

Final technical report

IDRC project number: 105303

IDRC project title:

THE PROCESS OF LAND SEIZURES IN ONE SUB-REGION OF COLOMBIA AND ITS EFFECT ON THE PEASANT MOVEMENT DURING ARMED VIOLENCE

Participating institutions:

- **International Organization for Migrations (OIM) (technical and administrative assistance)**
- **Historical Memory Group - National Commission for Reparations and Reconciliation of Colombia (project implementation)**

Country: COLOMBIA

Written by:

Donny Meertens, project coordinator & rapporteur

Contents

1. Abstract / Executive Summary	3
2. Basic Project Information	5
-The Research Problem	5
-Objectives	6
-Methodology	7
3. Project activities	10
3.1. Literature review	10
3.2. Regional support networks	10
3.3. Team building and gender training	10
3.4. Fieldwork	12
3.5. Workshops	13
3.6. Elaboration of project outputs	13
3.7. Difficulties and lessons learned	14
4. Outputs	15
5. Outcomes	16
6. Overall assessment and recommendations	17
Annex I: media pieces	
Annex II: front covers (cd)	

1. Abstract / Executive Summary

For nearly one year and a half the project research team, coordinated by a member of the Area of Historical Memory of the CNRR and with technical assistance from IOM, addressed the relationship between internal violence and the agrarian problem in the Caribbean coast of Colombia, where for several decades armed conflict, internal forced displacement of rural populations and violent land seizures have been an extremely strong phenomenon. It also collected multiple memories on the rise and fall of one of the most emblematic peasant movements of the country, the ANUC, and showed the impact of conflict on it, as well as the important role of female peasant leadership for its endurance at the local level. A thorough analysis of the data collected during field work showed how violent actors and their “front men” combined a whole array of illegal and legal mechanisms to seize land, often with local institutional involvement and the connivance of local political bosses. On the other hand, it has documented how national rural development policies constituted an encouraging setting for the forced selling of abandoned land by the displaced and impoverished peasant population. In the region, land has been further concentrated in both the hands of drug traffickers and war lords, and in those of traditional elites and new agro-industrial enterprises. Lack of formal land deeds – particularly amongst peasant women – constitutes a problem, as it makes claims for justice and judicial procedures for land restitution more difficult.

These core findings are all being used in the current national debate on restitution of land to the forcedly displaced, as part of a Victims Bill of Law presented by the Government to Parliament. Indeed, the present Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development and his technical adviser are using the project documents. Furthermore, dissemination and discussion of research findings amongst local and national peasant organisations contributed to its re-vitalisation underscored the importance of peasant women leadership and gave an impulse to inter-generational learning processes and experience sharing.

The recommendations of the project highlight the need for a transformative and gender-sensitive public policy on land restitution that goes beyond mere restorative justice and must take part in an inclusive process of rural development.

The final phase of the project counted with additional funding by UNIFEM and the publication of the main report was co-sponsored by a national and a local foundation (*Fundación Semana* and *Fundación Paz y Desarrollo de los Montes de María*). The two launchings of the final report (in Bogotá, the national capital and Sincelejo, one of the regional capitals) counted with massive attendance by victims, displaced people, peasant leaders (men and women), civil servants and students, as well as a wide

interest by local and national press agencies, whose publications are being gathered in a press-map. Further dissemination of project publications has been undertaken among stake holders of the international community (German, Dutch, Swedish, Swiss, Canadian Embassies and European Community, UN population Fund, UNDP, UNIFEM and UN habitat) and will also be presented at international seminars like *The Series Houston 2010 Seminar on Land and Security* (Medellín, Colombia December 3rd-5th 2010) that congregates Colombian civil and military authorities, academics, politicians, high-level ngo's and the USA Embassy.

Project outputs include:

1-3. Three publications: a conceptual document: *El despojo de Tierras y Territorios. Aproximación Conceptual* (Bogotá September 2009); the memories of a peasant leader: *Luchas campesinas y reforma agraria* (Bogotá, September 2010), and the final report: *La Tierra en Disputa. Memorias del despojo y resistencias campesinas en la costa Caribe 1960-2010* (Bogotá, November 2010), all three available in paper version and on the web site of the Historical Memory Group of the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation (memoriahistorica-CNRR.org.co)

4. A multimedia that adds sound and images to the final report: *La tierra ya no es pa'l que la trabaja* (Bogotá, November 2010), available on cd-dvd and on the web site of the Historical Memory Group of the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation. (memoriahistorica-CNRR.org.co) .

5-6. Two unpublished state-of-the-arts documents on (a) land and peasant movement and (b) women's access to land.

7. Progress report (Informe de Avance) (October 2009).

All products are in the Spanish language.

Key words: *violent land seizures; peasant movement; armed conflict; gender violence and women's land rights.*

2. Basic Project Information.

The Research Problem

Land *seizures* may be defined as an act of appropriation, by means of coercion, of land that belonged to others (over which others had some kind of rights before, that is property rights or other forms of de-facto tenure), in a context of intimidation, threats and armed actions. Sometimes a veil of legality is upheld, through formal buying much below market prices. The land may be taken by the armed actors themselves but mostly by intermediaries who act on behalf of third parties, the so-called *testaferros* (front men).

In the Colombian context and particularly in the regions where the research has been carried out, violent land seizures are facilitated by three factors: 1) the presence of armed actors 2) high levels of informal land tenure practices by the peasant population. Without pre-existing registration of property or possession rights, illegally obtained land may be easily legalized by its usurpers; 3) the absence or decline of a strong peasant movement, capable of defending traditional land rights in the region. This last point is of particular importance as it links explicitly the two main objectives of the research proposal: the dynamics of land seizures are related to –amongst other factors- the decline of the peasant movement in the region. An integrated analysis of these articulated processes is an important task for the Commission on Historical Memory.

The project also highlights the importance of taking into consideration the historical ways through which rural *women* access land, as well as the specific ways they lost their properties or possessions by abandonment and seizures. The lack of historical acknowledgement of women's rights to property places them in disadvantage towards men when acting as rights claimants. Highlighting both their particular vulnerabilities and their active participation in peasant movements contributes to a better understanding of these processes and allow an inclusive design of gender-sensitive reparations and land tenure democratization programs.

The leading questions for the Project to solve were: What were the methods for land seizures in the regions of study and their effects on the agrarian structure? Who was involved in these processes and events? What were the forms of historical access to land by women and how can we categorize the specific mechanisms used to spoil their land? How has the government intervened in land problems? How have peasant organizations been affected by the conflict? What has been the role of women in peasant organizations? What policies may be suggested to contribute to reparation,

avoid repetition of the violations of rights, and return the land to the victims, particularly to the women?

Objectives

In the Project two, closely interrelated, general objectives were formulated:

a) Provide Colombia's Commission of Historical Memory with a historical documentation on the relationship between the "agrarian problem" and violent conflict, based on the mapping and characterization of land seizures and appropriation processes in one sub-region in Northern Colombia, with particular attention to the impact on peasant women. Specific objectives were formulated as:

- Establish the illegal seizures and land appropriation by armed groups and drug traffickers during armed conflict and violence in *Córdoba* and *Sucre* with special attention to the specific forms of seizures and loss of land for (displaced) women.
- Analyze the evolution of the agrarian structure and approximate women's access to land in the sub-region by establishing its relationship with armed violence.
- Establish the characteristics and effects of governmental intervention in the solution of the land tenure problem in the Córdoba-Sucre region and its effects on women's rights to land.

b) Provide Colombia's Commission of Historical Memory with an analysis of the effects of Colombia's internal armed conflict on the peasant movement, selecting as an emblematic case the rise, development and weakening of the national peasant organization ANUC (particularly in the same (sub) region of Northern Colombia where it originated) and of the relationship between its decline and the dynamics of land seizures. With its specific objectives:

- Write a memory about the evolution of the ANUC organization, and establish the current state of the peasant organizations in the sub- region.
- Identify and analyze the effects of armed groups on the peasant movements, particularly the ANUC, in the sub- region.
- Analyze the evolution of female participation and leadership in the national and regional peasant organization, as well as current actions of rights claiming undertaken by women afflicted by violence and loss of land.

Each of these general and specific objectives has been accomplished in a very complete and extensive way.

Ad a. The relationship between conflict and the "land problem" has been documented through the analysis of particular case studies of violent land seizures in Córdoba, Sucre and Montes de María. The multiple modalities of land seizures and their wide

spread presence all over the region of study gave rise to several mapping exercises and the organizations of all the field documentation into four central categories of violent land seizures: 1) land seizures and direct appropriation by violent actors; 2) violent appropriation of water and riverbanks (which are of public usage); 3) abandonment and forced selling of former agrarian reform lands; 4) Massive buying of abandoned land by new entrepreneurs who use the effects of violence as a “window of opportunity” for new investments. This information constitutes one of the core chapters of the book *La tierra en Disputa*, as well as a central piece of debate in the diverse seminars that are organized around the new Bill of Law on land restitution. The particular vulnerabilities of displaced peasant women (because of their very limited access to formal landownership and the risks of exposure to sexual violence) are mainstreamed in the more general chapters as well as highlighted in a special chapter on gender issues in the book.

Ad b. In the same way the rise and fall of the peasant movement has been documented through many interviews with peasant leaders (women and men), resulting in new interpretations with respect to the extent of annihilation that suffered the movement as a consequence of armed conflict and its transformation in less visible but nonetheless effective local associations for productive activities, mostly led by women. A third thematic area has been developed through the documentation process, which is the area of *institutional memory*, a rather unknown field of analysis equally conducted through interviews with (former) civil servants, which aimed at a more appropriate and regionally based view of the impact of government interventions in land questions in the region. The findings are of great importance to the current debates on the transformative (more socioeconomic and gender equity) potentials of transitional justice processes and particularly land restitution.

Finally, the accomplishment of the objectives is represented by three different outputs that will be listed in the next part of this document (whereas only one output was foreseen: the general report).

Methodology

1. Delimitation of subjects and analytical categories

1.1. Preparatory phase.

The methodological process started with the discussion and organization of data collection for the two regional case studies around the following subjects and categories:

For objective (1): (a) Regional context: geography, demography and culture; (b) agrarian structure; (c) historical struggles over land; (d) presence of armed and illegal groups; (e) conflicts and clashes among the armed actors, and their alliances with

regional social-economic interest-groups (f) institutional presence; (g) processes of seizures and appropriation of land and (h) particular ways in which women become victims of land seizures.

For objective (2), the analysis of the consequences of armed conflict on the peasant movement will focus on the following subjects and categories: (a) rise, expansion and decline of the ANUC during the sixties and seventies; (b) the role of women and female leadership in the organization; (c) the division of the peasant movement in the eighties and the role of Government throughout this process; (d) persecution, murder, and disappearance of leaders since 1973 to present date; (e) the attempts by ANUC to rebuild the peasant movement; (f) suppression of local and regional peasant organizations and women's organizations by illegal paramilitary groups; (g) relations between peasant organizations, illegal armed groups and the State; (h) current status of the peasant organizations; (i) acts of violence against women leaders and peasant women organizations post - ANUC.

1.2. The intermediate phase of literature review.

After categorization and partly parallel to the first fieldwork phase, the project undertook a state-of-the-art review on two broad topics: (1) agrarian policy, the land question, and the peasant movement, and (2) access of women to land, the gender-differentiated impact of conflict and public policy for rural women.

2. The fieldwork: phases, methodological strategies and instruments

2.1. The fieldwork started with a more precise geographical and administrative delimitation of the sub-regions selected for the case study, according to official information on internal displacement (by the Governmental Agency *Acción Social*); exploratory information on seizures by regional experts, practical insights and security considerations.

2.2 The second step was a *consultation* phase with leaders of local organizations and regional networks of peasant organizations, organizations of displaced people and women's organizations. This consultation took place in a discussion workshop in the region (Sincelejo, a province capital in the centre of the area of study and a more or less safe environment for people to gather). The original idea of conducting at least 8 consultations proved to be unnecessary and could be integrated with the focal groups that were used for the next phase of documentation. *Informed consent* of the organizations and their leaders, as well as of individual participants in the documentation process, was obtained in all cases..

2.3. The planned three kind of *interviews* have all been held. These were: A) Semi-structured interviews and testimonies with victims of displacement and land seizures.

(Objective 1) In these interviews participated both men and women, both leaders and people at the grassroots. B) Additional interviews were held with State authorities such as: the Inspector General's Office the (regional agrarian inspectors); public offices on agrarian and rural issues; non governmental organizations (NGOs) and local research centres; they represented the "institutional memory" as mentioned before. C) In-depth interviews were held with male and female peasant leaders at national and regional level (Objective 2). The research on gender issues and women's rights in the regions used the technique of focal groups for the themes related to women's participation in the peasant movement and introduced a *new technique*, developed by the historical memory group on gender, called *tool kit for narratives*, for the research on the very sensitive sequence of massacres-displacement-abandonment – land seizures - violence against women. Both the focal groups and the "Memory workshops" as we called them, were exclusively with women, as we found out that that worked best for creating trust. In the memory workshops clear rules were established on beforehand, and in a participative manner; never a woman was pressed to speak out or to draw a map if she did not feel well about it. Indeed, several women used this right to keep silence when they were overwhelmed by emotions of fear and disgrace.

More than 200 interviews were held, 60% of them with women. Victims of violent land seizures are under represented for the Córdoba department because of security problems: some municipalities have not been visited in order not to challenge the personal security of victims. And not all of them could be heard outside the region. The numbers of interviewees in the institutional spheres have been accomplished (10 male and 10 female leaders). 2.4. On the documentation side, official information from real estate records and local land tenure statistics have been consulted and collected. The archives from the CINEP (NGO dedicated to social and human development through involvement in research and popular education) have been important sources for consultation by the project team.. Colleagues from the different research groups that take part in the historical memory work have played an important role in the discussion and revision of texts for the final book.

2.5. The 4 workshops planned initially for the end of the project have been reduced to two, at two crucial moments. The first regional workshop has been held with a select group of peasant leaders and academics -_both men and women- to discuss the preliminary research results (Sincelejo April 28th 2010). The second workshop has been held as an afternoon session immediately after the regional launching of the final report. This workshop was oriented towards the recommendations of the report and their applicability in the context of the Bill of Law on restitution. This way, the workshops fulfilled the functions originally designed in the project proposal. The reduction from 4 to 2 is related not methodological but to security reasons: we considered that conditions in one of the subregions (Cordoba) were not safe for public

gatherings of people; therefore, the participants from that region were invited to the more centrally and more safely located city of Sincelejo.

2.6. Finally, the national seminar with stake holders has not been held. In stead, several dissemination and discussion efforts have been developed in those scenarios where most stakeholders com together (particularly to discuss the Bill of Law on land restitution).

3. Project activities.

3.1. Literature reviews

National, regional and sub-regional literature review and review of sources on women in peasant movements have resulted in the production of two “State of the Art” documents, at the end of 2009.

3.2. Regional support networks

During the months April to June, the regional support networks have been formed, consisting of two regional guides/assistants (a man and a woman, linked to local ngo’s and universities) and two male and two female local peasant leaders, who together prepared the fieldwork visits of the Bogotá-based research team. They contacted potential interviewees and prepared focal groups and memory workshops, as well as the final workshops and their participants. Their work has been crucial for the success of fieldwork activities and the dissemination. They also collected informed consent formats and participated in meetings and workshops.

3.3. Team building and gender training

The original project team was composed by seven persons. The gender training for the team was assumed, as part of the team building process- by the gender responsables (senior researcher and assistant researcher). This training took part during the first months of the project and was held parallel to the discussion sessions for the definition of categories and variables. The team suffered several changes. The project coordinator and one research assistant left the team early 2010, and tasks had to be re-distributed with obvious consequences for individual workloads. Also, the administrative assistant fell ill in July/August and needed a surgery in September 2010. Thus, the systematization, analysis and writing –up of the final report took more time than calculated, and therefore, where possible, supplementary funding was obtained for researchers and coordination. Nevertheless, the project coordinator and the research assistant worked the last two months ad honorem. The two project extensions (with no budget effects); approved by IDRC (September 30th and November 30th 2010) have to be seen as a consequence of these changes in the labor force of the

project team. The following scheme shows the efforts made by the team, by IDRC and by the counterpart organization in order to guarantee continuity for the team members and the project activities.

Composition and functions of the team evolved as follows:

Project coordinator - Absalón Machado, April 16th 2009 - April 15th 2010
-Donny Meertens, April 15th 2010 –November 30th 2010¹

Gender researcher -Donny Meertens, April 15th 2009 – May 31st 2010 (IDRC-OIM)
June 1st –September 31st 2010 (UNIFEM)
October 1st –Nov. 30 2010 (ad honorem)

Gender research assistant -Eliana Pinto April 15th 2009-May 31st 2010 (IDRC-OIM)
June 1st –September 31st 2010 (UNIFEM)
October 1st –Nov. 30 2010 (ad honorem)

Research assistant 1: -John Jairo Rincón, April 15th –December 31st 2009 (Acción Social)²
January 1st – April 30th 2010 (IDRC-OIM)

Research assistant 2: -Jeannette Castro, April 15th 2009 - Dec. 31 2009 (IDRC-OIM)
January 1st – Nov. 30th 2010 (Acción Social)

Research assistant 3: -Pablo Nieto, April 15th 2009 – Nov. 30th 2010 (Acción Social).

Administrative assistant: - Javier Soto April 15th 2009 – May 31st 2010 (IDRC-OIM)
June 1st-September 30th 2010 (additional funds by Historical Memory Group).

Regional support: Alejandrina Pacheco - José Francisco Restrepo July 2009 –April 2010 (IDRC-OIM).

¹ In combination with original functions as Senior Gender Researcher

² Presidencia de Colombia, Departamento de Acción Social y Cooperación Internacional. This Governmental organization acted as the administrative counterpart for international cooperation with the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation of which the Historical Memory Group is part.

3.4. Fieldwork

Preparation and fieldwork: April 2009 – April 2010

After a three months period of preparations and discussions over geographical, methodological, analytical, ethical and protection issues (see “Methodology: delimitation of subjects and categories” and 2.1. “Geographical delimitations), the field work period started at the end of June 2009. During the period April 2009 - April 2010 the four research assistants conducted an immense amount of fieldwork in 35 municipalities (*Departamentos Córdoba, Sucre* and part of *Bolívar*, sub-region of *Montes de María*). Information was collected through a total number of 12 trips to the field, with participation of two or three assistant researchers at a time and the participation of the gender expert in four of the trips. The highest concentration of field trips was presented during August, September and October 2009. For security reasons, the average duration of field trips was 8 days, and no longer than 2 weeks. The number of days used for field work by the research team totals 250.

In order to collect and represent the memories of the women and men victims of violence and land seizures, 200 interviews were conducted; and more than 10 focal groups held with peasant leaders, displaced people and civil servants. Additionally, two “Memory workshops” were held with displaced women, using a special technique of testimonial drawings and collective interpretations of what happened during violence and the loss of land³. Also “memory walks” were held in the countryside and much cartography was done, representing both “statistical hard data” and “subjective memories” on the geographical presence of peasant struggles and losses of land. A particular mention deserves the recollection of *institutional memory*, through interviews held with local civil servants about the implementation of national agrarian development policies at the local level. Finally, statistical data were used on violence, forced displacement and economic development, in order to provide a context of historical processes for the testimonies, and a revision of relevant documents (primary sources) was done on the periodical publications of the peasant movement (ANUC) during the seventies and the confessions rendered by the paramilitary perpetrators during their judicial processes under the Justice and Peace Law during the last years.

Although stated elsewhere, it is important to mention that the gender perspective of all field work activities and the statistical data (where possible) gave a special visibility to the sufferings but also to the leadership of women, as presented in the outputs and outcomes.

³ These techniques have been developed by another project of the Historical Memory Group and are published on the web site under the name of *Caja de Herramientas: Narrar y recorder el conflict* (Tool kit: Narrate and recall the conflict. English version available).

3.5. Workshops

As described in the methodology section, two workshops were held for discussions of research results: one in Sincelejo in April 2010 and the second one at the end of November 2010, complementary to the regional launching of the final report.

3.6. Elaboration of the project outputs

The systematization, analysis, writing, discussion of results with the participants and final presentations extended through the final eight months of the project (April – November 2010).

The research findings have been presented in six different scenarios:

- 1) In Bogotá, the conceptual elaboration of *violent land seizures* was presented to a public of more than 60 representatives of social organizations, ngo's and academia (September 2009).
- 2) In Sincelejo (one of the local capitals in the research area), the first field results have been discussed with a selected group of peasant leaders (women and men) and local academics (April 24th 2010). The IDRC program officer also attended this exercise, as well as the director of UNDP field office.
- 3) In Bogotá, a presentation of fieldwork findings was held for the international *Consejo Consultativo* (Advisory Board of internationally accredited academics) of the Historical Memory Group (June 2010).
- 4) In Bogotá, during the official opening of the Third Week for Historical Memory, the project results were presented together with the other three research projects that had been finished at the moment. One of the peasant leaders who participated in the project (from the province of Córdoba) presented his testimony in front of the vice president, and an audience of national authorities and international community. (September 21st 2010).
- 5) In Bogotá, the national launching of the first two products (Memories of a peasant leader and the final report *La Tierra en Disputa* (at that moment finished but not yet published) was held at Javeriana University. Also a video summary of the multimedia project was presented. And six peasant leaders (three women and three men), representing old and new generations, presented their experiences of violence and resistance to an enthusiastic public. The official registered audience consisted of 202 persons, 116 women and 86 men. Nevertheless unofficial accounts report more than three hundred people in the over-crowded auditorium. (September 27 2010).
- 6) Again in Sincelejo (Sucre province), the local launching of all three products (Memories of a peasant leader, the final report *La Tierra en Disputa* and the multimedia *La tierra ya no es pa'l que la trabaja*, was co-sponsored by the *Fundación Desarrollo y Paz de los Montes de María* (coordinated by priest

Rafael Castillo) and held for an audience of 165 peasant leaders, and local civil servants (58 women, 107 men (!)). In the afternoon a workshop was organized with 55 participants (only 29 persons-17 men and 16 women- registered officially). The workshop focused on the recommendations made in the final report for the policy-in-the-make on land restitution, discussed in the context of local experience and knowledge. The results will be used in dissemination activities by the Historical Memory Group (November 22nd 2010).

In all activities, but particularly in the last two, contacts with the media have been crucial.

Most planned activities were held, with the exception of two: the two regional final workshops with women have been integrated into a more general workshop, with an important presence of women (the specific memory workshops with women already contributed to their speaking out). The workshop with stake holders at the national level has not been held. The project team, together with the general coordinator of the Historical Memory Group, decided not to organize this workshop, because of the multiple scenarios of discussion on land restitution in which the research team, civil society organizations, national authorities and the international community are participating. Instead, the allocated funds have been used for strengthening the own report-launchings and to supply the high publication costs of the report (due to the many maps and graphics that require polychromatic presentation).

3.7. Difficulties and lessons learned

1. Apart from the work load, the difficulties experienced by the project team refer to two themes: security and complexity. Some of the areas under study, particularly in Córdoba, are former strongholds of the paramilitary and after their formal demobilization (2005) of the “emergent” criminal bands linked to drugs trafficking. The access to these areas was restricted for safety reasons (municipalities of Valencia, Tierralta, Puerto Libertador, and Montelíbano) and this affected data collection, particularly with respect to indigenous territory of the *Embera* ethnic group.

2. The complexity of the final stage of data analysis and writing has been underestimated, particularly as to the time and labor inputs and the costs of the elaboration of maps and graphics that are of crucial importance and part of the innovative strength of the final report and the multimedia.

3. Calculating project duration in advance. The project presenters did not properly calculate the necessary time for style correction, editing, publishing and publicly

presenting the research results. The necessary time span for these activities is influenced by extra-project factors like congestion in the editorial company etc.

4. Outputs

The outputs of the project are four, mainly in the field of research and advocacy or policy influencing. All products are highly innovative and have got a wide outreach because of their dissemination in paper amongst the peasant and displaced population, its availability on the web side and the attractiveness of a multimedia interactive exercise, particularly for younger generations.

The achievements of the projects consist of its innovative research results on one of the most difficult and risky topics (the description of several methods of violent land seizures and its cartography; the gender specific analysis of the impact by armed conflict on peaceful forms of peasant resistance, as well as the analysis of the institutional role and the influence of development models on the loss of land by peasantry), directly told through the voices of the victims.

A second achievement is its political opportunity: project results came out at the very moment of a new Bill of Law on Land Restitution, presented by the Minister of Agriculture to Congress, as part of a new Victims Bill of Law. Policymakers, authorities and academics, therefore, are very interested in the project results and its recommendations. These recommendations address specifically the terms of the bill of law.

A third achievement is the linking of different generations of national and local peasant leaders (male and particularly female) that did not know each other, through bringing them together in the different scenarios of presentation of the project results. This may be seen as a milestone in networking and knowledge building, as experiences of both generations are being exchanged.

List of Outputs:

1. Área de Memoria Histórica de la Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (2009) ***El despojo de Tierras y Territorios. Aproximación Conceptual***, Bogotá, Área de Memoria Histórica de la Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (CNRR) and Instituto de Estudios Políticos (IEPRI) de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, September. 100 pgs. ISBN 958-719-313-8

2. Jesús María Pérez (2010) *Luchas campesinas y reforma agraria* (Bogotá, Puntoaparte Editores, September. 211 pgs. ISBN 978-958-8575-15-5.
 3. Grupo de Memoria Histórica de la Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (2010) *La Tierra en Disputa. Memorias del despojo y resistencias campesinas en la costa Caribe 1960-2010*, Bogotá, Ediciones Semana/Taurus, November. 528 pgs. ISBN 978-958-758-060-0 .
 4. An interactive product of multimedia that tells its proper story, adding sound and images to the final report: *La tierra ya no es pa'l que la trabaja* (Bogotá, November 2010), available on cd-dvd and on the web site. Of the Historical Memory Group of the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation (memoriahistorica-cnrr.org.co)
- All three products are available in paper / cd-dvd version and on the web site of the Historical Memory Group of the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation (memoriahistorica-cnrr.org.co)
5. Unpublished state-of-the-art document on land seizures and peasant movement (2009).
 6. Unpublished state-of-the-art document on women's access to land (2009). No se ha previsto la publicación de estos documentos. Su función ha sido fundamentalmente soportar el proceso de investigación-
 7. Progress report (Informe de Avance) (October 2009).
 8. Products of dissemination (articles in media)- see Annex 2.

5. Outcomes

Project outcomes are basically to be found:

- a. In the area of innovative research, both because of its method of historical memory and because of its thematic approach – being land seizures generally considered to be a dangerous and obscure subject
- b. In the providing of basic knowledge and social/ political visibility for women and men who suffered the loss of their land
- c. In the systematic provision of a gender dimension through which the disproportionate effects of the conflict on women and their particular risks and vulnerabilities during reclaims have been documented.
- d. In the contributions the research made to the current policy discussions by state, congress and civil society on land restitution, and its transformative capacities, in terms of (gender) equity.

e. In the social and political effects of the research results that contributed to the debates on how to bring peasant women and men back to the political scene as important and legitimate actors for rural development.

Finally, the project design and particularly the importance assigned to *mapping* not only statistical data but also the memories of peasant leaders –showing their geographical coincidence- gave a strong support for this kind of methodologies; legitimate the use of otherwise considered “soft” techniques by policy makers, and promote the participation of forcedly displaced peasant men and women as relevant political actors.

6. Overall assessment and recommendations

The partnership with the IDRC was useful and supportive for policy related research- a quality rarely found in other donors but bitterly needed for adequate development policy design.

An important lesson learned has been that a research project on such a core question as land seizures, with a high political sensitivity and with many security risks for researchers and participants, cannot be carried out in a one year (not even in a one – and- a- half year) period without serious effects on the physical and mental health of the team members. One of the measures to be taken must be the acknowledgment of the stress and amount of work that is produced by human rights violations (in the context of development problems) and the continued thinking of improving protection for participants. This acknowledgment should lead to a more long time vision and a better structuring of a multi-phased project over several years.