising on the individual and collective benefits of social capital, to learning to frame their conditions of marginality as illegal, to building an actual city (the ultimate act of certification), the women of the LMD have resisted and rejected their condition of being victims. They are

the protagonists in their own lives, and they rely on each other to overcome the daily struggles associated with forced displacement.

Moreover, the LMD's mobilisation is a *feminist* attempt to make society less violent for women specifically. That is, the strategy of coming together in organisations is a form of resistance – concerted effort to build a shield of social capital that may militate against the mental and social deleterious effects of pervasive violence against women. As the charismatic bond strengthens and women adopt a feminist identity, they begin to encourage others to organise as a function of being women living in high-risk conditions who want to change the gender relations in society. Such organisation both catalyses more women into adopting the same identity and fortifies the protective functions of bonding social capital by adding strength in numbers. Forming a community group and giving value to collective identity can be seen as an insurgent act – an act that makes a demand for physical security, for gender security, and for rights writ large. In turn, these groups can engage in certification techniques, acts that involve assuming a certain level of risk given the violent context, but which also have the potential to establish a certain level of legitimacy as actors on a public stage, further encouraging even more women to join.

Despite manifold setbacks and obstacles, they have experienced, the women of the LMD maintain that it is better to use their collective voice than it is to be quiet. Resistance – in the form of High Risk Feminism – has not only become a way of life, but it is the strategy for creating pockets of safe places in the midst of a conflict zone. At the end of one interview, upon being asked what she envisaged in the future of the LMD, the interviewee replied:

> Look, now we women have a *voice*. What we built [the City of Women] has a weight…and the union that we have, the alliances that we have as an organisation of women… that has weight too. It gives us force. A woman working by herself doesn't have the same result as working in a group – a group of feminists… this gives us force (Interview, 19 October 2016).

We see here, then, that the *Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas*, for all its current frustrations, is not prepared to disengage with its project for a dignified life any time soon. It plans to monopolise on its members' right to rights, and right to fight. Resistance – feminist resistance in a high risk setting – is its *modus operandi*, and its best choice for guaranteeing success (albeit incremental) for its constituent members.

Chapter V: Afro-Colombian Women Mobilising Against 'Geographies of Violence': Intersectional High Risk Feminism in *Cuerpo y Cara de Mujer*[70,71]

The Day I Decided Not to be the Victim

The day I decided not to be the victim, I looked at myself in the mirror,
I undressed, I saw myself in body and face of a woman, and I stopped blaming myself

The day I decided not to be the victim,
I stopped crying for myself and cried for other people instead

The day I decided not to be the victim, I lifted my voice
And publicly denounced my malaise

The day I decided not to be the victim, I didn't forget
It is impossible to forget what is in your brain,
But with my whole soul I learned to forgive

When I decided not to be the victim,
I stood up, I loved myself, I beautified myself, I put on high heels,
I put on my best dress.
Again, I stood in front of the mirror in the body and face of a woman…
I think I have healed,
Finally I forgave myself.

When I decided not to be the victim,
We united our voices with others who thought the same.
So the fire will not put out fire,
And those who violated us with the goal of destroying us,
For our different ways of building and thinking,
We have converted this into an offering of peace

When I decided not to be the victim,
I stood up with others,
And today we are AFROMUPAZ.
Association of Afro women for peace, together.
We are all the women of Colombia who are betting on peace,
And because of this today I simply want to say thank you, thank you, thank you.
I decided not to be the victim.

(Urrutia, in AFROMUPAZ, 2014, 32).

[70] Spanish for "in the body and face of a woman" and is taken from interviews with Urrutia, as well as (AFROMUPAZ, 2014; Secretaría Distrital de la Mujer, 2015).

[71] Much of this chapter is included in an article accepted for publication by *Latin American Perspectives* (Zulver, forthcoming-b).

A. Introduction

Bogotá is the capital of Colombia and, with a population of more than 8 million inhabitants, it has been a hub of internal migration due to displacement during the country's fifty-two year conflict with the FARC. Victims of guerrilla groups, paramilitary organisations, and BACRIM fled – or were forced to flee – from all parts of the country. Arriving with their remaining family members, and whatever belongings they could carry with them, victims had to re-establish themselves and their lives in an unknown and often hostile environment. This was no easy feat; they often arrived with few economic resources, and with no social network to welcome them. Usme, in the south of the city, has historically been a hub for displaced Afro-Colombians from the Pacific coast (El Tiempo, 2014).

This chapter examines AFROMUPAZ – *la Asociación de Mujeres Afro por la Paz* (the Association of Afro Women for Peace), which was founded in 2000. In the midst of a hostile environment, María Eugenia Urrutia – herself a victim of displacement, kidnapping, and sexual violence – established an organisation for women who, like her, fled from their homes in Colombia's Pacific Coast region, and arrived in Bogotá with no personal ties or social links. A charismatic leader, she was able to convince displaced women that it was worth their while to act collectively despite the risks this implied. The organisation now represents the central community, support network, and employment opportunity for dozens of displaced Afro-Colombian women and their families in Bogotá.

For many victims of displacement (who have usually also suffered physical, sexual, and psychological abuse), AFROMUPAZ is the only safe space they have. It offers a

welcoming community, the ability to heal the emotional scars of past abuses, protection against ongoing re-victimisation, and a source of fair employment. At the time of writing, the organisation has only been studied once in the academic literature (see Marciales Montenegro, 2015), within the context of structural racism and sexual violence. The present chapter, however, will use the HRF framework to explain AFROMUPAZ's mobilisational strategies.

Indeed, it presents the case that Usme represents a domain of losses for displaced women. Violence in commonplace and inaction does not guarantee safety or protection. In this context, Urrutia was able to use a language of women's rights, victims' rights, and Afro-Colombian rights to bring women together in a coordinated gender justice project. New and alone in a big city, she showed them the non-material benefits of community and belonging. Moreover, she was able to facilitate material benefits for participants, including employment, psychological programmes, childcare, and reparations. In concert, these benefits complement an identity-building exercise whereby participants become ever-more dedicated to the leader and to the movement, ensuring continued action over time.

The following chapter will examine AFROMUPAZ from the angle of its role as a uniting organisation for women who have lived – and continue to live – in high risk conditions. First, the chapter discusses the specificities of the methodology employed for this case study. Next, it narrates the experiences of organisation members, from their displacement to their settlement in Bogotá, to their daily strategies for resisting violence. Here, we see the dynamic of how Urrutia created a charismatic bond with displaced women looking for leadership in a violent context. Then, the discussion suggests that this mobilisation

can best be understood employing the HRF framework. The remainder of the chapter examines each of the pillars in turn, before imparting concluding statements about the success of AFROMUPAZ's actions of strategic feminist resistance.

B. Particularities of Case Study & Methodology:

This chapter is based on ten months of fieldwork with AFROMUPAZ. The organisation is located in Usme (see Figure 5.1 below), a municipality in the south of Colombia's capital city, Bogotá. It comprises about 70 families. These households are primarily headed by women, however some of the women have husbands or partners with whom they live. The large majority of these women have children (usually between three and five). Socio-economically, the women struggle. As will be noted below, although they work for the organisation, they do not get paid wages. On their days off, the women work informally; some talked about selling plastic garbage bags at traffic lights to make enough money to pay their monthly rents.

The women of AFROMUPAZ engages in three primary activities: psycho-social healing programmes based in traditional practices, providing economic security to displaced Afro-Colombian women through a series of small business ventures, and legally denouncing past and present acts of violence committed against members of the organisation. AFROMUPAZ currently has its headquarters in a rented house that serves as a meeting place, a source of employment, a NGO headquarters, a crèche, and a space for psycho-social healing. Usme is far from a safe neighbourhood, but the office's central location is easy for many displaced women to access on a daily basis. The neighbourhood

is home to many criminal gangs who engage in *microtráfico*[72] – the micro-trafficking of drugs, weapons, and people.[73]



Figure 5.1: This map shows the municipality of Usme within the city of Bogotá. Source: http://maps.google.com/. Accessed 21 March 2018.

I first made contact with the organisation at a conference hosted by the Ministry of Justice and the Law Department at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, in September 2016. As part of the conference, "*Prevención de Violencia Sexual Para el Posconflicto*" (Prevention of Sexual Violence in the Post-conflict Era), we were divided into groups to

[72] This is the word Urrutia's uses to describe the activities carried out by these organisations. A report by the *Observatorio de Drogas de Colombia* notes that microtrafficking refers to the transport of base products from production zones to urban areas. Normally the quantities are small compared to shipments designed for export. This trafficking is hard to detect by authorities, and is linked to high levels of the use of violence as a way to regulate and control behaviour, and to maintain territorial control (on behalf of criminal organisations) (2016, 110-112).

[73] For more on the dynamics of micro-trafficking and BACRIM, see (Saab and Taylor 2009; McDermott 2014).

brainstorm ideas about violence prevention (to then present to the Ministry of Justice). I was grouped with two members of AFROMUPAZ, and at the end of the day we exchanged contact details.

Upon arrival in Bogotá in early February 2017, I contacted these two women, and from there was able to get in touch with María Eugenia Urrutia, the founder and legal representative of AFROMUPAZ. Over the following months, I spent time in the organisation's headquarters in Usme. I interviewed Urrutia and her assistant Victoria[74] multiple times. They often invited me to meetings with various state institutions (including the *Alcaldia* (Mayor's Office), the Victim's Unit, the *Defensoria del Pueblo* (Ombudsman's Office), etc.). After these meetings, I was always invited to stay for lunch, which was a time when I was able to chat to the rank-and-file members of the organisation and their children. Over time, we developed a level of closeness that resulted in the women opening up to me about their life stories, their past experiences with violence, and their day-to-day struggles of re-victimisation in Bogotá.

I found the women at AFROMUPAZ initially much more closed than the women I interviewed from the LMD. For the first four months I spent visiting, I also had the impression I was being prevented from having discussions with the members of the organisation. Urrutia would often postpone our meetings or change the subject when I arrived. For example, I would sometimes arrive to interview some of the women (as I had arranged via the Whatsapp messages) only to find that I was, in fact, observing a meeting

[74] Except for Urrutia, all names have been changed for the purpose of anonymity.

with the Victim's Unit. This was frustrating for me, as I wanted to extend beyond a merely institutional understanding of the organisation.

It was only when (in May) Urrutia asked me to help her write a grant proposal for an international organisation that I felt I had finally overcome some barriers. In being able to offer something tangible to the organisation, I felt a shift in our dynamic. I no longer felt that I was treated with suspicion, but rather, as a friend of the organisation. It was around this time that Urrutia began to tell me "*mamita, estás en tu casa, siempre estás bienvenida acá*" (honey, this is your house too, you are always welcome here"). From then on, I was finally allowed to conduct interviews with rank-and-file members of the organisation.

I mention this dynamic for two reasons: 1) to justify the extended period of time I spent with AFROMUPAZ; and 2) to highlight the cautious attitude that the women of the organisation take with outsiders. In terms of the second point, I am not certain why the organisation is reticent to allow outsiders to conduct interviews. It is difficult to summarise this feeling using academic language, but I felt for many months that I was seen as mildly irritating when I arrived at the house. Although it was never articulated to me, I always left with the idea that Urrutia did not want to waste her (or the other women's) time speaking to a foreigner who was not offering anything in return. It also could be the case that Urrutia and the women were reticent to speak to a foreign, Western, middle class researcher. These colour and class divisions may have caused discomfort that only diminished with time and familiarity.

I am still uncertain as to whether this was her protecting the women of her organisation from prying questions that might unearth past traumas, if she wanted to control the information I had access to, or if she thought the women had reached their saturation point in terms of interviews (after frequently sharing their experiences with journalists and state institutions like the Victim's Unit). By the end of the 10 months, however, I was able to conduct interviews with leaders, and rank-and-file members of the organisation.

C. AFROMUPAZ: Narrating Experiences of Terror and Resistance

1. Social Context and Neighbourhood: Violent Dynamics

The women of AFROMUPAZ come from the Pacific region of Colombia. Oslender describes the 1990s as a "time of hope" in this region, particularly due to the recognition of Afro-Colombians as an ethnic minority group in the country's 1991 constitution (2007b, 754; 2008, 86). In late 1996, however, the Colombian army (in conjunction with paramilitary groups) began an offensive against guerrilla forces in the region, leaving in its wake civilian causalities.[75] Local communities were caught in the crossfire, "sandwiched between fighting groups" (Oslender, 2008, 89). Thus began the phenomenon of massive forced displacements of hundreds of thousands of civilians. At the same time as the region experienced the violence of armed groups, powerful economic groups began to expand industries like mining and palm plantations, often on

[75] For more on this campaign of violence, see (Oslender, 2007b, 754-756).

land collectively-held by local populations.[76] Community leaders who spoke out against this were disappeared and killed by paramilitary forces.[77] Scholars suggest that there were strategic economic interests in forced displacement (Escobar, 2003; Marciales Montenegro, 2015; Oslender, 2007b, 2008). In this way, the Pacific coast of Colombia went from a "peace haven" to a "geography of terror" (Oslender, 2008).

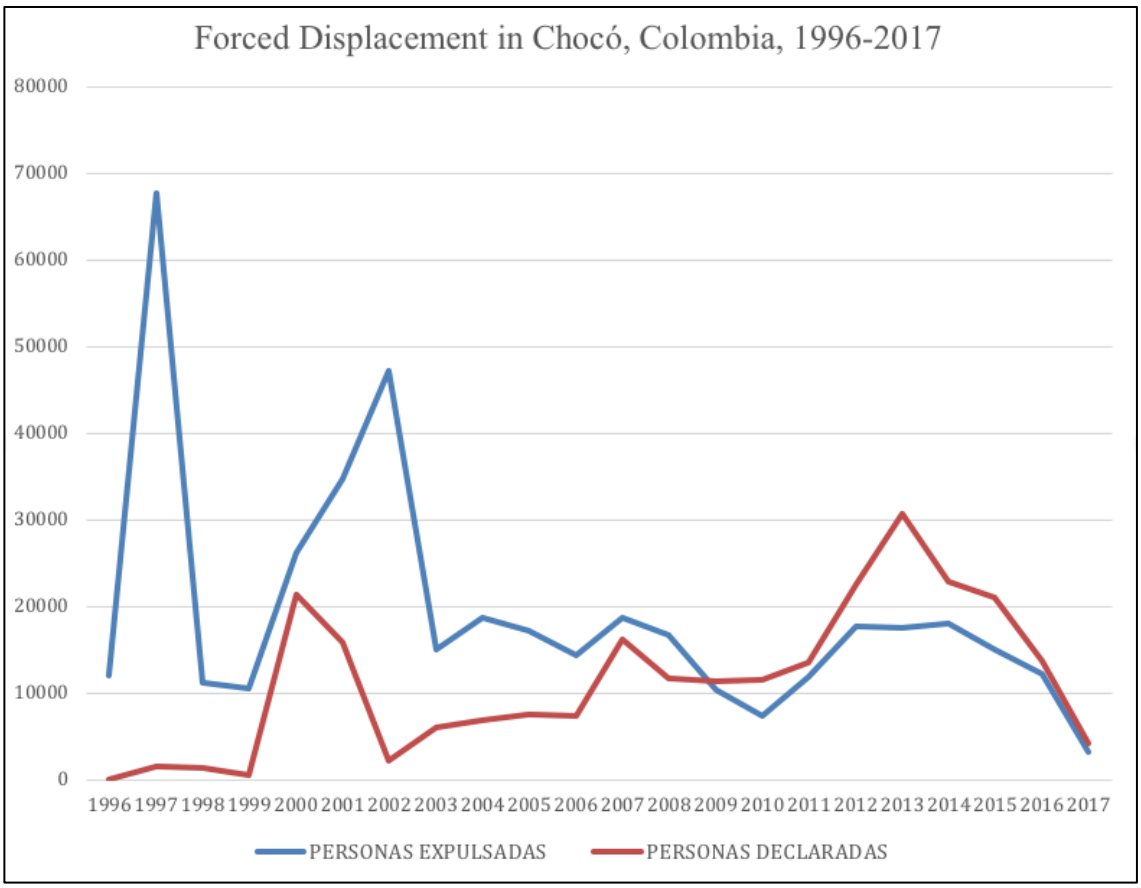


Figure 5.2: Number of People Displaced by the Conflict (blue), and Number of Declarations of Displacement (orange) -- Department of Chocó. Data source: https://rni.unidadvictimas.gov.co/RUV [Accessed 19 September 2017].

The above chart shows the subsequent waves of displacement, highlighting spikes in 1997, 2000-2002, and less so in 2004-2008 and 2013-2015. The majority of the members

[76] The constitution of 1991 was the first to offer Afro-Colombians collective land ownership rights. For more on this, see (Oslender 2007a; Oslender 2008; Hooker 2005; Hooker 2008; Asher 2017).

[77] For more on social movements in Colombia's Pacific coast, see (Oslender 2004; Asher 2017).

of AFROMUPAZ come from Chocó, but some also come from the Pacific departments of Antioquia, Valle del Cauca, Cauca, and Nariño.

The women of AFROMUPAZ often spend interview time waxing poetic about their homes in the Pacific, which they lovingly refer to as their 'territories.' Most of them lived in small towns along the San Juan river and had their own houses with gardens and farm animals. Their narratives always focus on how safe and peaceful their towns were before the guerrilla[78] arrived.

When the guerrilla arrived, however, everything changed:

> The day [they] arrived, they destroyed all the lamp posts. They threatened all the men. People had to send their children away…. You couldn't have a daughter in town or the guerrilla would take her away. If you had a store, they came and ate everything. If you had a nice house, they would come and take it. They took my pigs, my hens, my eggs. Everyone had to leave. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Interviewees talk about the overwhelming fear they experienced. The guerrilla tried to forcibly recruit their sons and rape their daughters; "I had to *sacar mi gente* [get my people out of there] as quickly as possible. We had no time to take anything, just our clothes" (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Some of the women interviewed sent their children away and stayed in the town to tie up loose ends. They remember hearing bombs and seeing the guerrilla soldiers kill and dismember people before throwing their corpses in the river. Then the army arrived and

[78] It should be noted that it was not always guerrilla forces that forcibly displaced these women. The FARC, ELN, and paramilitary groups all operated in these regions (with different levels of frequency over the years). Interviewees, however, found it difficult to tell me exactly who the actors were who had displaced them. I am unsure if they did know and did not want to reveal this information to me, or if they genuinely were uncertain. Perhaps it is most accurate to say that for many of these women (interviewed) it was the guerrilla who displaced them the first time, and subsequent displacements and violence came at the hands of a combination of these groups.

implemented a curfew: "we didn't have the right to leave our houses. It got to the point where we couldn't go out, night or day. People were starving to death in their houses." (Interview, 23 June 2017). These descriptions are consistent with Oslender's aforementioned framework of "geographies of terror".

As mentioned above, the experience of arriving in Bogotá as a displaced person was overwhelming, stressful, and insecure. Meertens and Stoller suggest that for women, the "rupture of social fabric at the family and neighbourhood level has produced the sensation of being adrift: like a boat with no harbour" (2001, 140). Victims of displacement recount that they would often call distant relatives, or people from their home town who had already set up a new life in Bogotá, in hopes of staying within them until they could find their own housing. Despite this, victims reflect on how difficult it was to arrive in a new city with few relatives, far away from home, with no job prospects.

The women of AFROMUPAZ are the victims of multiple and continuing acts of violence. After being displaced from the Pacific Coast, many of them travelled to different parts of the country and experienced secondary and tertiary acts of displacement before arriving in Usme, Bogotá. One member of AFROMUPAZ talks about being displaced from Chocó in 2001 with her children.[79] She went to Apartadó, Antioquia, but was displaced again, after suffering further acts of violence, in 2008. Because she was given a small amount of money (by the government) when she arrived in Antioquia, she did not qualify for any further aid when she arrived in Bogotá.

[79] She mentions that she had eight children, but that only four are alive. She implies that she lost some of children during the experiences of displacement.

Members of the organisation talk about the racism they encountered in the city – as black women, they were often unable to find work, or even rent a house due to stigmatising and racist attitudes:

> Bogotá is a very racist city, it is hard to find employment. People might say you don't have the right skills for the job, [but they mean that they don't want you because you're Afro]. You have to start denying your heritage. You have to straighten your hair. Your integrity suffers. But what can you do? You can't let your children starve. (Interview, 28 February 2017).

It was because of this vulnerability that Urrutia saw the need to establish an organisation that offered a welcoming community, the ability to heal the emotional scars of past abuses, a protector against ongoing re-victimisation, and a source of fair employment.

Arriving in Bogotá did not represent a cessation of violence. Usme is home to many criminal gangs who engage in *microtráfico* and use violence to gain and maintain social control. Members of the organisation talk about re-victimisation. The experience of living in Usme exposes them to further dangers, both related directly to the conflict, and as a function of living in a socio-economically marginalised neighbourhood. Deisy and Kelly (of AFROMUPAZ) note: "The neighbourhood is very dangerous for us, every day more so. The guerrilla isn't here, but there are other groups… *bandas* (gangs). We feel revictimised here. We have suffered displacement even here in Bogotá, because of the danger" (ibid).

In conversation, they go on to elaborate on the above statements: when they first arrived in Bogotá, they were threatened by unknown groups (most likely, BACRIM), who would come to their houses. The landlords thought that they were involved in criminal activity, and accordingly threw them out. Although this is not the same as the forced displacement they experienced in El Chocó, it represents another episode of homelessness that left them feeling isolated and vulnerable.

Moreover, as with the *Liga*, being part of an organisation of women puts a further target on their heads. As Marciales Montenegro notes, beginning in the early 2000s, the group began to be the object of persecution and violent acts because of its community work and demands that displaced peoples' rights were honoured. This violence is ongoing; AFROMUPAZ members have suffered threats, stalking, kidnapping, physical aggression, murders of family members, and sexual violence (2013, 49). Sandra and Paula describe:

> We have been threatened for being part of AFROMUPAZ. We leave the building and they threaten us. They swear at us. We don't know what is going to happen. They call María Eugenia names. Many times it has happened to me. We are afraid, but this also gives us strength. It makes us stronger. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Despite this, the organisation continues to mobilise, with the goals of re-building the links destroyed by violence, creating community, and demanding the State take the adequate measures to protect AFROMUPAZ members and their families (ibid., 49).

2. Building a Charismatic Bond: María Eugenia Urrutia and AFROMUPAZ

Urrutia is herself a survivor of displacement and multiple incidents of sexual violence. Originally from San Juan in the Chocó Department, in 1998 paramilitary soldiers raped her while her former partner and child were forced to watch. With only a suitcase, she brought her family to Bogotá and established AFROMUPAZ as a way to help women in similar situations.

More than this, however, she has a history of leadership.[80] In an interview, Victoria told me that her grandmother and aunts were both prominent community members in Chocó and were involved in mobilising women even before the conflict began. As mentioned above, McAdam's resource-based explanation sees leaders with previous experiences of leadership as crucial for the ability of a new organisation to effectively strategise (1982). For him, the organising skills and prestige that a leader gains through previous experiences are key resources that can be drawn upon in the context of the new movement. He notes that unless there is someone with prior experience to guide the collective action, the population in question will lack the capacity to act collectively.

Urrutia was one of the organisers and participants of the *toma* (invasion) of the Red Cross buildings in Bogotá by displaced families.[81] When assembled together with other displaced people, the Afro-Colombian women present expressed their dissatisfaction with being represented by male leaders. They wanted differential representation, Victoria says: "They said, no, we don't want to be lumped in with all the women or with all the Afro-Colombian people" (Interview, 25 September 2017).

With her history of leadership and organising, as well as her charismatic personality, Urrutia was the "obvious choice" and was asked by those present at the *toma* to be their leader. This seems to be in keeping with McAdam's above assertions. When she left the Red Cross building, she began to organise with other women and they started to work

[80] Here we see that *part* of the leadership explanation, then, may reflect McAdam's recycling notion (1982).

[81] This event involved more than 200 displaced people forcibly taking over the headquarters of the International Red Cross in Bogotá in an effort to force the Colombian government to find solutions to the problems of housing, food, and education that arose from displacement. (See El Tiempo, 2002; Pinilla, 2000).

together for women's rights. This group went on to become AFROMUPAZ.[82] According to Urrutia:

> The State made minimal [efforts in terms of meeting its obligations]… and what was left [for us] was the wastage and the sadness… so we decided to organise ourselves… with the idea that we could guide those women who would arrive, so that they did not have to live what we ourselves were living (Interview with Urrutia, in Marciales Montenegro, 2013, 47).

From this point onwards, a group of 53 women began to organise as an autonomous collective, amalgamating their collective knowledge, wisdoms, and ideas without the help of public or private institutions. There were no economic or technical resources for these women, but the organisation began to take shape. AFROMUPAZ began to work in Usme, where there was a high concentration of displaced women in need of help.

Urrutia saw the necessity of developing a policy platform within the organisation. As will be discussed presently, she settled on the need to develop initiatives within AFROMUPAZ that would allow women to be productive and commercialise their labour. In this way, they would not have to rely on hand-outs or wait for the State and could also regain dignity in their new communities.

Her leadership did not come without risk. In 2010, Urrutia was kidnapped from the AFROMUPAZ office in Usme by other paramilitaries and was taken, with her cousin (and personal assistant) Victoria, to the town of Mosquera.[83] Over the following days, she and Victoria were repeatedly sexually abused. She was told that she had been

[82] The organisation legally established itself in 2005 but operated unofficially before this.

[83] I decided never to ask Urrutia directly about the subject of her kidnap and sexual assault, although she referenced it sometimes in conversation. I made this decision out of respect for her privacy. She has told the story many times to a number of media outlets, and I did not feel it was necessary to have her go through the emotional pain of recounting it again to me. The story, then, comes from secondary sources, but has been confirmed through many personal conversations. Urrutia did, however, talk to me once about her process of psychosocial healing after this devastating event.

kidnapped and abused this way as punishment for encouraging other to women to denounce the crimes they had suffered (Gómez Carvajal, 2015; Moloney, 2014).

As a charismatic leader, Urrutia, however, led by example. Here, we see an experience where mobilisation did indeed lead to violent reprisals. In the wake of her assault, however, she did not stop acting collectively. Instead, she used the experience to highlight that despite increased risks for violence, the continued non-material and material benefits of mobilisation are worth it. After being released from Mosquera, she came home and locked herself in the house with her three children. She fell into a depression, but then began to sing songs from her childhood in Chocó. "I remembered I had a life," she says, "and I realised that I was healing myself with these songs" (Interview, 4 April 2017). In all, this experience strengthened her resolve to create a strategy within AFROMUPAZ to help other women overcome their pain.

Rank and file members refer to Urrutia as their "mother hen". Her leadership role was fundamental in recruiting displaced women to join AFROMUPAZ. Interviewees overwhelmingly concurred that Urrutia's personal style of leadership is to be credited for the organisation's successes. An AFROMUPAZ member says:

> María Eugenia has a very human quality, she is charismatic and intelligent. She treats other people well. She brings us into the organisation because of her love, and because she values us. She understands what happened to us. When we have meetings she makes sure that we participate. She teaches us how to meet [as a group], how to resist, how to dialogue (Interview, 23 July 2017).

Another interviewee notes that Urrutia "loves the women and is very committed to helping us – she doesn't get tangled up in political commitments, because she needs to make sure that women are being helped first and foremost" (Interview, 8 February 2017).

When I asked a lawyer at the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Ombudsman's Office) why AFROMUPAZ has been successful, for example, in terms of receiving collective reparations, she replied: "It's mainly because of the leadership of María Eugenia. She has a way of connecting things that others don't manage to connect. She knows how to connect the various institutions and to propose things at the right moment to the right people…" (Interview, 23 June 2017). Moreover, throughout the history of the organisation she has created a "sense of belonging, of identity" (ibid.).

This narrative was repeated time and time again: Urrutia's style of leadership – both in terms of personal charisma and networking abilities – permitted displaced women to create a community in their new city. Through her initiative, socially isolated women came together and began to act collectively in the knowledge that this act of mobilisation itself would bring certain (material and non-material) benefits that merited assuming the extra risks of violence that came with such mobilisation. In keeping with the tenets of Prospect Theory, we see here that Urrutia framed women's mobilisation as 'a risk worth taking', given that everyone is operating in the same domain of losses (in Usme). As such, the risks of further violence become secondary to the benefits accrued *through* participation in collective action.

3. Material and Non-Material Benefits of Collective Action

These experiences of historical and ongoing violence give AFROMUPAZ its *raison d'être*. The organisation sees a need to overcome the pain of the past, while also

protecting women from contemporary dangers and risks. The principal action strategies reflect this: the organisation outlines its mission in the following points:

- Develop actions that make demands and influence policy in favour of the rights of the displaced population, especially of female Afro-Colombian victims of sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict;
- Denounce and resist violent actions directed toward the organisation;
- Reconstruct life projects that have been affected by violence, through the realisation of collective healing exercises…using Afro-Colombian wisdom and customs;
- Creation and strengthening of productive initiatives and development of strategies to promote and commercialise these initiatives (based in community wisdom);
- Political formation of the community;
- Increase awareness about violence against women in order to prevent it;
- Rescue and disclose the culture of black and Afro-Colombian communities, as a crosscutting strategy for all the above points (AFROMUPAZ, 2014, 7).

Furthermore, one of Urrutia's primary focuses within AFROMUPAZ is the creation of an identity of survivorship. That is, she vocally speaks out against calling women 'victims', and instead encourages a celebration of the experience of having survived violent acts.[84] Figure 5.3 is a photograph of a quilt that hangs in the downstairs meeting room at the AFROMUPAZ house. It features phrases like 'we build peace', 'cultural diversity', 'Afro women', 'healing', and 'the town of the survivors.'

[84] The transition from self-identification as survivor vs. victim is discussed in detail in Lemaitre et al. 2014; Sandvik and Lemaitre 2015.



Figure 5.3: This quilt hangs in the main meeting room of the AFROMUPAZ house. Created over time by members of the organisation, it represents the *Huerta al Perejil* model, and features phrases like "we build peace", "cultural diversity", "healing", and "the town of the survivors". Photo Credit: Julia Zulver.

The quilt is a product of the *Huerta al Perejil* 14-step programme, developed by Urrutia and the women of AFROMUPAZ. Meaning 'parsley garden', the programme is named after a traditional song from the Chocó region of Colombia. The introduction to the book, written by Urrutia, and published by the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, states:

> AFROMUPAZ…began a community process to heal the damages caused by the armed conflict, particularly in terms of sexual violence. This process was born of an initiative thought up by María Eugenia Urrutia… who, from her personal healing process, and through the use of traditions of the black community, and after having lived various situations of sexual violence, designed a proposal of collective work to overcome her pain, and thus initiative a new life project through an understanding of the strengths of each of the women of AFROMUPAZ (2014, 5).

Another part of Urrutia's vision for AFROMUPAZ involved creating an economic social safety net for displaced Afro-Colombian women. The experience of arriving in in Bogotá,

often widowed and with children, was socially isolating for victims of displacement (see Meertens & Stoller, 2001). Moreover, as discussed above, the social dynamics of racism made it hard for these women to gain employment or even rent a place to live. Seeing these dynamics, and having experienced them herself, Urrutia decided to create a space – both physical and emotional – for women to come together and gain the benefits of community solidarity.

Given the situation of unemployment, Urrutia realised that AFROMUPAZ needed to not only create a safe-space for women to share their emotional burdens, but also a safe place free from racism where women could be productive and earn a living. As such, AFROMUPAZ is not only an organisation, but also a business. She elaborates:

> Women have to generate *their own* resources – this actually serves to prevent violence! Women are then going to be less willing to accept violence. We do *not* allow for a narrative of inequality in AFROMUPAZ… We can't cry all the time, we have to protest in front of the things we don't like. We do *not* talk about victims, we talk about *survivors.* (Interview, 2 March 2017).

The AFROMUPAZ house is home to an industrial kitchen that women use to bake coconut biscuits, *chontaduro*[85] cake, and other sweets. They import the ingredients from the Chocó department, and use traditional recipes. Moreover, they are trained in catering, and hire themselves out to cook for and serve food at events. When the kitchen is not being used for cooking, they make beauty products (again, using traditional recipes) like soaps and creams that they sell at markets. Upstairs, they have sewing machines, and they design and produce clothing and jewellery from the Chocó region. All of the women of AFROMUPAZ are expected to participate in these activities (according to their skills) – this becomes their day-job. Interviewees express their satisfaction at being able to work in an environment with their friends, away from racism and discrimination.

[85] *Chontaduro* (peach-palm) is a chestnut-like fruit native to the Pacific coast of Colombia.

The profits from the sale of the products do not yet allow for the women to earn a wage, but this is the goal for next year. At present, the profits pay the bills and the rent on the house. Every day, however, the women prepare a hot lunch for themselves and their children. Moreover, the attic of the building has been converted into a crèche, so the women do not have to worry about childcare while they are at work. Urrutia proudly speaks about the business model:

> Without being arrogant, [AFROMUPAZ] is operating at a high level where we do not have to depend on the state. We produce our products, we feed ourselves every day. We are making our own funds – we are autonomous… we feel that we are doing well (Interview, 11 May 2017).

4. Success of Incremental Gains

Beyond internal benefits, AFROMUPAZ also calls on the government and the institutions of the state to help displaced Afro-Colombian women. Since 2015, the organisation has been receiving the benefits of their collective reparations.[86] Importantly, in terms of framing, Urrutia shows pragmatism in her understanding of formulating the organisation's demands. She highlights that any campaign the Victims' Unit or the Mayor's Office devise with AFROMUPAZ needs to bring about change. She is cognisant of the need to maintain a balance between the scope of the reparations programme and the needs of the organisation. Here, she builds bridging social capital in a manner consistent with AFROMUPAZ's values.

Furthermore, the women of AFROMUPAZ are outspoken in denouncing violence and demanding action from the state. They recognise that by continuing to denounce ongoing violence, however, they make themselves targets of even more violence, as Urrutia notes:

[86] For a detailed account of the process of collective reparations, see (Zulver, forthcoming-a).

> It's clear why we receive so many threats [from BACRIM] … AFROMUPAZ works to prevent the recruitment of our children into the war again, and this makes us a target. By standing up to these groups and denouncing them and telling them that our children won't be part of their groups, they persecute us. But we defend ourselves. We have pulled our sons out of these groups, we have filed reports [to the state institutions], we have done sit-ins until the [institutions] listen to us. We go to the *Fiscalía* (Attorney General) …we *have to* keep denouncing this behaviour, so that it doesn't happen to us again… [we] go to the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Ombudsman's Office), to the *Fiscalía*, we send letters to the *Procuraduría* (Inspector General). We have to sit down at the table and tell them everything that is happening, and obviously this makes us targets (Interview, 11 May 2017).

Members of the organisation highlight that despite the risks they run, denouncing violence "is our strength, our resistance" (Interview, 23 June 2017). As with the *Liga*, a shared idea of community and togetherness is seen as a non-material benefit that encourages continued participation, despite the risks associated with membership. Moreover, successes over time reinforce continued behaviour. For example, one day while I was at the AFROMUPAZ house, Urrutia introduced me to a teenaged boy (the son of a member) who had been recruited into a local gang. His mother and the other women of AFROMUPAZ had protested at state institutions until he was brought back to them. Small successes, despite the risks they incur (especially in terms of gang retaliation in this case) emphasise to women why they should continue to act collectively.

Finally, AFROMUPAZ engages in a series of public strategies that are based in educating and showcasing Afro-Colombian culture to the Colombian public. It does so in two ways, through cultural fairs and through organisation open days, which will be discussed in later sections. In concert, these activities comprise the day-to-day functions of AFROMUPAZ.

Factor	Turbaco	Usme	Riohacha
Neighbourhood	Y	**Y**	
Charismatic Leadership	Y	**Y**	
Non-material benefits	Y	**Y**	
Success of incremental gains	Y	**Y**	

Like in the case of the LMD, then, we see that AFROMUPAZ operates in a social context dominated by violence. Urrutia – a charismatic leader – was able to make this context salient: she highlighted to potential participants that within this domain, engaging in collective action would bring about material and non-material benefits. The rest of this chapter will turn to examine the AFROMUPAZ' strategies, and how these feedback into an ongoing dynamic of HRF mobilisation.

D. Discussion

1. Collective Identity

AFROMUPAZ tries to foster a sense of collective identity by drawing on a shared racial/ethnic[87] culture and the way that this shapes experiences of displacement. This is especially pertinent when it comes to the intersections of gender and race (Hooker, 2005; Marciales Montenegro, 2013, 2015). In doing so, it "reconstructs the social and

[87] For more on the distinctions between race and ethnicity see (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998; James, 2017). For more on the specificities of race and ethnicity as they pertain to Colombia's Afro-descendant population, see (Ng'weno, 2007).

communal fabric" of the Afro-Colombian community in their new city (AFROMUPAZ, 2014, 7). Using a narrative of cultural wisdom and ancestral traditions, AFROMUPAZ invites women displaced by the conflict to re-associate themselves with their background. This way, they become consciously united by a shared heritage. They are further united by their shared experiences of pain suffered during the armed conflict. AFROMUPAZ intends to carry out activities that:

> Allows for a path of healing for the women of [AFROMUPAZ], in which the feeling of estrangement and isolation generated by displacement is transformed thanks to the recovery of ancestral roots that contain a shared memory that was previously silenced by the violence (ibid.).

We can understand AFROMUPAZ's process of collective identity creation to be a form of resistance against violence(s). For example, the *Huerta al Perejil* programme employs dance, song, theatre, and relaxation exercises to allow participants to go through 14 steps of an "individual and collective comprehensive healing process" (ibid., 10). It is important to emphasise the collective element of this process. In completing the steps of the programme, a victim/survivor is engaging in an exercise that dispels the idea that she is alone in her pain, and rather, stresses that she is part of a community of other women who have also suffered. One member of AFROMUPAZ said in an interview:

> Before, I couldn't have a relationship. I didn't want anyone to touch me. I was terrified of a man touching me, because I was raped. And it wasn't just one person, it was various people. I couldn't even talk about it. And now, with María Eugenia and the organisation and the *Huerta al Perejil*, now I can talk about this. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

For example, step nine of the programme, "before dawn", encourages participants to reflect on the sort of society that they want to build. This step is written from a first person plural perspective: "what society are *we* going to build for a new tomorrow", "as survivors of violence, *we* consider *ourselves* to have an important role in [building peace]", "*we* will share our ideas about… *our* personal motivations" (emphasis added, ibid., 31). This language is deliberate – the healing process for survivors of violence is

purposefully collective. In creating a shared identity of survivorship, AFROMUPAZ builds a solid base from which to execute its other goals of resistance, reconstruction, and political training. In an interview, Paula (a member of the organisation) notes:

> What gives a person the strength to erase all of this is the knowledge that it's not just one person, but many together. I have lived an ugly situation in my village. I was almost mute. And now I am a little parrot! In the meetings, in the dialogues, I talk. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Urrutia's successful use of collective identity creation is also noted by state officials. Carmen Marciales of the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Ombudsman's Office) has worked with AFROMUPAZ since 2011.[88] In an interview, she noted:

> The true *fuerza* (force) of AFROMUPAZ is its ability to provide a space where people can participate in collective community action. They have created an identity that is not just about being a woman, or an Afro-woman, but about being an integral part of AFROMUPAZ itself… They have all lived and experienced discrimination… but, importantly, they have an organisational structure which creates a sense of shared identity and community bond. And this is continuous, it is reinforced every day. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Indeed, the question of strength is a daily topic of conversation in the AFROMUPAZ house, as was articulated to me in a series of interviews. Sandra and Paula highlight: "being in AFROMUPAZ gives us the strength to continue in our lives. This is what saves us. We have lived harsh things" (Interview, 23 June 2017). Deisy and Kelly reiterate: "remember, we are not victims, … we are survivors now" (Interview, 23 June 2017). All of this serves to highlight the collective identity developed by Urrutia and the women of AFROMUPAZ – an identity that binds them together as strong women who choose to resist the violences to which they are exposed. This identity gives organisation members a sense of importance, and a sense of belonging. As organisation members tell me in an interview: "Above all, we have been united. *Somos guerreras, somos resistentes* (we are

[88] Indeed, hers are the only academic works that examine AFROMUPAZ, see (Marciales Montenegro, 2013, 2015).

warriors, we resist)" (Interview, 23 June 2017). This language goes beyond mere survivorship – the women of AFROMUPAZ are fighters.

2. Social Capital

In an environment where women are victimised and revictimised, standing up against violence is a form of resistance. In a climate where this violence is both gendered and racial, AFROMUPAZ builds bonds of social capital that form part of a *feminist* strategy of resistance. There are benefits – both emotional and material – that come with belonging to AFROMUPAZ. This is part of the feminist strategy of resistance the organisation employs to protect its members against violence. Beyond just a shared identity of survivorship, however, the women speak of community bonds:

- "I feel [that AFROMUPAZ] is our own space where we can build our lives."
- "I don't feel like a stranger, rather, I feel like I am part of a family, like I am in my home."
- "We all want to share with each other."
- "I feel happy, liberated, and supported – I feel companionship."
- "I came here with a burden, but now I feel light as a feather."
- "Many women have been raped and violated, but there is trust between us to talk about sexual violence" (AFROMUPAZ, 2014, 19).

One of the elements of social capital building in the case of AFROMUPAZ is about non-material, emotional elements. For example, long-time AFROMUPAZ member Yasmina says in an interview that when she first arrived in Bogotá after being displaced three times, she felt isolated and desperate. After only a short time in the city, her youngest daughter died. "This was incredibly hard for me. I didn't know anyone. I suffered alone,"

she relates (Interview 31 May 2017). She has now been involved with the organisation for nine years. In January 2017, her son-in-law was murdered in his house in Usme. Tears fill her eyes when she talks to me about this, but she is quick to highlight how much more support she had to carry her through her grief. The women of AFROMUPAZ grieved together (her widowed daughter is also part of the organisation), sharing the emotional burden. We see, then, that AFROMUPAZ provides (what women consider) a safe space; Sandra notes:

> I like being here [in AFROMUPAZ]. I feel calm. I prefer it to the *barrios*. [At home] I don't even like opening the door. I have panic, horror, fear about what might happen in my neighbourhood. I usually don't leave my house. Just to come here. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Importantly, this space does not necessarily guarantee physical safety; as mentioned, Urrutia and her cousin were kidnapped from the office itself.[89] The other aspects of the centre – its provision of emotional safety, for example – makes up for the unsafe environment. Such benefits ("feeling safe" as opposed to actually and objectively ensuring physical safety) are accrued *through* mobilisation and not as an outcome of mobilisation.

Bonding social capital building, therefore, serves to promote membership and collective action by offering benefits only to those who participate actively. Here, we see that the non-material benefits of mobilisation persuade those who may not have mobilised before to participate in collective action, as the risk of exposure to further violence is eclipsed by the perceived benefits of, for example, emotional support and "feeling safe". Highlighting the potential for benefits (despite a high risk environment) is a strategy

[89] Since this incident, however, the government has provided AFROMUPAZ with drivers who serve as bodyguards for Urrutia.

initially employed by leaders (like Urrutia), and then continued by members as they begin to experientially rationalise their reasons for mobilising.

The *Huerta al Perejil* programme has now been mentioned a number of times, including as a form of collective identity building. Most importantly, however, this programme is key in terms of generating social capital for members of AFROMUPAZ. The programme involves 14 steps that hope to guide victims of violence through acceptance, grief, anger, and forgiveness. For many women, this is the first time that they have been able to speak about their experiences of displacement. A member of the organisation relates:

> The *Huerta al Perejil* is one of the best parts of AFROMUPAZ. It has been the best psychosocial attention I have received. [Before I came to AFROMUPAZ] I was raped, I was afraid. I couldn't touch my intimate parts. This is the sort of trauma we were left with. But through the process of the *Huerta* I am much better. We all talked about our experiences of rape. And then afterwards I had the courage to report what had happened to me [at the Victims' Unit]. Before this, I was so shy. I didn't talk, I didn't go out, I barely bathed. I couldn't look at myself in the mirror. [Women like me,] we couldn't dress up or put on makeup…because of the long-lasting trauma of the rape. And now, because of the *Huerta*, now I am not afraid to talk. I lost some of the timidness. I can express myself better. I love myself again. For example, I can dress up again, I can go to the doctor for my check-ups again. I feel better now that I know that I am not the only person. We can talk. This is the *Huerta al Perejil*. This is the best part of the organisation for me. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

An article by Simpson tells us that violence is so personal because it affects the mind, body, self-identity, and personhood. Accordingly, "the role of public story-telling after such violence thus is significant. It can allow for victims to 'take back' their self-pride, their self-worth, and assume their place as an intrinsic part of the new post-conflict political order" (2007, 95).

Many of the women who suffered abuses were threatened by their perpetrators. They were told that if they reported their attacks, they would be killed. As such, before joining

AFROMUPAZ, organisation members had not felt safe relating their stories, often resulting in symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.[90] Deisy reveals:

> Joining AFROMUPAZ was the first time I was able to talk about what had happened to me. Things happen to you, and you have to live with them. I was afraid. They said that if I told anyone what they had done to me, that they would kill me. I was so afraid that they would kill me. I lived that nightmare and I lost trust in everyone. Here, I regained that trust. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

In this way, we can see the bonding social capital generated through participation in AFROMUPAZ and the *Huerta al Perejil* programme. The women, many of whom have lost their families in the act of displacement, regain a community that brings them material and psychological/emotional benefits. As Kelly notes: "AFROMUPAZ is the organisation that has helped us the most. We are part of it. Our *compañeras* are our family now" (Interview, 23 June 2017). The women further gain strength in the knowledge that they have a community that supports them. While before they were silenced by the fear of retribution, the knowledge that they are part of an organisation that protects them inspires them to denounce their perpetrators. When asked about fear of revictimisation, they note: "Yes, we are all afraid, but we can count on the organisation. Here, we feel safe inside… I am in my house, I am not afraid" (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Not all social capital is of the bonding variety, however. The organisation has strong ties to the Mayor's Office, the Victims' Unit, the Ombudsman's Office, and a number of foreign embassies. This way, Urrutia has been able to create ties that have led to material benefits over time, including (for example) money to rent the house, to buy machinery for the kitchen, and to design and publish the *Huerta* programme. Moreover, she has the ability to take advantage of political opportunities at specific moments in time. McAdam

[90] While their PTSD has not been officially diagnosed, it is not a major leap to assume that after the traumas they have suffered, the women of AFROMUPAZ are left with emotional and psychological scars.

might attribute this to her previous experiences of leadership, but others would say that she has a natural ability to create linkages through her ability to think critically and her strong interpersonal skills. Having worked with Urrutia for many years, Marciales of the Ombudsman's office says:

> The process [of organisation] belongs to Maria Eugenia – it has always been hers. Sometimes it is strengthened with outside money from institutions. But it belongs to her. Why has AFROMUPAZ been so successful? Honestly, it's mainly based in the leadership of Maria Eugenia. She has a way of connecting things that others don't imagine connecting. She knows how to connect with the various institutions and to propose things at the right moment to the right people. (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Despite this, and as part of collective identity building, there is a strong central within AFROMUPAZ that places importance on self-sufficiency. The women of the organisation, despite securing access to their collective reparations, maintain a discourse that promotes self-reliance and independence. In such a way, they feel a sense of agency over their future – if the resources are to disappear from one day to the next, the organisation will not fold. Urrutia emphasises this point in an interview:

> I don't want to depend on big organisations. If the money goes, what happens to us? Dependency is what this creates – I do not want my women to be dependent. We want to be independent. We may have old chairs and old equipment, but it belongs to *us*! We are free. (Interview, 2 March 2017).

The element of autonomy is important in the previous discussion of collective identity, and further as it relates to the concept of building social capital. By managing their business activities, the organisation reaps the success of its hard work. There is an understanding that a form of economic sustainability based in creating a safe and secure working environment will allow for the re-creation of sustainable life projects.

In an interview, she highlights that despite being grateful for the resources from the state, it is important that the women of AFROMUPAZ do not become dependent. Interviews

reveal that the women need the resources of the state to re-build their dignity after the horrors of displacement during the conflict. At the same time, it is important not to develop a relation of *asistencialismo* (reliance on aid/support) against which the former head of the Victims' Unit warns.[91] Identity creation in political activism seems a practical way to sustain this balance between reliance and independence. In the words of a member of the organisation: "while we may not have very much, we women have fought tooth and nail for everything we have" (Interview, 19 March 2017).

This identity of self-reliance can be further evidenced through the example of AFROMUPAZ's interactions with U.N. Women. In an interview, Urrutia talks about a grant that the organisation was offered. The donors wanted to fund a certain set of practices to meet a set of pre-determined outcomes. The U.N. was prepared to fund a series of workshops, part of which would involve a group lunch that would be contracted to external caterers. Urrutia asked why these funds could not be paid to the members of AFROMUPAZ, who could cook better food, more economically, for the events. The U.N. would not oblige, and as a result, Urrutia refused the grant money. As she notes:

> You see, AFROMUPAZ has never had to put out its hand [to beg] to ask for anything. AFROMUPAZ continues to advance. We have done our work, and what we were offered, we took. This strengthened us. There are things that we still haven't received, but this doesn't paralyse us. Rather, we have continued moving forward. (Interview, 11 May 2017).

In an interview, Marciales too referred to Urrutia's decision to refuse U.N. funding. When I subsequently asked if she considers AFROMUPAZ successful (in comparison to other, similar organisations), she answers affirmatively. She points to Urrutia's incomparable leadership as a reason for the organisation's success:

> She has very high emotional intelligence. She has lived many episodes of violence yet is able to create a sense of belonging and identity. She has the ability to create links and connections

[91] See interview with Paula Gaviria cited in Chapter 3. (Interview, 18 November 2016).

> between the community [and the institutions of the state]. And she [isn't afraid to] say no to people. The U.N. offered money and she said she couldn't accept it, as long as their proposal [did not match her goals for the organisation]. She didn't want the process to come from outside. It had to come from the base (Interview, 23 June 2017).

In the case of AFROMUPAZ, then, we see that the leader and the members of the organisation stress the importance of self-reliance. Despite this, we are able to see that they maintain a solid balance between this autonomy (as linked to identity creation and bonding social capital) and bridging social capital. That is, Urrutia creates connections with state institutions that play an important role in the organisation's ability to obtain material benefits. At the same time, however, she creates an insular narrative that highlights to members that the non-material benefits of participation (belonging and solidarity) are equally as important to their sustained participation over time.

3. Legal Framing

In other case studies that employ the HRF framework, (legal) framing has taken the form of highlighting the illegality of the situations in which many victims find themselves. For example, women in El Salvador elaborated a law (*Ley Especial de 2011*) that explicitly outlines the various forms of violence against women that exist, and establishes that these acts are illegal and punishable by law (Zulver, 2014, 2016). In the case of the *Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas*, participants organised a collective action to denounce the crimes they had suffered over the years before the appropriate state institutions (Zulver, 2017). Moreover, when these demands were not met, the LMD filed a case before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights to highlight the illegal nature of the Colombian state's refusal to deal with these claims.

These examples highlight that part of a strategy of resistance, within the HRF framework, involves using legal mechanisms to establish the legitimacy of the members' claims. In doing so, members validate their experiences using a unit of measurement accepted by the state – the institution that is in fact in charge of guaranteeing their security. In the case of AFROMUPAZ, legal framing has been twofold. Firstly, the organisation has worked closely with state institutions to successfully establish themselves as eligible for collective reparations. Secondly, on an ongoing basis, the organisation helps its members to declare their situation of displacement, as well as denounce present-day crimes.

In 2011, the Colombian government penned and passed the *Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras* (Victims' and Land Restitution Law). As part of this law, the government included special compensations for collective victims – collective reparations. These are supposed to be *integral* – comprehensive. An umbrella term, comprehensive reparations are intended to include social, economic, cultural, and environmental provisions (Unidad para las Víctimas 2017). Since 2015, AFROMUPAZ has been receiving the benefits of their collective reparations. Andrea Garzón of the Ministry for the Rights of Victims, Peace, and Reconciliation (often referred to as the *Alta Consejería*), an institutional arm of Bogotá's Mayor's Office, says that she has worked with them since before they began their process of collective reparations (Interview, 4 April 2017).

In March 2017, I attended a meeting with the Victims' Unit, the *Alta Consejería*, and AFROMUPAZ. During the proceedings, these actors compared the activities and measures included in the PIRC that have been executed with those yet to be developed. The conversation centred on two initiatives: the Congresses and the *Huerta al Perejil*. The Congresses focus on peace-building *en cuerpo y cara de mujer* (in the body and faces

of women). During these conflicts, the women of AFROMUPAZ celebrate cultural diversity through song and dance, as well as sharing their cooking traditions with the public. Part of this initiative also seeks to de-stigmatise the names of the women of AFROMUPAZ, who, under the Uribe government, were called "terrorists for being defenders of human rights" (Interview, 2 March 2017). Urrutia notes that these congresses create spaces of peace, and that the women will continue holding them until "our country has a true and holistic peace" (Secretaría Distrital de la Mujer, 2015).

The meeting had a strong focus on *seguimiento* (follow-up). Urrutia showed pragmatism in her understanding of collective reparations: "AFROMUPAZ matters to us. It is important that we go forward in this process together" (Interview, 24 March 2017). She highlighted that any campaign the Victims' Unit or the Mayor's Office do with AFROMUPAZ needs to bring about change. For example, she wants to tackle racism faced by children of the organisation's members – "we want our children to have a life that is different from the one we lived" (ibid.).

At the end of the meeting, Garzón informed María Eugenia and the rest of the leaders present that the *Alta Consejería* has approved a budget that will allow AFROMUPAZ to buy its own house (currently, the organisation operates from a rented property). This news was met with cheers and embraces. Garzón tells the women "the idea is that we move". Her words refer to both the physical act of moving into new premises, and the symbolic act of moving forward with collective reparations.

Here, it is evident that AFROMUPAZ's focus on reparations is centred on healing the scars left by the conflict, rather than pursuing an end to injustice more generally. The

organisation frames its collective reparations in terms of psychosocial healing – redressing the violence members suffered during the conflict. As detailed by Johanna Cruz Herrera of the Victims' Unit, these sorts of healing activities are within the scope of the institution's mandate. That is, activities of this nature fit the Unit's reach/scope-damage balance.

In an interview with Urrutia, it becomes clear that AFROMUPAZ was cognisant of the need to maintain a balance between the scope of the reparations programme and the necessities of the organisation. She notes that the women of the organisation were acutely aware of the moment in time when it was possible to take their demands from being parts of a discussion to being realised in practice: "we were able to take advantage of the willingness of the government to negotiate and advance" (Interview, 11 May 2017). Within this discourse, however, Urrutia discussed a flexibility; in outlining their PIRC, the women accepted that there would be specific issues that would not be negotiable at that moment, but in other issues they could move forward. "In what we could not [negotiate], we said, let's put it to the side and wait and see. In what we can [negotiate], let's advance!" (ibid.). Here, it is clear that Urrutia is able to successfully and strategically navigate the (legal) political opportunities that become available.

Laura Velásquez (of the *Unidad para las Víctimas*) sheds light on the potential reasons for the success of AFROMUPAZ in their pursuit of their reparations.[92] She elaborates:

> With AFROMUPAZ we began the process because the *Alta Consejería* proposed to us [the Victims' Unit] that we prioritise them as a subject of collective reparations in Bogotá. The process of identification, diagnosing the damages, and formulating the Plan advanced very quickly because the *Alta Consejería* had already worked with them, and had already identified some of the damages and some potential reparation measures. Also, AFROMUPAZ has a very clear

[92] This is particularly interesting when compared to the experience of the LMD (see (Zulver, 2017, forthcoming-a).

> project – this allows us to advance quickly. It is a smallish organisation, only based in Bogotá. It also has a leader with whom we can discuss things easily. All this is to say that it was easy to approve their Plan in 2015. Now, we are beginning our third year with them.
>
> It is convenient that *Alta Consejería* had the will and the resources to work with these measures. Bogotá is the capital city of Colombia, the capital of the province, and has financial autonomy. In all, it has lots of characteristics that allow it to direct where its own resources go, including with regards to the measures for AFROMUPAZ. (Interview, 5 April 2017).

Collective reparations are not the only way AFROMUPAZ frames its mobilisation. The organisation also makes an effort to systematically declare instances of violence – both past and contemporary – before the institutions of the state. In an interview, Urrutia describes this work:

> We have to denounce this network [of criminals]. AFROMUPAZ is very clear that we are not going to allow [more violence] to happen to us. And more than anything, we won't let it happen to the victims of the conflict. These are the most vulnerable women that exist. They are so vulnerable that no one pays attention to the situation. We *have to denounce.* (Interview, 11 May 2017).

These sorts of actions, however, do not go unnoticed by perpetrators. Urrutia and AFROMUPAZ continue to receive threats. When it comes to documenting displacement and other crimes she notes,

> As [female] defenders of human rights, we are still victims [of violence]. It is going to be very difficult to get to a place where we are not persecuted. The theme of the Peace Process is polarising in society, and we have become a target for [criminal groups]. The situation has improved – it's not like the paramilitarism of the 80s and 90s…. But we are still in a conflict zone. There are BACRIM groups [living up the street] in the neighbourhood (Interview, 11 May 2017).

This statement shows a sophisticated understanding of the dynamics of violence in Usme. If they remained inactive, the women of AFROMUPAZ would likely suffer the violence of having their sons recruited into gangs and their daughters taken as sex slaves. By speaking out against these crimes and denouncing them, however, they make themselves targets for violent actions.

Despite this, the emotional benefits of participating are seen as "worth it" when operating in a high risk context (i.e. where non-action does not guarantee safety). They resist acts of violence by involving the institutions of the state who have the duty and the responsibility to act to protect citizen security. By couching their complaints within the existing legal structures of the Colombian state, these women exercise a form of feminist agency (based both in their positions as mothers, victims, and survivors) that serves to resist ongoing violence in the hope of reducing future acts of victimisation.

4. Acts of Certification:

The earlier sections about collective identity and social capital discuss the *Huerta al Perejil* strategy as bringing together survivors to show that the pain of one is the pain of all. In terms of the HRF framework, however, this psychosocial programme can further be understood as an act of certification. By creating an alternative psychosocial healing programme, AFROMUPAZ highlights that the government programmes are not tailored to the specific needs of Afro-Colombian women, and that without a differential (i.e. feminist and racialised) understanding of the violences they have suffered, said programmes will not be successful in terms of emotional healing.

Other acts of certification further involve exposing Afro-Colombian culture to the community to reduce racist stigma. As described earlier, this takes the form of open days and cultural fairs. The organisation is in the planning stages for its sixth cultural fair. Previous events have used music, dance, and song, as well as a fair to exhibit culinary and artisanal products, to showcase AFROMUPAZ to the wider public. Usually held in public spaces like the Plaza de Bolívar (in the centre of Bogotá), the fair looks to use

cultural diversity to promote healing (as is stipulated in the PIRC). AFROMUPAZ is founded on the belief that the re-vindication of cultural traditions can bring about healing, and the cultural fairs are an example of how the organisation shares this with the public (Secretaría Distrital de la Mujer, 2015).

The open days are a new strategy in the AFROMUPAZ repertoire. In June 2017, the organisation advertised one particular open day to the various state institutions with which they work so that their employees could come and learn more about their cultural heritage. The garage doors were opened, and the main meeting room was cleared to display all the different products and food items created by the organisation. Other open days are designed for the neighbours. Yasmina explains that in order to create further social cohesion in the neighbourhood, it is imperative that the neighbours understand what the women of AFROMUPAZ do in their headquarters. By sharing music and food with the community, it is able to demonstrate the benefits that it provides to local Afro-Colombian women. It further hopes to create bonds of trust between the organisation and the neighbours in order to prevent further violence and victimisation of organisation members.

The act of opening the organisation's doors to the public not only allows the community to get to know the strategies of AFROMUPAZ, but also establishes them as a legitimate social actor within the neighbourhood. Especially given the sentiment of being targeted both for being women and for being Afro-Colombian, outwardly celebrating the intersection of these two identities in a public space is an act of resistance. Certification is the act of making one's organisation legitimate in the eyes of the state and the public via action. AFROMUPAZ's primary strategies directed at community outreach are

consistent with this definition, further highlighting the utility of the HRF framework in describing the organisation's mobilisation.

E. Successful Mobilisation: HRF as a Harbinger of Change

In an interview, I ask Urrutia if she considers AFROMUPAZ a successful organisation in terms of its relationship with the institutions of the state. She replied:

> "Yes… we took advantage of a moment [when the state was willing to support us]. … sometimes [we] had to negotiate. We also have to accept certain protocols – for example, if the state says they will give us protection, it's going to be with men, with a bulletproof car… this isn't what I would have wanted, but this is what the state considers a security protocol" (May 11, 2017).

These words evidence Urrutia's strong understanding of the need to negotiate when it comes to interactions with outside organisations. As discussed with both Urrutia and Marciales (of the Ombudsman's Office), the ability to decline funds further illustrates the importance AFROMUPAZ places on the idea of balancing bonding and bridging social capital creation. By not letting outsiders dictate or modify the practices most important to the essence of the group, the women of AFROMUPAZ highlight their resilience. This resilience truly is fundamental to their successful HRF mobilisation as a strategy of resistance and is catalysed by the presence of a charismatic leader.

Despite the accomplishments of success, AFROMUPAZ's mobilisation attracts a continuation of threats against organisation members. In another interview, I asked Urrutia if she is afraid of the threats she and other members of AFROMUPAZ receive:

> Of course, every day I wake up afraid to die… but eventually I realise that I am not afraid of death…I am free – I don't owe anything to anyone and I don't owe anything to life… I could die peacefully. And in this way, a person learns to live with death. I am not going to stop doing what I'm doing, I will not stop doing my work... If something is going to happen to me anyway one

> day, I'm not going to stop defending my children, I'm not going to stop standing up to say, "this is wrong" … This is not what I want. This is my life project" (Interview, 11 May 2017).

Again, we see echoes of Urrutia's understanding – promulgated to organisation members – that when the risk of violence or death becomes unexceptional, the perceived benefits of participating in something that gives life meaning become relatively more important than abstaining from participation. This demonstrates Urrutia's use of Prospect Theory to encourage participation. The rank and file members of AFROMUPAZ echo Urrutia's bravery:

> The war… was fought against the civilians who didn't have anything to do with it…it has been cruel to us. But now, in AFROMUPAZ, are no longer victims, but rather, survivors. The victims are behind. We are survivors *now*. For all that they have tried to push our heads down, we haven't [let them]" (Interview, 23 June 2017).

Indeed, this ongoing existence in a domain of losses further means that there is an effort to include younger generations in the activities of the group. There are *Huerta al Perejil* sessions designed specifically for children who suffered displacement with their mothers, or who experienced ongoing acts of violence in Usme. Urrutia has three children who lead a group of teenagers and children (offspring of AFROMUPAZ members) in dances, theatre productions, memory activities, and music, in order to transfer not only the traditions of the Pacific region, but also the knowledge and values of the *lucha* begun by their mothers.

I was able to participate in one activity where mothers and their daughters stood in a large circle and threw a ball of yarn between them. Each person who caught the yarn had to reflect on the question: "why is memory important?" One of the daughters (born in Usme of AFROMUPAZ mothers) noted: "If my mothers, my aunts, my grandmothers didn't share [their experiences] with me, I would lose who I am" (20 March 2017). Another

noted: “I cannot forget what my family and my ancestors have given me and what they have suffered. I can’t abandon my roots” (ibid.). At the end of the activity, the ball of string had made a large woven ‘spiderweb’ between those participating. The leader of the activity concluded: “This is a spiderweb, a future we are building for our children. We can’t forget our roots when we build our new community here in Bogotá.” By incorporating new generations into the organisation, AFROMUPAZ is able to maintain inertia as some of the older members age. Particularly in a context shaped by ongoing sources of violence (including those that manifest against children and young people), Urrutia sees this as critically important for the ongoing success of the organisation.

Collective action that can aptly be described as a strategy of feminist resistance continues. This chapter has analysed the case study of AFROMUPAZ both during the height of the conflict and in Colombia’s transition toward peace. It has highlighted that the organisation uses HRF as a strategy for protection amidst ongoing sources of violence and victimisation. As is the case with HRF strategies, acting as a feminist organisation in a high risk context further exposes the women of the organisation to other dangers by making them targets of further violence. Despite this, the non-material and material benefits accrued by being part of AFROMUPAZ outweigh the fears of further victimisation, as has been outlined in the personal testimonies of rank-and-file organisation members.

This particular example of HRF considers culture as deeply linked with gender identity, and the rescue of the gendered elements of a traditional, ancestral set of practices and customs. Through the creation of collective identity, the building of social capital, the use of legal framing techniques, and the expression of acts of certification,

AFROMUPAZ uses HRF as a strategy of feminist resistance against the violence its faces on a daily basis. Members have created a strategy of mobilisation that has a tangible impact on improving their quality of life – psychologically and materially. At the same time, it also gives them the strength to strategically expose themselves to other sorts of violence in a way that is justifiable within the principles they hold as sacrosanct.

Chapter VI: When Women Do Not Mobilise: Explaining a Lack of HRF Mobilisation among Populations of Displaced Women in Riohacha, La Guajira

A. Introduction

The previous two chapters discuss instances of HRF mobilisation in Colombia, with an eye to describing *how* and *why* women mobilise in high risk contexts. The present chapter, however, looks at the case of a neighbourhood in Riohacha, La Guajira, where women do *not* mobilise, despite similar scope conditions to those of the women organising in Turbaco and Usme.

Riohacha, the departmental capital of La Guajira, is home to a high population of displaced people, victims of Colombia's conflict. Moreover, it is the site of historical and ongoing high risk, as represented by paramilitaries and BACRIM. I conducted research in the Claudia Catalina invaded neighbourhood[93], interviewing and 'hanging out' with displaced women, many of whom are also victims of sexual, physical, and/or psychological violence. The majority of these women are single-mothers, and none of them is involved in formal (or stable, for that matter) employment. Furthermore, despite having declared their victim status before the institutions of the state, none of them has received *indemnización,* their individual reparation payments. Ethnically[94], religiously, and socio-economically, these women are similar to their displaced counterparts in other

[93] A land invasion is the name given when poor people mobilise to invade land illegally and build informal shantytowns. See (Dosh, 2009).

[94] As with the women of the *Liga*, while most of the women in Claudia Catalina are Afro-Colombian (or at least mixed), there is no concept of shared identity based on ethnicity.

parts of the country. What is different to El Pozón/Turbaco or Usme, however, is that despite the same domain of losses, we do not see HRF mobilisation emerging in Claudia Catalina.

What this negative case adds to the overall thesis is the finding that without a charismatic leader, HRF mobilisation will not take place. This is the case even if the potential participants and the social context closely resemble those where we *do* see HRF mobilisation. Without a particular type of leader who is able to convince women that there are material and non-material benefits to mobilising within a domain of losses, those who might otherwise participate are not able to overcome barriers of fear. Indeed, in her study on leadership, Robnett notes that "as scholars of social movements, we must be as concerned about who becomes a leader as by who does not" (2013, 5).

The chapter will proceed by justifying the selection of a negative case, employing Mahoney and Goertz' Possibility Principle (2004). It will then apply Occam's razor to the case of Barrio Claudia Catalina, describing its inhabitants and the reason why they fall within this Principle – that is, why they have the characteristics of a group that *could* engage in HRF mobilisation, but do not. Third, it will look at the mechanisms that catalyse HRF mobilisation and describe what is missing in the case of Riohacha, namely, a charismatic leader. Finally, it will postulate on what the findings from this case mean for HRF mobilisation more generally.

B. Selecting a Negative Case

In order to find a negative case, I asked: in Colombia, where do we see populations of displaced women, who are victims of other violences (sexual, physical, psychological), who are considered victims under the 2011 Victims' Law, who continue to live in contexts of high-risk (including the risk of re-victimisation by armed groups), but who do *not* cultivate a collective identity, who do *not* come together to build social capital, who do *not* engage in (legal) framing exercises, and who do *not* participate in acts of certification. That is, where do we find victims of the Colombian conflict who are still exposed to the risks of violence(s) who do *not* engage in high-risk feminist mobilisation? The answer: Claudia Catalina invaded neighbourhood outside Riohacha.

The present case will be compared to the first two cases. Critically, it will shine light on the validity of explanations for *why* women participation as presented in the previous two chapters. I selected this community as a negative case primarily because it falls within the boundaries of the Possibility Principle – i.e. mobilisation *could have* taken place (given the scope conditions) but did not. I further selected it for logistical reasons, as previously established connections with local public functionaries allowed the necessary access to study local dynamics.

I first made contact with this community when a colleague put me in touch with Carlos Vidal Gómez, a functionary at the regional Victims' Unit.[95] The same colleague also introduced me to the regional representative for victims of sexual violence in the *Mesa*

[95] The Spanish is not easy to translate; his official title is *Profesional de Acompañamiento Integral Transformador.*

de Víctimas[96], Estefani. Upon hearing about my research, she invited me to her neighbourhood, where, over time, she introduced me to other women in the community. Through initial contact with these two interviewees, I used snowball sampling techniques to find other people to interview. Estefani introduced me to people living in the Claudia Catalina, and also put me in touch with other social leaders in the area. She shared contact information for her point-people at various institutions of the state, and through meeting them I was able to interview other functionaries who work with victims. During my time in Riohacha, I interviewed and spent time 'ethnographically hanging out' with more than 30 community members, as well as people at the Victim's Unit, the Ombudsman's Office, the Mayor's Office, the departmental Governor's Office, and from other local social movements.

I conducted research in May and June 2017, with follow up fieldwork taking place in January and February 2018. All names are fictitious, except for those of public functionaries, and that of Karmen Ramírez of *Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu*, as these are publicly available in a variety of online publications.

[96] The Mesas de Víctimas are run by the *Unidad para las Víctimas*, and are spaces where people affected by the conflict can dialogue with the State and help create public policies for victims. See (Unidad para las Víctimas, 2018a).

C. A Similar Domain of Losses: Comparing Barrio Claudia Catalina to El Pozón and Usme

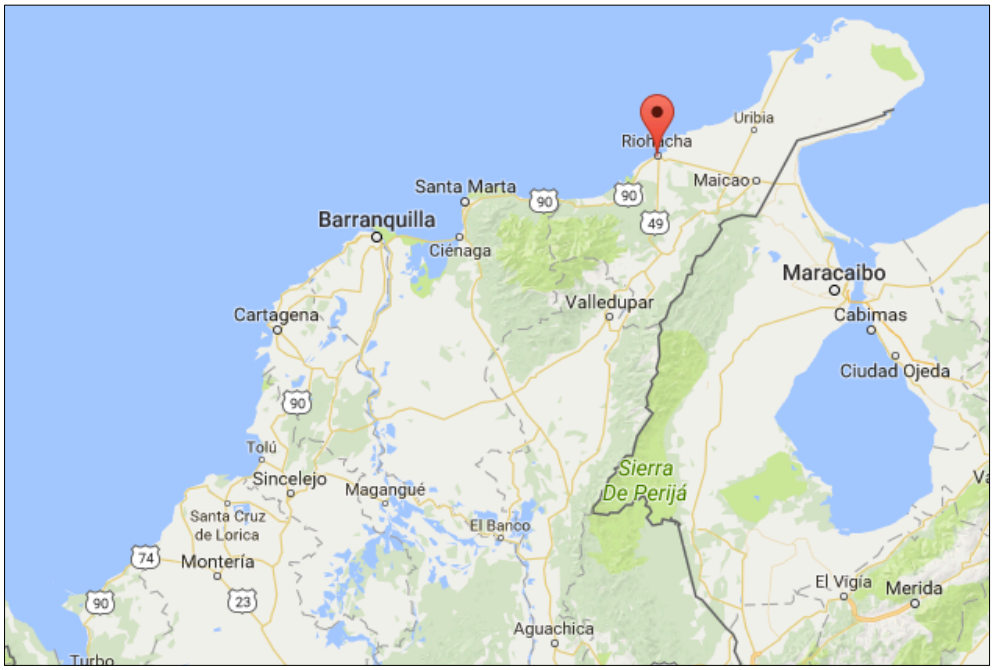


Figure 6.1: Riohacha, in the north-east part of Colombia, is the capital of La Guajira department. Source: http://www.googlemaps.com. [Accessed 4 February 2018].

1. Dynamics of Violence

Claudia Catalina is an invaded neighbourhood on the periphery of Riohacha, the capital city of La Guajira department. According to residents, the neighbourhood was founded about 17 years ago, and is primarily inhabited by displaced people (El Tiempo, 2001). As in the cases of El Pozón/Turbaco and Usme, residents were displaced due to Colombia's armed conflict. Originating from departments along the Caribbean coast and along the northern part of the border with Venezuela, they eventually made their way to Riohacha, a hub for displaced people. The population of the city is about 150,000, and a

government functionary who works with victims reports that there are 62,100 registered displaced people (Interview, 1 February 2018).

La Guajira department is primarily a desert. Claudia Catalina is made up of dirt streets on a grid system. The style of house varies; while some are built of cinderblocks and concrete, others are tin and wood shacks. There is little foliage, and the desert sun beats down on the hot, dusty neighbourhood. Children play in the streets, and teenagers drive motorcycles, hoping to make some extra money by ferrying residents into the centre of town. I was told on a number of occasions that these *mototaxistas* moonlight as small-scale drug dealers. They also provide security, intelligence, and messenger services for BACRIM groups (see Idler, forthcoming).

Like the other case studies in this thesis, Claudia Catalina is a site of conflict. Indeed, I decided to conduct fieldwork here in part because of the similar dynamics of violence it shares with the positive cases. The very fact that it is in an invaded neighbourhood puts it at odds with local authorities. In 2001, the local police organised operations to remove more than 200 families who had invaded land that had been sold by private companies to build a housing project (El Tiempo, 2001). Despite being forced off the land, the mainly displaced population returned and began squatting again. In an interview, a representative from the departmental Governor's Office told me that there are ongoing struggles between those who squat on the land and the landowners. She talked about the conflict between the "competing visions" the two groups have for the use of the territory and says that the relationship is not respectful (Interview, 31 January 2018).

As is the case with many invaded neighbourhoods, access to services like light, sewage, and water, are not guaranteed. For example, Estefani has a small well at the back of her patio. She pays a private company to fill this well every few weeks, and uses the water for drinking, bathing, and cleaning. She has access to public electricity, but the criss-crossed wires that precariously hang at eye-level suggest that she pirates some of her power. Her situation is widely representative of that of other residents.

The neighbourhood is precarious. Moreover, it is a site of ongoing criminality. As is the case with much of La Guajira, Claudia Catalina was a site of concentrated paramilitary and now, BACRIM activity. The department's proximity to the Venezuelan border makes it a centre of smuggling and contraband activity, which continues to present violent dynamics (InSight Crime, 2018, Idler, forthcoming). Conversations with interviewees reveal their understanding that contemporary BACRIM are merely modern configurations of the same paramilitary actors from years past.

The combination of criminal gangs and an unemployed, disaffected youth makes Claudia Catalina a hotbed of microtrafficking. District Victims' Liaison Disnay Freyle says that given the vulnerability of the residents, they are a perfect population for BACRIM groups to recruit new members (Interview, 1 February 2018). As a result, violence is high in the zone. This usually takes the form of armed robbery, but also involves physical violence and murder (Gámez, 2012). I have distinct memories of sitting in Estefani's patio while she desperately sent out group text messages trying to find a neighbour's disappeared son or relative. Not infrequently these people later turned up dead.

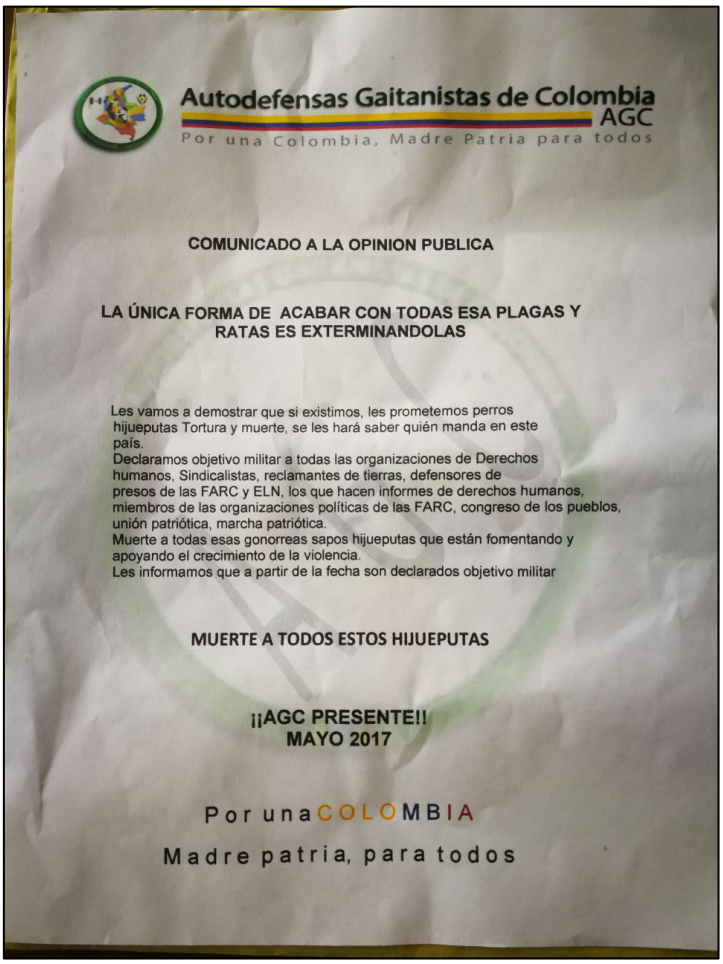


Figure 6.2: Photo of a pamphlet delivered to Estefani by a criminal group. The note threatens torture and death to human rights defenders. (Received via Whatsapp Messenger 25 May 2017).

Moreover, like in Usme and El Pozón/Turbaco, a climate of criminality means that gangs look for total social control. Social leaders – who mainly describe themselves as human rights defenders – receive threats via Whatsapp, Facebook, and pamphlets. Not only Estefani, but also leaders of other indigenous and religious groups I interviewed report that they have been threatened by BACRIM that want them to 'shut up.' Some, like the leader of an indigenous women's organisation, have had to leave the country. This is in keeping with national trends, where the murder rate of social leaders has skyrocketed since the signing of the Peace Accords (The Guardian, 2017). Local and international watchdog organisations have expressed major concerns that the killings are a sign of a

power struggle between new and existing criminal groups (paramilitaries, BACRIM, and dissident FARC) trying to gain control of economically important zones (Amnesty International, 2018; UNHCR, 2017). Over the course of research, Estefania told me about threats she received from three different BACRIM groups operating in the area (see Figure 6.2 above).

It should now be clear that the violent dynamics in Claudia Catalina are comparable to those in Usme and El Pozón/Turbaco. This means to say that one could expect to see HRF mobilisation. The reason we *do not* see this particular mobilisation, then, must be based on something other than a high risk context. Something else is moving (or not moving) that blocks HRF mobilisation.

2. Displacement and Arrival in Claudia Catalina

As with the women in Bolívar and Bogotá, the women living in Claudia Catalina fled violence and terror in their home territories. Their stories are similar, involving displacement, sexual violence, and torture. For example, Estefani is Afro-Colombian, and is originally from Bagre, Antioquia. She suffered displacement multiple times, multiple massacres, and gang sexual violence at the hands of the ELN. Nataly had to flee paramilitary violence after they murdered her grandfather in Antioquia. In a second incident of displacement, she was beaten while pregnant, causing her to give birth to a mentally disabled child. Aída and her family fled to Riohacha in 2008 after she suffered sexual violence at the hands of the guerrilla forces. Her husband was unable to overcome the knowledge that his wife had been raped and began to beat her.

Today, all of these women are single mothers (of between two and six children). They live close to each other in Claudia Catalina. They live in informal housing, and most do not have the deeds to the land (i.e. they are illegally occupying the land). As noted above, the housing varies in material; the more rudimentary houses are wont to be damaged by flash-floods and are usually insufferably hot under the desert midday sun. They don't have reliable access to services like water and electricity, which means that everyday life can be a struggle, particularly for women and children. None of the women I interviewed has any formal employment, and many are unable to generate income from the informal economy as well. The latter rely on remittances sent by family members in other parts of the country, on stolen electricity, and on the charity of their neighbours. One interviewee sometimes makes commissions from selling clothes from a magazine. Another runs a makeshift bar out of her house; she sells cheap beer to the local men, also often unemployed. The majority of the women were displaced from rural areas where education was largely inaccessible because of location and cost; many of my interviewees were only semi-literate.

We can see above that their stories are not dissimilar to those of the women of AFROMUPAZ or the LMD. Their situations are precarious. On multiple occasions they discuss the ongoing violence in the neighbourhood and are particularly afraid for the safety of their children. Estefani in particular receives paramilitary threats given her position as a member of the *Mesa de Víctimas*.

In previous chapters, we saw that in similar situations, newly displaced women began to come together with other women. For the LMD this originally took the form of women uniting to create an *olla comuna* to feed their children, and to raise money for a coffin for

a deceased neighbour. For AFROMUPAZ, this took the shape of women gathering to address specifically Afro-Colombian women's issues, including racism, unemployment, and the need for differential psycho-social healing. Women in Claudia Catalina, however, do not mobilise.

It would be disingenuous to say that there is no solidarity in the neighbourhood. Immediately apparent to me was that all of the mothers watch over each other's children. Estefani's children played in the patio with Neila and Aída's children. Each mother treated the children as her own, in terms of praise and of discipline. I noticed that they referred to each other as "comadre". Aída explains: "the *comadres* are… like godmothers. If I need something, I go to Estefani, and ask her, and if she has it she'll help" (Interview, 13 June 2017).

I spent many hot afternoons under the mango tree in Estefani's patio with groups of women, who casually wander in and out. They came to chat, to ask for advice, or to beat the boredom of unemployment. They sometimes talked about issues of violence in the neighbourhood, sharing information about a strange car they saw driving by or a neighbour who had been robbed. They are universally worried about the safety of their children. During one conversation, Aída recounts that the previous Sunday a strange car pulled up outside her house and asked her son a question. "Thank God I went out! I grabbed [my son] and took him inside. You *can't* talk to strangers in this neighbourhood!" (Interview 25 May 2017).

Estefani privately explained to me afterwards: "the majority of [the women in this neighbourhood] are victims of sexual violence, and they are the heads of their household.

We don't have the support of a partner, and not even the state helps us" (Interview, 25 May 2017). Given that they are singlehandedly raising their children, seemingly suffering from post-traumatic stress of the violences they experienced, and living in continuing fear of further violence, the "terror" (the word Estefani uses) they feel about the safety of their children is understandable.

The question of *organisation* (as opposed to neighbourhood solidarity), however, was initially confusing. Estefani heads an organisation called FUDEVUL (*Fundacíon de Víctimas y Vulnerables*, Foundation of Victims and Vulnerable People) which she claims has 190 members and offers support to victims of sexual violence. Aída started an organisation which allegedly addresses issues of abuse against children. Nataly told me about her organisation, *Milagros de Amor* (Miracles of Love) for victims of physical violence.

Deeper questioning, however, reveals that these organisations exist only nominally and do not have any real substance. That is, they are not legally registered (apart from Estefani's), do not have any formal structure (indeed, some do not even have any members), do not have defined strategies or goals, and do not participate in collective action. Estefani explained: "In other places in Colombia there are organisations, but not here. We don't have offices, we don't have money for that" (Interview, 25 May 2017). When asked whether it was a question of not organising out of fear, she replied, "No, it's more a problem of resources and money. [Our organisations] aren't legalised in the *Cámara de Comercio* because you have to have money to do that" (ibid).

At the time of writing, it cost around 34,000 Colombian pesos (approximately £8.50) to form a foundation (La República, 2017). While for a single mother this might represent a lot of money, between a collective the fee is more manageable. Indeed, this is what happened with LMD and AFROMUPAZ. When they first met, they did so informally (i.e. without legally registering). It was a few years after coming together as a collective that they raised the money to legally constitute themselves. Legal registration, then, is not a prerequisite for a HRF organisation, at least in early days. With time, and given strategies of legal framing and certification, however, it is beneficial to be legally established (and therefore legitimate in the eyes of the state and other organisations).[97] Estefani's explanation that the neighbourhood does not have women's organisations because of the cost, then, is an unsatisfying excuse (especially as the two positive cases existed without legally registering themselves for some time and still managed to engage in HRF mobilisation).

I asked other women in the neighbourhood if they were part of any local organisations. Nataly said: "I am not part of any women's organisation... If there was a women's organisation in the neighbourhood, however, I would like to take part" (Interview, 14 June 2017). Another neighbour, Margarita, notes "there isn't much organisation… Claudia Catalina is a forgotten place" (Interview, 14 June 2017). A third neighbour, Silvia, said: "I am not part of any organisation. If Estefani invites me to an event or a meeting, I'll go, but I don't really like organisations" (14 June 2017). Confusingly, all of

[97] In an interview, Freyle (District Victims' Liaison) noted that in the aftermath of the Victims' Law, Colombia saw a proliferation of "hollow" organisations, as this was a pre-requisite for participating in the *Mesa de Víctimas* (Interview, 1 February 2018). Legally registering an organisation is also necessary for applying for collective reparations.

these women were introduced to me by Estefani as members of her organisation, FUDEVUL.

Despite interviewees' discussions of their various organisations, over time it became clear that there is no HRF mobilisation in the Claudia Catalina neighbourhood. Discussions with functionaries at the Victims' Unit, the Ombudsman's Office, the Mayor's Office, and the departmental Governor's Office confirmed this; they did not know about any women's organisations in Claudia Catalina.

D. Explaining Inaction: Why Did These Women Not Engage in HRF Mobilisation?

In order to better grasp why women in Claudia Catalina do not mobilise, despite considerable similarities with the women in El Pozón and Usme, I conducted a number of interviews with Canderlaria Martínez. In charge of the Gender Delegation in the regional office of the National Ombudsman's Office, I thought that she would be able to provide reasons for inaction. She said:

> There are two reasons why we don't see many women's organisations here… firstly, it is because there is no clear feminism…. Here, women know that as women they have different and unequal conditions within the displaced population, but they don't necessarily know how to organise themselves accordingly. The knowledge that there is a clear need for an organisation based around being a woman – this is barely starting here. (Interview, 30 January 2018).

From this, we can extract that she cites women's inaction to a lack of consciousness that they could mobilise around a shared condition of gendered inequality.

Secondly:

> The interests of these groups are a political question.…What you see, then, is that whenever there is a call by the government for 'women's representatives' there is a surge of 'women's organisations', but they exist on paper only. As soon as you look at their work, you see that there is nothing backing it up. There are very few women who actually work for women's rights. (Interview, 30 January 2018).

What she is saying here is that without women who actually work for rights, we are unlikely to see the emergence of a women's organisation. On a separate occasion, when I asked her about a lack of women's mobilisation, she replied "there is no culture of that here" (Interview, 13 June 2017). Taking these words together with her longer explanation, what I understand is that in the absence of any sort of leadership that could potentially organise displaced women.

Indeed, I saw these dynamics in action. In May 2017 I attended a meeting hosted by the *Unidad para las Víctimas* in Riohacha. The event was intended to offer female victims of the armed conflict a formal apology on behalf of the Colombian state. Invitees were contacted by the *Unidad* to attend. Afterwards, I sat down with about 15 women[98], all of whom had been recognised in the ceremony. They were visibly pleased to see each other, and chatted and gossiped, evidently catching up after not having seen each other for some time.

When I asked if they spent time together outside events such as this, they replied negatively. They said that they enjoy coming together and chatting, and even went so far as to say that it was important for them to know other women who openly discuss their experiences of displacement and sexual violence, but that they have not formed any sort

[98] While not all of these women are specifically from Claudia Catalina, they all live in similar invaded neighbourhoods in Riohacha.

of group or organisation. When I asked if they had any plans to continue meeting up (this was the third of three events organised by the *Unidad*), there was unified agreement that they would like to continue meeting. "We would like to (*quisiéramos*), if [the Unit] invites us…" (Group Interview, 24 May 2017). I was surprised that there was no independent will or desire to arrange something outside the context of the *Unit* meetings. When I asked if there was anyone (among them) who took charge of organising activities, or who might be a natural leader, they replied that no one had ever shown a desire to take charge.

Given that these women exist, the question remains: why do these women not mobilise? More specifically, why do they not engage in HRF mobilisation? Departing from Martínez's assertions, the rest of this chapter holds up the case of Claudia Catalina to the mechanism of HRF, as discussed in the theory chapter and illustrated in the previous two case studies. In all, the remainder of the chapter notes that even when there are groups of women who could potentially be persuaded to participate in collective action, they will remain inactive unless there is a leader who can frame the benefits of doing so.

1. Neighbourhood and Social Context

In Claudia Catalina, the neighbourhood characteristics seem to lend themselves to mobilisation, insofar as they are similar to the social contexts described in earlier chapters. For the sake of thoroughness, though, part of this project also involved assessing whether it experiences a lack of HRF mobilisation, or a lack of *all* mobilisation? In El Pozón (and then Turbaco) and Usme we saw that the social context was home to a variety of instances of social action, not just mobilisation particular to women. For example, in

El Pozón, aid groups did not pay specific attention to the differential needs of women, resulting in a context ripe for Patricia Guerrero to mobilise a specifically women's organisation that would deal with specifically women's needs. In Usme, it was during the invasion of the Red Cross building that participating women decided that they wanted an organisation that purposely dealt with their needs as Afro-Colombian women.

What we can extract from this is that women's organisations in these two neighbourhoods emerged tactically from an environment in which a variety of other organisations already operated. They had the option to join existing mixed organisations but chose to mobilise *as women* instead. That they came together specifically with feminism as a mobilising strategy was not an accident, but rather a strategy.

The question then arises in Claudia Catalina: are women not engaged in HRF because *no one* is engaged in any sort of mobilisation? If this were the case, it would imply that the social context either does not permit mobilisation writ large, and that a lack of HRF mobilisation is a reflection of the wider context, rather than something about this specifically gendered style of mobilisation. To answer this question, it was necessary to look at the larger mobilisational landscape in Riohacha, including other invaded neighbourhoods with the same dynamics of high risk as Claudia Catalina. Crucially, I found an organisation that, at least superficially, appears to fit the criteria of HRF.

During fieldwork, I had the opportunity to meet up with another organisation, *Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu* (Force of Wayuu Women, FMW), and conduct a few interviews. This revealed that the organisation is seemingly an example of HRF mobilisation in La Guajira (including Riohacha). The interviews I conducted, as well as the literature and news

articles I read, leads me to believe that they use HRF strategies to meet their goals. The history and narrative related to me by one of the original leaders of the organisation also fits the HRF model for *why* women decided to mobilise despite the high risks associated with doing so.

Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu was founded in 2006. The formation process occurred when various leaders in different towns in the department realised that they were engaged in similar processes of trying to protect Wayuu women[99] from paramilitary violence. The department was the site of incredible levels of paramilitary violence, which disproportionately impacted indigenous communities (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2017; Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2010, 2013; Ramírez Boscán, 2007). They decided to unite under the banner of making visible the violations of human rights and ethnic rights suffered by Wayuu women and their families, as well as giving them assistance on institutional paths to declare these violences. Together, they realised that community members did not know about their rights, "and you can't fight to defend what you don't even recognise you have, can you?" (Interview, 31 January 2018).

Mercedes is the local coordinator for the Barrancas site of FMW. She explained that the organisation is a collective, and that each town or city has its own group.[100] The leadership structure is horizontal, meaning that local leaders all have a say in organisation-wide decisions. More often than not these groups work locally, but sometimes they come together to achieve more generalised goals.

[99] The Wayuu are the regional indigenous group. For more, see (Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2010).
[100] Claudia Catalina does not have a specific chapter of FMW. Riohacha does have a chapter, but the organisation is stronger in the smaller towns in the department.

Most of these leaders, Mercedes reports, were women who had had opportunities to leave La Guajira and study women's issues outside. One of the key leaders, Karmen Ramírez Boscán, won a scholarship from the UN High Commission of Human Rights to attend a training in Geneva in 2006. Now in exile in Switzerland due to the many threats on her life, members of FMW refer to her as the "mother" of the project (Guerrero, 2017). Other leaders, through international alliances, have travelled to Spain and Germany to ask agencies, foundations, and governments to put pressure on the Colombian state.[101] They have been recognised as recipients for precautionary measures by the IACHR, and have collaborated on projects with the European Union, the United Nations, FOKUS (a Norwegian women's NGO), and the Global Fund for Women (IPES, 2015).

At the local level, the organisation teaches classes on human rights and victims' rights, so that women within the communities can develop their leadership skills and learn to defend themselves. They also help women declare their displacement and/or experiences of violence before the relevant institutions of the state. More generally, they try to find ways to dialogue with the government on behalf of Wayuu women's rights. As part of their strategy, they make links with international aid agencies and embassies:

> "we are not experts, but we know how to locate ourselves within the wider environment… we know who to present our problems to, and this puts the pressure on the government, especially when you have the support of international agencies and other networks" (Interview, 31 January 2018).

They have had successes over time. For example, last year they were awarded the National Prize for the Defence of Human Rights, an award supported by the Swedish government. They also managed to have their communities included as subjects of

[101] For an example of using international alliances to pressure the Colombian state to recognise the violence against Wayuu women and to take action, see the document: (Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu, 2010).

collective reparations. Mercedes tells me that they are in the process of registering FMW, and not just their local indigenous clans, as subjects of collective reparations before the *Unidad para las Víctimas*. It has been documented, she said, that FMW was considered a military target by the paramilitaries, and therefore qualifies as a collective subject.[102]

Within the context of HRF, what is important is the presence of leaders who can highlight the non-material benefits of participation, despite the high risk context. Furthermore, they were able to make links with international organisations and the government that resulted in incremental successes like getting security details and recognition as collective subjects for reparations. Accordingly, we can identify the presence of a charismatic bond that gives rise to HRF mobilisation.

On why she continues to mobilise despite her high risk surroundings, Mercedes says:

> I don't know why! Right now, we are in such a critical moment, they are killing social leaders almost every day, and no one is doing anything. I am motivated because I see people suffering and I see the situation getting worse. And this obliges me to continue – I have to keep moving forward. After everything we've suffered internally with the organisations of men who have attacked us, and externally with the threats and the stigmas and the violations, I don't have any option but to continue my work. I am a defender of human rights, I have to keep going (Interview, 31 January 2018).

The collective identity she helped create has become fundamental to her individual identity, as Calhoun (1991) might suggest.

We have seen here that a preliminary examination of their strategies seems to put them in line with the HRF framework. Within a context of high risk, where participating in the organisation attracts threats and acts of violence from various armed groups

[102] For more about this, see (Verdad Abierta, 2015)

(paramilitaries and their successors), the women use a combination of collective identity creation, social capital building, legal framing, and acts of certification to call attention to the situation of the human rights violations they suffer. Future research would involve a deeper examination of their mobilisational strategies.

All of this goes to show that there *are* organisations that mobilise within the social context of Riohacha. Even more substantially, we can see *HRF mobilisation* within this social context. There is nothing in particular about Claudia Catalina that prevents mobilisation, when compared to other invaded neighbourhoods in the area.

That women in the Claudia Catalina neighbourhood do not mobilise, despite their shared condition as victims of the armed conflict, therefore, is a reflection of something other than a favourable social context. Candelaria Martínez's assertion that there is no culture of mobilisation in Riohacha (and Claudia Catalina) is incorrect. In all, what we gain from this case is understanding that a propitious social context or neighbourhood is a *necessary but not sufficient condition for HRF mobilisation.*

2. Charismatic leadership

The main finding from this case study is that in Claudia Catalina, the lack of HRF mobilisation can be primarily attributed to the lack of a charismatic leader. As a result, a group of potential participants operating in the same domain of losses is not encouraged to value the non-material benefits of group membership, nor are there incremental successes over time that promote continued participation. When violence is high and participating adds an extra layer of risk to daily life, it is not surprising that in the absence

of someone who can strategically frame the benefits of mobilising, women do not mobilise. Put another way, if there is no shared understanding that the "tomorrows of violence" can be modified, there is no justification for exposing oneself to heightened risk. There is no charismatic bond, and there is no HRF mobilisation.

What was originally confusing about this finding, however, is that there *is* a leader, who has an organisation, and is recognised by others in the neighbourhood as an organiser. What is it, then, about Estefani, that means she has not spearheaded – or has not been able to spearhead – a HRF mobilisation effort? As this section will show, it comes down to the fact that Estefani is not a *charismatic* leader and is therefore unable to create a charismatic bond with potential participants.

It needs to be said that personal relationships initially made it difficult to gain critical perspective of her leadership tactics. I spent a lot of time not only interviewing Estefani, but also playing with her children, cooking meals with her, taking the bus to various meetings together, and chatting with neighbours in her patio. Her dedication as a community organiser is immediately evident. She says about herself – and I have witnessed on multiple occasions – that when anyone has a question about a victims' issue, they come to her. Moreover, when I interviewed other neighbours and asked about their organisational behaviour, many related that although they are not part of a formal organisation, they go to Estefani if they are in trouble. She is a member of the *Mesa de Víctimas* (and is particularly involved in the section of the *Mesa* that deals with victims of sexual violence) and was previously the president of the neighbourhood Community Action Committee. She evidently has experience in leadership positions, and through this has met other leaders, has observed leadership practices, and has connections to certain

institutions (e.g. the Victims' Unit). She is a leader in the neighbourhood, but not a *charismatic* figure.

Estefani often talks about her organisation, FUDEVUL, which she has allegedly run since she arrived in Claudia Catalina in 2004. The organisation (which is legally constituted) works on issues pertaining to female, displaced victims of the conflict. At the beginning of my fieldwork, I wondered if this might be an example of HRF. Cracks started showing, however, almost immediately.

Firstly, no one seemed to know much about Estefani's organisation. Neighbours talked about "Estefani's women" or "Estefani's meetings" but did not include themselves as part of this narrative, nor refer to the proper name of the organisation. Silvia, who lives two blocks up the road, says that if Estefani invites her to an event she will go. Nataly says that if a woman needs something in the neighbourhood, she will go to Estefani, but there is nothing formal in terms of organisation. Another neighbour told me she did not know about any women's organisations in the neighbourhood, despite the fact that Estefani had introduced us by telling her that I was going to be asking questions about her organisation. As mentioned above, Estefani told me that she considers all of these women part of her organisation.

Second, during the many discussion I witnessed and participated in, there was never any dialogue about shared identity (and no marketing of the potential for "psychic income"). Estefani talks about working with female victims of the conflict, and with victims of sexual violence in particular (through her leadership roles, described above). Despite this, I never saw her engage in any work to do with identity creation. FUNDEVUL does not

host meetings of members, and even in the informal gatherings that took place in Estefani's patio, there was never any constructive discussion of women's rights, much less discussion about using women's rights as a point of departure for any collective action.

Third, apart from hearing Estefani *discuss* FUDEVUL, I never saw any evidence of collective strategies or action untaken by the group. This will be discussed in more detail in the following sections, but it is important to note from the outset that as a leader Estefani has been unsuccessful in rallying any sort of collective exercises on behalf of the organisation. The question emerges: if Estefani self-identifies as a leader, and indeed is named by institutional officials as a leader[103] – what about her leadership style is not compatible with HRF mobilisation?

Looking to the positive case studies, what is missing is a specific *style* of leadership, one that facilitates a charismatic bond. Without a dynamic leader who mobilises around an identity of feminism (whether this fits a historical/traditional or more popular definition), there is no way of highlighting the non-material benefits of mobilisation in a domain of losses. If potential participants do not see that there are benefits to participation – like feelings of unity and belonging – it is not obviously apparent why they should stick their necks out and mobilise, despite the high risk. Furthermore, without a base of collective identity, it is hard to convince people to take part in collective actions that also put them at further risk. It becomes 'worth it' when your identity is tied up in group membership and you feel a responsibility for others' wellbeing as well as your own.

[103] For example, when I asked Candelaria Martinez at the Ombudsman's Office about leaders, she mentioned Estefani as someone who is well-known in the community (Interview, 30 January 2018).

Indeed, Prospect Theory posits that if women perceive themselves to be in a domain of losses (a losing situation), they are more inclined to engage in risk-taking than if they perceived a safe situation. In order to frame this domain of losses, however, a leader has to highlight the potential benefits of mobilisation, the fact that these benefits are only available to participants (not free riders), and that shying away from risk does not guarantee safety. A charismatic leader is able to frame this in a way that makes it justifiable, and even logical for a woman to engage in collective action.

In the Claudia Catalina neighbourhood, women see that Estefani receives direct threats from BACRIM for being a human rights defender. In an interview, Nataly told me that she has never received a specific targeted threat from anyone but is aware that Estefani has. "She had to go to Bogotá one time, she had to leave in the middle of the night," she recounts (Interview, 14 June 2017). While Nataly also lives in a domain of losses where she is threatened by daily violences like robbery, attacks, and physical and sexual violence, it is understandable that she would not want to label herself as an organised person, potentially attracting personalised threats. This is where a charismatic leader could potentially change her way of assessing risk and encourage her to join a group of likeminded women in the same domain of losses, as was done in the positive cases. Without a charismatic leader to create a charismatic bond, however, this action is not personally justifiable.

To further contrast Estefani with Patricia Guerrero or María Eugenia Urrutia[104] what we see is the absence of a concerted gender justice project based in the vindication of

[104] Or even Karmen Ramírez of FMW.

women's rights and victim's rights. While Estefani has clearly learned some of the basics of rights-discourse while on the job (and as part of the *Mesa de Víctimas*), she has not connected this to creating a bond that overcomes the barriers to mobilisation (namely, high risk).

What is missing is her ability to recognise why women do not choose to mobilise (fear of increased violence), and accordingly reframe their understandings so that ideas of non-material benefits and incremental successes become more attractive (in keeping with the tenets of Prospect Theory). People can get on board with a gender justice project that promises to improve their daily lives (even if this is only marginally). It takes a charismatic leader to identify and activate this potential, forming a charismatic bond.

In the previous two chapters, I presented positive cases of HRF mobilisation. The central point that emerged was the critical importance of charismatic leadership to this type of collective action. What can be further noted, however, is the starkly different profiles of the charismatic leaders of the LMD and AFROMUPAZ. Patricia Guerrero had no previous experience with leadership or collective action but was able to draw on her own educational resources and successful organisational skills in order to facilitate action and procure things like the houses for the City of Women. María Eugenia Urrutia had very little formal education (likely a similar level to that of Estefania, in fact), but did have a history of community organising. As well as being a leader within the Afro-Colombian community, she grew up with a mother and grandmother who were seen as community leaders in el Chocó. She was able to draw on her experiences of previous mobilisation to effectively direct the strategies of AFROMUPAZ.

What becomes clear from this is that neither a certain educational background nor previous experiences of mobilisation are requirements for the charismatic leaders of HRF organisations. While this thesis did not aim to explore where leaders come from, it nonetheless provides some initial reflections on that question. Ganz's studies suggest it might have to do with a leader's biography. It could be Estefania's lack of educational attainment or her lack of a certain type of experience with community organising that precludes her from recognising the specific ways in which women can be convinced to mobilise.[105] McAdam's studies of leadership suggest that leaders are recycled from previous movements, and that their experience and organising skills can be applied to an incipient movement (1982). As mentioned earlier, when it comes to what makes a leader charismatic, Madsen and Snow note:

> Psychological readiness for a saviour plainly does not lead a public to seize upon the first available candidate for that role. Something – very probably a mixture of style and substance, of promise and performance – must be seen in the would-be leader which persuades the public that this is the one to turn to (1991, 145).

Further research could identify and compare a larger set of HRF mobilisation leaders to better ascertain where they come from and what about them makes them able to develop a charismatic bond in a high risk context. This line of investigation will be detailed in the concluding chapter.

In sum, and when taken in comparison with examples of other HRF leaders, we see that Estefani's style of leadership is incompatible with mobilising a HRF organisation. She lacks the correct mix of style, substance, promise, and performance. Crucially, then, *charismatic leadership is a necessary condition for HRF mobilisation*.

[105] As described above, Estefania has held leadership positions before, but perhaps these were not the same as María Eugenia's experiences. Further research will further investigate the exact nature of previous leadership/organising positions to facilitate more in-depth comparative analysis.

3. Non-material benefits

Given Estefani's lack of charismatic leadership, it is not unsurprising that she does not try to leverage the value of non-material benefits to potential participants. In Claudia Catalina, each woman operates like an atom. For example, people go individually to the Victims' Unit to present a case. There are no *plantones* or collective actions taken by the group, as is the case with the LMD and AFROMUPAZ.

On declaring, Aída told me: "I declared [myself as a victim] at the *Unidad para las Víctimas* because Estefani convinced me to… I know her story, and if she was able to declare her story, I knew I could too." This sentiment, however, is about as close to a collective identity as we get in Claudia Catalina. There is no shared notion that coming together as a collective group of victims could bring about solidarity, belonging, and camaraderie. As discussed in the Theory Chapter, part of the charismatic bond involves creating connections not only with the leader, but also with the group, which leads to the restoration of a sense of security, competency, and renewed autonomy (Madsen & Snow, 1991, 15)

In the same interview, Aída told me that she does not always like to ally herself with other victims of the conflict. "There is a lot of stigma," she says, "people see you in the group and say, 'Oh look, there go the raped girls'" (Interview, 13 June 2017). Paradoxically, rather than stigmatising women in Turbaco and Usme, these understandings of shared pain and violence are what give the organisation its strength, and what convince individuals to continue to identify with the collective.

In an interview with the bar owner (discussed above), she was reticent to talk about her experiences of displacement and/or sexual violence. We were sitting in a comfortable setting for her (outside her house), with her friend Estefania sitting nearby. I had been introduced to her a "safe person", and she and I had no trouble talking about her children, her daily life, and her ongoing struggles. She seemed relaxed. When it came to experiences of past trauma, however, she went quiet. She told me "I am ashamed to talk about that" (*me da pena hablar*) (Interview, 14 June 2017). By this point, I was not a stranger in the neighbourhood, and I was obviously not a threat. This interviewee, however, was evidently uncomfortable (as her body language also reflected), so I did not belabour the point.

On another day, Diana (a middle-aged resident of Claudia Catalina) came to Estefania's house to see me. She had been present at other group meetings ("hang-outs") where I had met other neighbourhood women. She asked if I wanted to see where she lived, on a parallel street. We walked along the dusty road, and into her small house. It was only when we were inside that she told me that her son had been recruited by a BACRIM group and that she had had to find him, rescue him, and send him away from La Guajira. We sat and talked about this traumatic experience for about half an hour. When I asked about her history of displacement and sexual violence (which Estefania had previously mentioned to me), however, she went quiet. She told me a little, using generic terms, but did not want to indulge any more details. Like the bar owner, her body language became closed, her voice dropped to a whisper, and she was obviously very uncomfortable. I did not insist, and we had a cup of coffee and talked about a lighter subject instead.

Indeed, stigma around sexual violence is not unique to Claudia Catalina. Women in all of my fieldwork have discussed the psychological and emotional trauma of declaring themselves as victims before the institutions of the state. In these cases, it was the ability of the leaders not only to convince these women to declare, but also that doing so was in fact a collective good; the more women declared, the more the state would have to act. Again, we see that a leader's ability to frame women's understanding of their situation as part of the same domain of losses is key here. The same was the case in El Salvador; leaders encouraged women to report acts of violence not only to seek justice for themselves, but so that the wider community of women could benefit from a society where impunity does not dominate either the legal system or the social norms in high risk barrios (Zulver, 2014).

The psychic and emotional benefits allow women to overcome the barriers of mobilising – even if the only benefit is a sense of solidarity, this can mean a lot when a person feels isolated and fearful. This is partly about the framing on behalf of the leadership (i.e. that the benefits exist) but is also partly experiential. Here we see the inherent feedback: over time, participants reap the benefits of being part of the collective, thus encouraging continued participation. In Claudia Catalina, though, it is evident that the women were uncomfortable talking about their experiences of violence, both with each other, and certainly with an outsider (me). This was in stark contrast to the women in Turbaco and Usme; although it was clear that talking about these experiences was painful, they were not afraid or ashamed in the same way as the women in Claudia Catalina.

It is not enough for a leader to encourage an individual victim to declare their experiences of violence; the leader needs to frame this declaration in a way that highlights the non-

material benefits of being part of a larger group who have suffered similar stories, *and* who are prepared to mobilise in the name of gender justice. Sharing suffering, knowing that the "pain of one is the pain of all" must be encouraged by a leader who knows that creating collective identity is one way to encourage women living in a domain of losses to take collective action, despite the further risks this may involve.

4. Success of incremental gains

In contrast to the LMD and AFROMUPAZ, Estefani's organisation has not had any incremental successes over time. Accordingly, there is no shared vision of how HRF action can modify the "tomorrows of violence." Estefani's only foray into organised collective action was trying to build a football pitch for neighbourhood children in 2015.[106] There are two main problems that emerged from this project:

First, the project had nothing to do with women's or victim's rights. While the idea of building a safe space for children is appealing (especially to single mothers), as a leader there was no way that Estefani could use this project to show women why participating under high risk conditions had the possibility to produce incremental successes that would in some way ameliorate their situation *as victims*. There was no strategy behind the project and what it meant for the collective. In El Pozón, the women complained that without a dignified house they would not be able to [regain the life that they had had before]. Estefani lives in a shack built of corrugated iron and wooden sticks. She frequently complained about her lack of a *vivienda digna*, yet there has never been any

[106] It is worth mentioning that Estefani founded her organisation in 2004. It is unclear what actions, if any, were taken between 2004 and 2015.

concerted effort to address problems of suffering directly brought on by the conflict. It is unclear what long-term tactical planning was behind the football pitch project; here we see a lack of strategic forethought required for a charismatic leader.

Second: it was never finished. Links with donors were evidently not strong, and the majority of the promised money never appeared. Therefore, not only did the project not bring any shared sense that gains are possible if women mobilise, the opposite was true in the case of this project. The lesson that women in the neighbourhood drew: even if they *do* mobilise, things do not get finished, and hopes are crushed (Group Interview, 30 January 2018). The narrative around this project (and its failure) is that there is no point in actively working together.

Estefani and Aída blame the failure of the project on a lack of commitment from the Mayor's Office and other state institutions. This sentiment is not unique to them; text messages exchanged with members of LMD since finishing fieldwork highlight similar frustrations with the institutions of the state. Leidys wrote in a Whatsapp message (9 February 2018) that one of their projects "is not advancing at all, there is no willingness on behalf of the state administrations." Despite frustration with the state, however, Leidys and the other members of the LMD are continuing to mobilise around this particular project. They have a history of success and of overcoming hardships and barriers like this. In part, however, this determination is dictated by Patricia Guerrero, who over time has refused to let organisation members accept defeat. This is part of her overall architecture of mobilisation, whereby certain projects are not just about the material gains they bring, but also about creating and sustaining morale over time. As such, perhaps what we see in the case of Estefani is an inability to create bridging social capital, to

create networks between institutions of the state, and to effectively take advantage of political opportunities.

What we might be seeing here is Estefani mobilising as a mother and not as a feminist. She is perhaps a leader, but certainly not a HRF leader. The project she selected is safe (for her children), and not an edgy project about equality or victims' rights or women' rights. It seems that Estefani herself is not aware that she could mobilise the women in her neighbourhood by framing mobilisation as a harbinger of change (in terms of attracting benefits and successes over time).

In this case, we can see that this project represents more than just a lack of strategic forethought, but rather, that she herself is motivated by the fear or cautiousness in the face of violence that prevents other women from participating in collective action. Without strategic vision as to how HRF mobilisation could engage in projects that make assuming risk justifiable, it is not possible to generate solidarity amongst potential participants. A cautious project is unable to convince others that there is the possibility to develop agency to modify the "tomorrows of violence." Again, we see that Madsen and Snow's mix of style and substance, of promise and performance is not reached.

Estefani says that there have not been any FUDEVUL meetings since the attempted construction of the football pitch in 2015. Moreover, FUDEVUL does not appear to have any current or ongoing projects. In our last meeting, Estefani talked about presenting a project for a rural women's collective to the mayor's office. It was unclear what this project has to do with the victims of sexual violence in her own neighbourhood, who allegedly make up the rank and file of the organisation. I am unconvinced that such a

project, even in the unlikely event it is funded by the government and goes ahead, will have any impact of convincing displaced women to engage in HRF mobilisation.

E. Conclusion: What this Means for HRF: Why Do Some Women Mobilise?

There is no HRF mobilisation in Claudia Catalina, a neighbourhood that suffers high violence, and also is home to a population of women who are similar to their mobilised counterparts in other parts of the country. Despite bearing similarities to the other cases presented in this thesis (and even to other neighbourhoods in Riohacha where there is an indication that HRF is taking place) – particularly in regard to dynamics of violence and the experiences of potential participants – there is no leader able to form a charismatic bond necessary for HRF mobilisation. It is this lack of charismatic leadership (and subsequently, a charismatic bond) that has prevented women who operate in the same domain of losses from coming together in their shared identity to work together in the pursuit of gender justice.

The point of this section has not been to show that FUNDEVUL is not a HRF organisation, but rather to use it illustratively to highlight the reasons why there is no HRF mobilisation in the neighbourhood. The most likely potential leader is unable to catalyse HRF mobilisation, which speaks more to her style of leadership than it does to the existence of other factors that might preclude HRF mobilisation.

Earlier chapters have discussed mobilisation strategies within the context of the pillars of HRF (collective identity, social capital, legal framing, and acts of certification). There is no HRF mobilisation in Claudia Catalina and, as highlighted above, there are consequently no collective strategies in the pursuit of gender justice. Within the context of the Possibility Principle, though, the lack of a charismatic leader gives us an inverse reinforcement of the relationship between the mechanisms that prompt HRF mobilisation and the HRF pillars. That is, without a charismatic leader in a high risk social context, potential participants are unable to overcome the barriers to mobilisation, which automatically limits collective identity creation and social capital building. Without a unified group, there is no one to undertake legal framing or acts of certification.

As outlined in the theory chapter, within a specific social context, a particular type of leader is able to convince women that they should group together and act collectively, based on their shared identities as victims and their shared location in the domain of losses. By highlighting the potential benefits that come from mobilisation, as opposed to the potential exposure to further and targeted violence, women decide to act collectively. The shared identity and the bonds of social capital that this creates over time become integral to that woman's individual identity. As we have seen expressed by various interviewees over the course of this thesis, they are unwilling to desist in their *lucha*, even when they are under particular moments of threat.

These bonds of collective identity generate non-material benefits that justify continued participation. For a victim of untold violence, feelings of belonging and understanding make it 'worth it' to expose oneself to ongoing violence. Especially when framed in such

a way that does not consider inaction an option that is necessarily significantly safer than action, the bonus of non-material benefits is enough to tip the scale towards mobilisation.

Once these bonds are solidified, and participants are convinced of the utility of non-material benefits, projects that show that there are also *material* benefits to be generated through collective action further compound continued participation. For example, the women of the LMD saw that by working together they were able to generate dignified housing for themselves and their families. The women of AFROMUPAZ saw that sustained collective effort brought them jobs and the ability to feed their children. Even smaller successes contribute to this dynamic; getting a meeting with the National Protection Unit after years of sustained pressure (as was the case with *Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu*), or being recognised for an international prize contribute to group morale, which justifies why continued action is necessary. Without a leader to make the connection between mobilisation and outcomes, however, we will not see HRF mobilisation.

The below chart depicts what the previous section outlined: that while in Turbaco and Usme, all four of the catalysing factors were present, in Claudia Catalina this was not the case.

Factor	Turbaco	Usme	Riohacha
Neighbourhood	Y	Y	Y
Charismatic Leadership	Y	Y	**N**
Non-material benefits	Y	Y	**N**
Success of incremental gains	Y	Y	**N**

This chapter began by justifying the selection of a negative case. It then set up the case of Claudia Catalina as apt for study within the parameters of the Possibility Principle. The next sections served to show that while Estefani may be considered a neighbourhood leader, she does not have the requisite skills to establish a charismatic bond with potential participants. When the risks associated with mobilisation are high, a leader needs to take a strategic tack to convince potential participants to act collectively. In the wider context of this thesis, then, we see that the lack of a charismatic leader precludes HRF mobilisation.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

This thesis is about feminist resistance in high risk contexts. While levels of violence in Colombia today do not consistently reach the same levels as they did in years gone by, current criminal dynamics mean that mobilising as a social activist remains dangerous (InSight Crime & Universidad del Rosario, 2018). In such a climate, we might expect women – often portrayed as weaker or more vulnerable members of society – to shy away from activities that augment their exposure to risk.

Despite these currents of violence, in Colombia, we do see women engaging in collective action in the pursuit of gender justice. These women "are subject to additional risk" and:

> leaders whose behaviour challenges gender norms are targeted by actors for sexualised forms of punishment or harassment, including taunts, humiliation, and torture. Thus, empowerment can lead to violent reprisals – either for challenging gender norms (being "like men"), for being "politicised," or both (Lemaitre & Sandvik, 2015, 14)

This chapter begins by summarising the findings of the thesis. It then discusses future directions for research, including comparative popular feminism, HRF over time (sustainability), HRF in different violent contexts, and leadership in high risk contexts. Finally, it comments on the theoretical contribution this thesis has made, with a focus on policy impact.

A. Summary of Findings

The research questions this thesis sets out to answer is: *why and how do women mobilise in high risk contexts?* To find an answer, I conducted research in three discrete fieldwork

sites in Colombia between 2016-2018. Two of these cases were "positive" insofar as they involved working with groups that I identify as engaging in HRF mobilisation. The third case was "negative" in the sense that notwithstanding its apparent similarity to the other two cases, there was no HRF mobilisation present among the local population of displaced women, despite similar contextual factors.

Throughout the course of the thesis it became obvious that leadership is critical when it comes to convincing a specific population to mobilise, in spite of the risks this entails. Charismatic leaders are able to frame the benefits (material and non-material) of mobilisation to those who operate in a domain of losses. That is, when *not mobilising* does not necessarily guarantee any further protections, and the benefits of mobilisation can only be accrued *through* participation, the risks of mobilising become palatable to potential participants. Women form a bond with the leader and then with each other and the movement's goals. This charismatic bond is a good in itself (part of Tullock's "psychic income"), contributing to a dynamic of protracted mobilisation.

High Risk Feminism is a framework that builds from this charismatic bond. It answers the "how" element of the research question. Directed by a charismatic leader, women operating in conditions of high violence strategically engage with four pillars of action. By building collective identity, creating bonding and bridging social capital, employing legal framing techniques, and participating in acts of certification, they contest their violent surroundings and demand a more gender just society. In this way, women find an ability to modify their "tomorrows of violence" – the ways in which they will experience and perceive violence in the future.

In El Pozón, displaced women came together under the leadership of Patricia Guerrero. Members of the resulting group – the *Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas* –were able to generate a collective identity that paved the way to build the City of Women – a symbol of peaceful resistance in a zone of conflict. Meanwhile, in Usme, María Eugenia Urrutia was able to show a group of women that by working collectively they would not only reap the psycho-social benefits of solidarity and friendship but could also direct their strategies in a way that led to material benefits like collective reparations. Finally, in the Claudia Catalina neighbourhood in Riohacha, we saw that the lack of a charismatic leader precluded the possibility for HRF mobilisation. Despite a similar context of violence and similar profiles of potential participants, Estefani does not have the ability to frame mobilisation in a domain of losses as worthwhile. Instead, we see displaced women who act in isolation and consequently do not reap any benefits of collective action.

In all, this thesis has shown that there is room to discuss alternative narratives about women who mobilise for themselves and for gender equality more generally, despite the risks they incur by doing so. High Risk Feminism is a way of resisting overwhelming and unspeakable acts of violence. It gives women agency, voice, and identity.

B. Future Directions

Further research is necessary to continue to test and refine High Risk Feminism. The following sections examine potential challenges to the dynamics of HRF as presented in this thesis – including comparative, temporal, and contextual factors – and offer suggestions for how future research could grapple with these.

1. Comparative HRF: Intersectional Feminisms

While the research design of this thesis is not conducive to making casual claims, adding more cases would allow continued testing of the dynamics of HRF mobilisation. Further research could look at different examples of feminist organisations that fall within the remit of HRF mobilisation. An underlying theme that perhaps has not been explicitly developed throughout this thesis is that HRF exists within the broader landscape of popular feminism in Latin America. This is especially pertinent when it comes to labels relating to both gender and race. When women (who have never mobilised before) realise that their condition *as Afro-Colombian* or *indigenous women* makes them a target for specific violence, they come together in resistance under a shared identity to which they had not previously subscribed. For example, AFROMUPAZ advocates gender justice by actively seeking to resist dynamics of racialised sexism that are intensified by the context of conflict. Within a definition of popular feminism that is intersectional, members account for both the traditional elements of their culture and their pursuits for gender justice.

This suggests that being part of an indigenous or Afro-Colombian community might facilitate HRF mobilisation, given an existing shared identity. We know, however, from the *Liga* that this is not an essential ingredient, and that leadership can help create the same kind of solidarity that emerges in more homogeneous movements. The LMD does not define itself as an explicitly ethnic organisation. With that said, the majority of its members have Afro-Colombian roots (as is also the case in Claudia Catalina). They do not have ties to ancestral traditions in the same way as AFROMUPAZ, but their racialised

identities mean that they have suffered specific violent dynamics during the conflict (Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2013).

Future research that compares an increased number of cases, then, might be able to better untangle the influence of racial or ethnic identities in catalysing HRF mobilisation. Given the space for differential understandings of popular feminism, a good place to start might be with the *Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuu* (FMW).[107] The Wayuu community is matrilineal, but all decision-making goes through the maternal uncle. Despite this, the FMW has strong female leaders who have been able to encourage women to act collectively. Extended interviews and participant observation might reveal the specific dynamics of feminism and gender justice that emerge from a community which is seemingly organised in a fashion that would preclude acts that privilege women's empowerment.

In terms of a comparison of HRF organisations, this research would allow for a more thorough examination of the ways in which these feminisms have been "sidestreamed" into new racial-ethnic and class-based social and cultural spaces (Alvarez, 2009, 177). While this thesis has focused primarily on leadership, there is also room to investigate whether there are other contextual factors that lead to greater movement solidarity, including intersectional identities.

[107] My colleague Nancy Tapias Torrado plans to engage in more in-depth research with this community as part of her DPhil project.

2. HRF Over Time: Sustainability

Another interesting line of further research would examine the progression of HRF over time. While this thesis has incorporated data about the LMD and AFROMUPAZ since they were founded (in the late 1990s), their mobilisational futures are not guaranteed to remain unchanged. Indeed, in the case of Perón in Argentina, Madsen and Snow wonder: "what proof an incipient following must see in order to bond with a leader, and what proof an existing following must see in order to *sustain* the charismatic bond" (1991, 145, emphasis added).

For example, the end of Chapter 4 highlighted the mobilisational fatigue I sensed during fieldwork with the LMD. As mentioned, leaders and rank and file members expressed frustration with the stagnation the organisation was experiencing (via text messages, February 2018). This was particularly clear in the case of reparations, both collective and individual. There are also tensions between LMD leaders (on the *Comité Técnico*) and Patricia Guerrero. Since the construction of the City of Women in 2006, there has been a dearth of incremental successes.

Moreover, when expectations of rewards do not line up to what is delivered, how can we explain ongoing participation? While this thesis has highlighted the crucial importance of the charismatic bond to participation, is there a limit to the amount of time that women will continue to participate without receiving material benefits? Indeed, women's participation is based on some balance of psychosocial and material gains. Future research might look further into how this balance is calibrated.

Interestingly, since finishing fieldwork with the LMD, Patricia Guerrero has informed me that she is retiring (Text Message, 9 February 2018)[108]. Have the past 20 years instilled the lessons of charismatic leadership in the new leaders of the organisation? Will Magaly, Leidys, and others be able to take up the mantle of HRF in a way that re-emphasises the non-material benefits of mobilisation to participants? What does this mean for the future of the LMD, or for any HRF organisation for that matter? More broadly, are the traits of a charismatic leader teachable and/or transferable? Unless the leader is grooming someone to take over, or there is a natural-born new leader, might we expect the decline of a movement as a leader retires, moves on, or dies?[109]

Indeed, I have a trip planned for August 2018 in which I will conduct interviews with these women to glean information about Guerrero's retirement. I plan to ask about their current roles (as leaders), their current activities and strategies, and their plans for the future. It will be interesting to compare these interviews with those I conducted during fieldwork in 2016. It would further be interesting to replicate these interviews in another year's time. In this way, I will have three sets of interviews that document the inertia of the *Liga* (in terms of ongoing mobilisation) before, directly after, and a year after the retirement of the charismatic leader. This longitudinal data will hopefully provide insights about HRF over time more broadly.

[108] When I spoke to a contact in Bolívar in April, she informed me that Guerrero was still actively participating in the organisation. In our most recent communication, however, she forwarded me a copy of an email (8 June 2018) in which Guerrero officially announced her retirement from the organisation. Since then, Guerrero has seemingly ceased all participation in the *Liga*.

[109] Moreover, what happens in the case that a leader is killed 'in action' (i.e. Berta Cáceres in Honduras or Marielle Franco in Brazil). Does this create a unique opportunity/incentive for a participant or group of participants to continue their legacy?

Furthermore, in the longer term there is a question about the intergenerational transfer of mobilisation. Madsen and Snow note that we should not expect "*any* charismatic bond to have staying power over more than a few generations" and that it is "progressively more difficult to pass…passionate conviction on to offspring" (1991, 147-148). Putnam notes that over time, social capital decreases, as younger generations do not take up the "civic potential" of their parents and grandparents (2000). Small's study of a poor neighbourhood in Boston, however, offers a slightly different narrative. Although participation in certain community activities declines over time, new forms of social capital (including new friendship networks) actually rose among new generations (2004, 68).

The case study chapters documented the activities that the LMD and AFROMUPAZ employ to engage and integrate younger generations in their mobilisation. These mainly involve historical memory building, leadership training, and inclusion in psycho-social healing activities. Indeed, given sociodemographic patterns, the "next generation" ranges from women now well into adulthood (who suffered the same original displacement as their mothers), to teenagers and children (born during ongoing violence, but after the original act of displacement). They seemed to participate in a host of organisation activities.

Moreover, the organisations are investing resources into training them to be future leaders, something that presupposes that their *lucha* will extend into the future. Given their ongoing links to their mothers (the original members) *and* continued existence in ongoing domains of losses, they maintain strong connections to the group. Time will tell what their continued participation looks like as their mothers begin to age and die, and

therefore demonstrate their importance to the continued success of the group. As was the case in Small's study of Villa Victoria (2004), while the activities undertaken by the new generation may not be the exact same as those of their mothers, they certainly do not represent a decline in social capital over time.

On the opposite side of the coin: I wonder if current inaction prevents future action. While the previous chapter explained the reasons why HRF mobilisation does not exist in Claudia Catalina, is there a possibility that if the right sort of leader appeared, or if Estefani was taught or guided to change her leadership practices, that displaced women might begin to engage in HRF strategies? The two positive case studies detail organisations with twenty-year histories. Logically, though, in situations of high risk we might expect to the see the emergence of *new* HRF organisations. In further examining the factors that lead to movement take-off or demise, we could draw even more well-founded conclusions about the dynamics that inhibit or catalyse HRF mobilisation.

3. HRF in Different Violent Contexts

While this thesis has narrowed its scope to focus on women who were victims of Colombia's armed conflict, its theoretical contributions can be applied to other situations of high risk. Indeed, previous research looked at HRF in El Salvador, a country marred by astronomical homicide rates and the world's worst feminicide rate. Women here live their lives in gang-controlled neighbourhoods that present a risk to their day-to-day lives, yet still engage in HRF mobilisation. Chapter II defined a high risk context as it pertains to HRF. Further research, then, would look at other violent contexts where women

mobilise despite high risk contexts, and the further risk associated with public resistance to this violence.

For example, the municipality of Ecatepec (a suburb of Mexico City in the State of Mexico) is considered "the worst place to be a woman in Mexico" (Nájar & Paullier, 2015). In 2016, it saw 39 instances of feminicide[110] (Clarke Estrada, 2017). Ecatepec is home to criminal gangs and 95 per cent of inhabitants claim to feel unsafe (Vergara, 2017). The dynamics of violence here are shaped by local drugs-trafficking gangs fighting for control over extortion and drugs markets. As a result, the municipality is one of the top five cities for murder in Mexico (Corcoran, 2017).

Despite the evident context of high risk (both generally and specifically for women), on International Women's Day, around 70 women took to the streets to demand security and justice for the women who were murdered (Solís, 2018). It would be interesting to examine the mobilisation strategies of these women in Mexico, where we know that activism is met with threats, violence, and murders. Are the women demanding gender justice in Ecatepec engaging in HRF mobilisation? Is their activism based in feminist resistance to their high risk environment? Are there particular charismatic leaders who allow women to overcome the barriers to mobilisation? Does this variant of violent context influence or change the way in which women shape their mobilisation?

In the Theory Chapter, I noted that violence exists along a continuum, but that this does not necessarily mean we need to expand HRF to the point of diluting its utility as a

[110] NGOs believe this number may actually be much higher given a lack of reporting and investigation.

concept. There is value in studying, describing, and explaining women's mobilisation under high risk settings – that is, where we might not expect to see mobilisation at all. In expanding the number of cases and the setting of violence, I will be afforded more contextual variation with which to continue refining the HRF framework. The definition of "high risk" provided earlier will further be refined and delimited such that we can give more traction to the analysis and identification of these organisations.

4. Women's Leadership in High Risk Contexts

When I began this project, I did not understand the importance of leadership to HRF mobilisation. I am now motivated to begin a parallel investigation that looks into women's leadership in high risk zones in Latin America. Countries like Brazil, Honduras, Guatemala, Venezuela, and El Salvador would likely make good case studies for investigating leadership. The research could perhaps be organised as a database project that examines women leaders who have emerged in periods of conflict in the 2000s. It would include a set of factors (independent variables) to explain the outcome of effective leadership (dependent variable).[111] This would serve the triple purpose of contributing to social movements literature on leadership, expanding understandings of my own work on HRF, and advancing scholarship on women's empowerment more broadly.

Indeed, perhaps some of the mobilisational outcomes discussed in the cases included in this thesis could have been explained by variation of the personal resources on which

[111] It could perhaps apply an adapted version of Wickham-Crowley's Boolean Algebra mixed-methods approach (1992).

leaders drew. The LMD and AFROMUPAZ are seen as the positive cases of HRF in this thesis, however Guerrero and Urrutia drew on different experiences. For example, Guerrero was educated, but did not have much previous experience with mobilisation. Urrutia has limited education, but experience with previous mobilisation. She has similar levels of education to Estefania, but the former was able to generate successful outcomes for her organisation, while the latter could not. A larger-N research project might begin to elucidate the impact that factors like education, experience, or even histories of violence, racial/ethnic identity, socio-economic status, or others might have.

As a starting point, it might be worth taking inspiration from a study begun by Restrepo about woman leaders "against all odds" in Colombia (2016). She presents a set of variables that she considers important for the emergence and formation of these leaders. The source of this information, however, is generated from a small number of interviews with personal contacts, conducted over one summer.[112] I am not particularly confident about the generalisability of her fieldwork and think that future research of this sort – with more leaders, more in-depth interviewing, and more systematic qualitative analysis – would make a valuable addition to the field.

C. Value of Theoretical Contribution: Policy Impact

HRF presents a new lens through which to study women's mobilisation and agency. Instead of viewing women solely as victims of the conflict, or through their capacity to

[112] She justifies her relatively small scale of fieldwork by suggesting that her personal experience working with women over time allows her to consider her sample "broadly representative" of all registered women victims in Colombia.

act as mothers (or on behalf of others), the framework allows for a nuanced reading of women as survivors, activists, and *luchadoras* (fighters) in contexts of high risk. While McAdams purports that people will only partake in collective action when they are relatively free of personal constraints that would make participation especially risky (1988, 71), we have seen the opposite in the cases examined in this thesis. This goes in contrary to rational choice arguments, whereby people only participate collectively when the benefits demonstrably outweigh the costs.

The value of this thesis, then, is that it considers not only *that* mobilisation can take place in high risk contexts and improves the life of women, but also *why and how* such mobilisation can take place. On a political level, then, I have reflected on how these findings can make a contribution beyond the realm of academia. I am immensely grateful that interviewees have been candid and forthcoming with their stories and their experiences. These interviews have been emotional, both for me and for the interviewee. Within the context of the Peace Accords and an influx of national and international resources intended to ensure the success of these, can my findings about HRF mobilisation be used on a policy level?

For example, given the centrality of a charismatic bond to HRF mobilisation, I wonder if there is the possibility of designing trainings and workshops that promote feminist mobilisation, even despite the risks that doing so incurs. Colombia has a rich history of community leadership, despite the threats against these leaders. In a post-conflict era, perhaps training women to rise above risks by framing the material and non-material benefits of feminist resistance could have impacts beyond just those of national peacebuilding. Indeed, teaching women to employ the pillars of HRF mobilisation could

in fact contribute to a larger gender justice project that has the possibility to undo historic and engrained patterns of inequality.

While Colombia's current peace process is being heralded as unprecedentedly gender inclusive (McWilliams, 2016), the government has made a lot of promises that it is unlikely to be able meet any time soon (Sikkink et al., 2015; Zulver, forthcoming-a). The most recent report on the progress of the Victims' Law notes that 93 per cent of victims eligible for reparations have not been paid anything (Comisión de Seguimiento y Monitoreo a la Implementación de la Ley 1448 de 2011, 2017). Given the immensity of the transitional justice project and the resulting unlikelihood that many victims will receive any sort of compensation, it is important to investigate other ways that women can begin to rebuild their lives after the atrocities of war.

Moreover, given the shifting security landscape, it has become clear that the end of the conflict between the Colombian state and the FARC does not necessarily mean a complete cessation of violence (InSight Crime & Universidad del Rosario, 2018). Particularly in isolated regions far from the capital, the future of human security remains uncertain. The high risk nature of collective action has not declined, as has been evidenced by the spate of killing of human rights defenders and social activists since the signing of the Accords in 2016. With an increased understanding of the quotidian problems women face in high risk contexts, the international community could adopt a watchdog function: keeping track of women organisers, staying poised to defend them against threats, supporting their work financially, and guaranteeing security and justice to deter future violations against them.

Accordingly, research like that found in this thesis adds to a larger conversation about how to include marginalised, silenced, or forgotten voices into debates about inclusion, reparation, and justice. Colombia continues to represent a vulnerable context, particularly for women, and particularly for poor, displaced, single, unemployed, racial minority women. Violence is rife and presents ongoing challenges in many women's everyday lives. If there is the possibility to translate academic research on HRF mobilisation into action that modifies the intensity of the "tomorrows of violence", it is imperative that it be undertaken. Leaving the lessons of resistance and agency on paper would be doing a disservice to those women who have suffered – and resisted – during and in the aftermath of Colombia's armed conflict.

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Below are listed the interviews carried out during this fieldwork for this study. For information on the research methods used, see Chapter I. Material available upon request.[113]

Interview (3 July 2015) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia**

Email Interview (13 September 2015) *Bogotá, Colombia**

Interview (22 August 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (25 August 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (29 August 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (30 August 2016) *Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (3 September 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (7 September 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (9 September 2016) *Bogotá, Colombia*

Phone Conversation (14 September 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (23 September 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (24 September 2016) *Bus to Barranquilla, Atlántico, Colombia*

Group Interview (24 September 2016) *Barranquilla, Atlántico, Colombia*

Group Interview (27 September 2016), *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (29 September 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (29 September 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (29 September 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (30 September 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (6 October 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (12 October 2016) *El Pozón, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (13 October 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (19 October 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Phone Conversation (20 October 2016) *City of Women*, *Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (26 October 2016) *San Jacinto, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (26 October 2016) *San Jacinto, Bolívar, Colombia*

[113] Interviews marked with an asterisk were conducted in 2015 for an article in *Al Jazeera* (Thomas Davis & Zulver, 2015). Participants were retroactively asked to give permission for these quotes to be used in the present thesis. This process was cleared with the Divisional Ethics Team (Department of Sociology, University of Oxford).

Group Interview (26 October 2016) *Carmen de Bolívar, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (26 October 2016) *Carmen de Bolívar, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (26 October 2016) *Carmen de Bolívar, Bolívar, Colombia*

Group Interview (5 November 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (5 November 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (5 November 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (5 November 2016) *City of Women, Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Phone Conversation (8 November 2016) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (18 November 2016) *Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (18 November 2016) *Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (21 November 2016) *El Pozón, Bolívar, Colombia*

Interview (8 February 2017) *Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (9 February 2017) *Bogotá, Colombia*

Group Interview (28 February 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Group Interview (2 March 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (2 March 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (19 March 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (19 March 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (19 March 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (20 March 2017) *bus ride in Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (20 March 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Group Interview (20 March 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Group Interview (24 March 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Group Interview (4 April 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Group Interview (5 April 2017) *Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (6 April 2017) *Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (11 May 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (22 May 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (23 May 2017) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (23 May 2017) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Group Interview (24 May 2017) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Group Interview (24 May 2017) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (25 May 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (25 May 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (25 May 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Group Interview (25 May 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (12 June 2017) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (12 June 2017) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (13 June 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Group Interview (13 June 2017) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Group Interview (13 June 2017) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (13 June 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (14 June 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (14 June 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (14 June 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (14 June 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Group Interview (14 June 2017) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, la Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (23 June 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (23 June 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (23 June 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (23 June 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (23 June 2017) *Bogotá, Colombia*

Group Interview (31 June 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (31 June 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (25 September 2017) *Usme, Bogotá, Colombia*

Interview (30 January 2018) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (30 January 2018) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (30 January 2018) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Group Interview (30 January 2018) *Claudia Catalina, Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (31 January 2018) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (31 January 2018) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Interview (1 February 2018) *Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia*

Text Message Conversation (9 February 2018) *Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia*

Text Message Conversation (9 February 2018) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

Phone Conversation (9 July 2018) *Cartagena, Bolívar, Colombia*

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