UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

Contesting Hegemonic Understandings of Security:

The Need for the Prioritization of Human Security in Colombia

A Senior Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

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by

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ABSTRACT: The term 'security' has long been synonymous with the protection through militaristic means of the state and its citizenry from those who pose a physical threat to the state's national territory or citizenry. This thesis makes evident the necessity to re-conceptualize the term 'security' to distinguish between the protection of the people through militaristic means and the protection of the people through the securing of their basic human needs. In this re-conceptualization of 'security', I argue that human security should be placed as the top priority and treated as vitally important by policymakers, international political actors, NGOs and academics. I demonstrate that in cases such as Colombia where generations have endured one of the most violent and lengthy internal armed conflicts in the world, the government's focus on security threats by militarized actors (i.e. guerrilla insurgencies and paramilitary groups) has largely failed to resolve the conflict, and in many ways has worsened threats to human security. I demonstrate the gravity of threats to Colombian livelihoods and social fabric among the country's most vulnerable populations and argue that these are of more vital importance then traditional security threats. I offer a new conceptualization of human security by disaggregating the term into three analytical categories--embodied elements, structural elements and inter-personal elements--that arose from original research conducted internally displaced, Afro-Colombian women in the Caribbean coastal region of Colombia.

Keywords: human security, state security, Colombia, Democratic Security Policy, internal displacement, Cartagena, LIMPAL

This thesis is dedicated to mi abuelita linda, Pilar Combariza del Valle, who imbued in me her deep love, passion and pride of her country.

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PREFACE

The thick, moist air of the Colombian Caribbean feels stagnant. It envelops you, filling your lungs, moistening your hands, engaging every sense in your body to find calmness in the intense heat. The climate allows for a certain amount of serenity, all the beings beneath the smoldering sun pacing themselves as they amble along the streets. In the heart of the city, smog fills the air above the sea of cars, trapped under the thick blanket of moisture, unable to escape to the sky above. The unpaved streets of San Jose de los Campanos, a barrio tucked away on the outskirts of the city, result in a dramatic entrance by any vehicle into the small, quaint area. Plumes of dirt trailed our taxi as little stones from beneath the turning wheels hit the metal doors of the vehicle. Motion turns into stillness as we wait for the event to begin. The women entering the petite, cement church seem observant and alert, but unenthusiastic, as they pass my colleague Sophie Curtis and me sitting in plastic chairs against a wall waiting to attend our first workshop with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (*Liga Internacional de las Mujeres Por Paz y Libertad,* henceforth LIMPAL). I felt profoundly present as I marked this day as the first of many. For the day, all that I would ask of myself was to be an undividedly attentive listener.

This summer of 2011 was my second summer spent in Colombia. Just a year earlier I traveled to Bogotá on my own to meet my many cousins, aunts and uncles. My grandparents, who came to the United States in 1975 having been political refugees themselves, had always told me one of their greatest dreams was to send one of their grandchildren to experience their homeland they had been unable to visit for decades. Over the summer I attended La Javierana University in Bogotá. During my studies at the

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university, I became increasingly interested in the politics of the country. Marisol Triana, an outstanding professor at La Javierana exposed me to the shantytowns surrounding the city and the unrecognized settlements of displaced people. A month or two into my visit I walked out of my lecture hall into a demonstration of thousands of displaced persons, Amerindians and rural *campesinos* marching in the street with army tanks closely behind. At the same time the presidential elections of 2010 were approaching, and towards the end of my trip a car bomb in downtown Bogotá was set off. The car bomb was carrying 110 lbs of explosives and was publicized as having been planted by the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revoluccionarias de Colombia*), a left-wing guerilla group operating in the country since the 1950's. After this short but eventful summer I knew the pride and love I felt for Colombia was starting to transform into a curious and passionate quest to make it the center of my studies.

Colombians are the most proud people I have ever met. Everyone wants to share a piece of the rich culture with you. Everyone you meet will tell you of an amazing food you must try, send you to his or her favorite dance spot or insist you must visit some part of the country that they have deemed the most beautiful place in the world. Over the years I have come to relish in my Colombian heritage. In a country that has endured a century-long bloody civil war and is regarded as one of the most violent places in the world, I have met some of the most truly happy people. Through the Latin American and Latino Studies (LALS) department at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), I was able to express the pride I feel for Colombia within my academic career to work towards completing a degree driven by my own passions. Different classes under the program allowed for me to study Colombia while opening up the opportunity for me to create a research project of my own this last year to later materialize into this thesis.

I have always believed motivation and perseverance stem from not only from yourself, but the people in your life surrounding and supporting you. There are many people who have contributed to this thesis through giving me the support I needed to have enough motivation and perseverance to make my research happen.

At UCSC, I would like to extend by gratitude to Dr. Kent Eaton who agreed to be my thesis advisor despite his busy schedule as the Politics Department Chair. He showed me an amazing amount of patience throughout my writing and research process and his valuable input and extensive knowledge of Colombia contributed greatly to my work. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Flora Lu, who has long provided me with the drive to exceed my own limitations both academically and personally. She introduced me to the idea of taking on independent research as an undergraduate and provided any assistance needed to bring my research to fruition, as I know she has done for many others. Her optimism and enthusiasm is contagious and I am incredibly grateful and honored by her overwhelming support throughout these last three years of working with her. Furthermore, a funding source at UCSC, the Joel Frankel Scholarship out of LALS, facilitated my research by providing sufficient funds to make the trip to Colombia feasible.

In Colombia, I send my gratitude to Paul Mercado, Bexi Cruz Torra, and Ximena Correal, three encouraging women from the organization of LIMPAL, which extended their support through introducing me to all the extraordinary women of LIMPAL. I would also like to acknowledge those women who took part in the research through offering their time, and sharing their extremely personal experiences in the interviewing process. I will forever remember their stories and truly inspirational strength.

INTRODUCTION

In August of 2005, the Colombia government started to take notice of the allegations of hundreds of peasant families who were claiming the disappearance of their loved ones by paramilitary forces. When the government and military officials started to uncover multiple mass graves, some bearing up to 72 bodies, in the coastal cattle-grazing regions of the Caribbean, it became evident these were "victims of right-wing paramilitary groups now benefiting from generous [government] concessions for pledging to disarm" (Forero 2005: pg#). From 1996 to 2004, 3,588 people vanished in Colombia, many of whom were rural *campesinos*, charged by the paramilitary with aiding the left-wing guerilla groups who passed through their villages. Villagers recalled that during the height of the conflict when the paramilitary groups were highly mobilized "every day people were killed. They would pull them out of houses breaking down doors. They would all wind up dead" (Forero 2005). In addition to the thousands of murders and many massacres, since 1985 CODHES (*Consultario Para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento*) estimates that over 5.1 million people have been internally displaced in Colombia with over 34% of the country's internally displaced persons (or IDPs) not officially registered and 25% of the applicants for the status of IDP turned down (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2011).

Colombia has endured one of the longest running internal armed conflicts in the world. The country's ability to protect its citizens is a source of grave concern as its 56-year armed conflict "has been characterized by repeated use of displacement, intimidation, kidnapping, killings and massacres as weapons of war" (Elhawary 2010: 389). The violence continually hinders the country's economy by creating an

unattractive investment climate, which has lowered employment generation rates and thwarted economic growth. Unable to free itself from poverty despite its abundance of natural resources and rich human endowments, many civilians suffer the symptoms of the country's armed conflict Marcelo 2003). The United Nations Human Security Trust Fund estimates that over 45,000 Colombians are registered as refugees or asylum seekers in neighboring countries while its internally displaced population places the country second only to Sudan. As I will discuss below, in recent years the levels of displacement and violence in the country have improved, but there are many problematic consequences of the approaches that have been taken to make these strides.   Colombians continue to face deep problems of insecurity and violence.

Álavro Uribe, Militarism and Democratic Security

In 2002, President Álavro Uribe, a former governor of Antioquia and national Senator, entered into the presidency promising to bring 'law and order' to the country through a series of military crackdowns against the left-wing guerilla groups (Rojas 2012). Uribe understood the internal armed conflict in Colombia to be one of 'terrorism vs. democracy' rather than as a civil war or an armed conflict. This approach led him to seeking militaristic rather then political tactics as a solution to the violence, in contrast to earlier Conservative Presidents such as Belisario Betancur and Andrés Pastrana who sought to end the armed conflict through negotiated settlements. Uribe's central policy innovation in the area of security was his 'Democratic Security Policy,' designed in 2002 and implemented across the eight years of his presidency. While he marketed the policy to the public as a means for guaranteeing the protection of citizens, Uribe utilized the Democratic Security Policy alongside Plan Colombia as a way to "protect the state and its

international backers against the threats posed by non-state armed groups, particularly guerilla and organized crime entities" (Elhawary 2010: 395). Uribe's prioritization of protecting the state over the citizenry is evident in his relatively soft approach in dealing with the paramilitary forces that historically support the interest of the state, in comparison to the left-wing guerilla groups who are declared enemies of the state (Elhawary 2010: 395). The Democratic Security Policy aimed to enhance the state's presence through a strengthening in military and police forces throughout the country with similar goals to Plan Colombia. In doing so, the primary target was tackling drug trafficking and defeating the left-wing guerillas while simultaneously working towards the demobilizing of the paramilitaries (Elhawary 2010: 394).

In certain areas, the Democratic Security Policy appears to have been successful. President Uribe was able to demobilize over 30,000 paramilitary combatants, who are infamous for their massacres and human rights abuses (Elhawary 2012: 394). At the same time, the FARC, (Colombia's largest and longest-standing left-wing guerilla group), is dwindling at its lowest numbers of combatants and has been pushed into peripheral areas of the country (International Crisis Group 2010). Between 2002 and 2008, the country's overall murder rate decreased by 44%, massacres by 68% and kidnappings by 88% (UNOHCHR 2010). For a nation that has endured more than a half-century of presidencies unable to end the armed conflict, these strides made under the first Álavaro Uribe administration were seen as a huge success and allowed for the president to be easily re-elected in 2006 under the new constitutional reform. In 2006, a new Colombian Constitution was passed that enabled Uribe to run for more successive terms within the electoral branch (Elhawary 2010).

I argue in this thesis that Uribe's focus on militarization as means of increasing security through his Democratic Security Policy has further worsened the state of *human* security in the country. Rather then solving the internal armed conflict by addressing the causes of the conflict (i.e., lack of economic opportunity, social inequality and lack of political associational space), the president has chosen to fight the symptoms of the conflict, including armed actors and social unrest. Issues of human security such as unequal land distribution, economic disparities, and poverty triggered the armed conflict and have in many ways given it the social and political fuel needed to burn over the past century. While certain issues of human insecurity, such as economic instability, inequality and limited association space, may have been the symptoms of the conflict, other issues of human security, mainly as direct and indirect threats, seemed to have been the main causes of displacement. Fear and threats posed by armed actors were more determining factors of internal displacement then forced recruitment or actual assassinations or massacres. This is demonstrated in the following chart where the main causes of displacement lies in issues of human security such as direct and indirect threats.
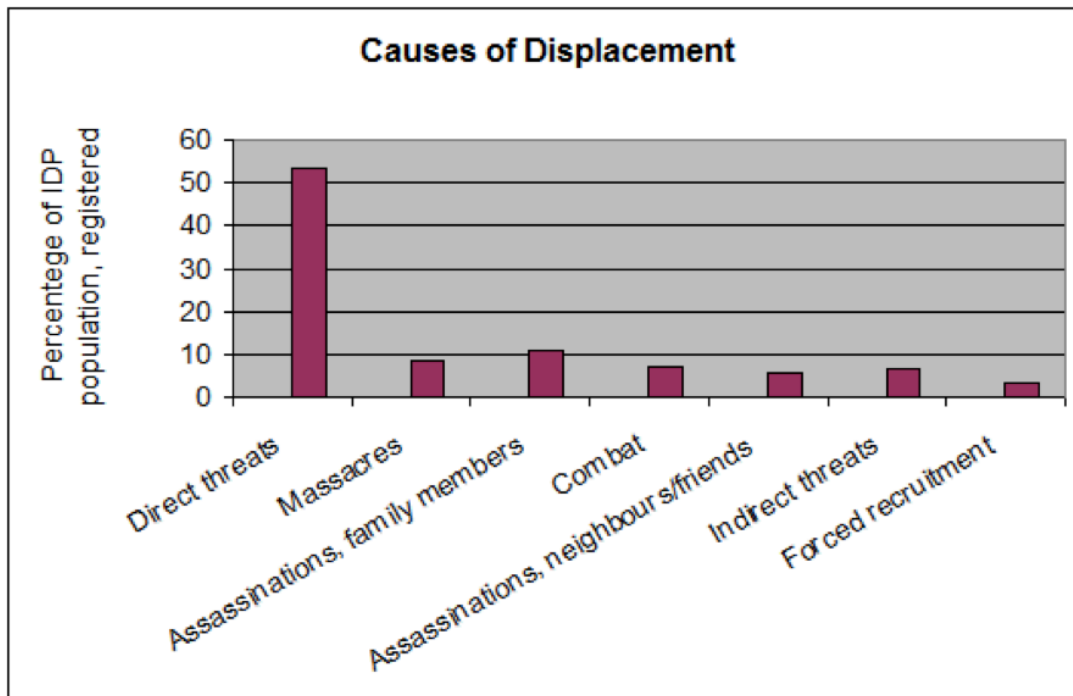
Causes of Displacement

Figure 1. Reference footnotes for citation. [1]

LIMPAL and Issues of Human Security

This research was originally structured around physical forms of insecurity and violence exercised by paramilitaries and guerilla groups, which was the focus of Uribe's Democratic Security Policy. However, my emphasis changed as a result of working with LIMPAL, an organization dedicated to working on projects that are "aimed at reducing violence against women [Gender-Based Violence or GBV] and encouraging women to live against the war and seek equality, justice and dignity of all" (LIMPAL 2012). I was able to conduct interviews with some of the women affiliated with LIMPAL regarding their definitions of and experience with "security." It became clear that the most prevalent feelings of insecurity in the communities were embedded in the social fabric of their lives. Most of the women of LIMPAL whom I interviewed and surveyed were IDPs,

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[1] http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/(httpEnvelopes)/80020A3EB11B4DFAC12575E5005649FB?OpenDocument#11.4.1

and some were living in settlement communities under the political control of paramilitary forces. The threat of armed violence is a dark cloud that hangs over their heads. Yet it was the inability to provide food or healthcare to their children, the inaccessibility of medical services and job opportunities, the pervasiveness of domestic abuse, and the lack of proper infrastructure such as street lighting, which were the main concerns that the women expressed.

The people whose voices echo in this thesis can be considered some of the most vulnerable Colombians: female, Afro-Colombian, displaced, living within or on the outskirts of paramilitary infiltrated territory and living in areas with high amounts of poverty. All five characteristics of the study population independently strengthen the legitimacy of my argument that human security supersedes state security and should be of top priority in countries with armed conflict because each places human beings in a position of marginalization. The five characteristics taken together categorize those who belong to the country's most physically, socially, economically and politically at risk population.

The Colombian case thus presents a paradox. In a country with a century-long armed conflict and one of the highest murder rates in the world, the absence of social services such as health care, subsidized food programs, and public lighting poses threats that are equal in significance to the more sensational threats that are posed by guns, kidnappings and physical coercion, as expressed by some of the most susceptible members of Colombian society to the threats of violence. This point is powerfully brought home in the example of San Jacinto, a community in which armed actors are not only still present, but instead of keeping a low profile, run for and win local government

positions. However, the majority of the participants in my interviews listed economic

independence from their spouses, food security and access to healthcare as the three

defining aspects of security for women in their community. Therefore, this thesis will

look to the Colombia case to exemplify an attempt to end an internal armed conflict

through a focus on traditional, hegemonic understandings of security, and it will critique

this tactic by focusing on the need for human security.

As human security has become a concept of increasing discussion among

scholars, NGOs and members of the international community, it is important to provide a

working definition for the concept within this thesis. This thesis will use the United

Nations Human Development Report's working definition of human security, which

defines it as a universal concern composed of "many threats that are common to all

people-such as unemployment, drugs, crime, pollution and human rights violations"

(Human Development Report 1994: 22). These human rights violations can include a

variety of issues ranging from famine, disease, ethnic disputes, poverty and social

disintegration. It is a humanistic concept, concerned with "how people live and breathe in

a society, how freely they exercise their many choices, how much access they have to

market and social opportunities--whether they live in conflict or in peace" (Human

Development Report 1994: 23).

Organization of the Thesis

In order to contextualize the argument I will be making, this thesis will start with

a background on the history of violence and insecurity in Colombia, leading to a

discussion of the current status of violence and insecurity in the country, and ending in a

description and analysis of Álavro Uribe's Democratic Security Policy which has been

the forefront of policy in Colombia for the last decade. I then present my theoretical

framework titled 'The Concept of Human Security' where I discuss the global concept of

human security in its historical context and the ways it is defined in terms of scope.

Related research and criticisms of the concept will be incorporated in order to situate this

thesis within the scholarly field of work surrounding issues of human security. Following

the theoretical framework section, I will present my methodology, including a discussion

of the communities studied, numbers of interviews and surveys conducted, and the

population demographics of the subjects who took part in the study. This thesis will end

with a discussion and analysis of the findings of the research and data collected in my

section, in order to connect my theoretical framework with the evidence I gathered in

Colombia.

THE HISTORY OF VIOLENCE AND INSECURITY IN COLOMBIA

Despite being one of the longest-standing democracies in Latin America, Colombia has faced a complex set of historical, political, social, and economic challenges at the regional, national and local levels that have resulted in one of the longest-standing internal armed conflicts in the modern world. While political forces undoubtedly drove the armed conflict at its birth, one can easily look to the grave extent of social and economic inequalities in the country during the 20th century and the ways in which they still exist today to explain why the armed conflict has been able to endure for the last century. Economic growth in the country has done little to reduce the extremely large gap between the upper class and the lower class in Colombia. In rural areas the level of people living in extreme poverty triple that of urban areas and land ownership continues to be highly concentrated. This section will outline key facets of Colombian history, politics, and society alongside displacement demographics to understand the complexity of security in Colombia.

The Roots of Violence and Insecurity in Colombia

In order to fully make sense of the modern day issues of security in Colombia, it is important to first understand how the political, social and economic history of the country has affected its modern institutions, politics and civil society. Colombia's ongoing internal conflict started with the decade of *La Violencia* between 1948 and 1958. The beginning of *La Violencia* is best marked by the assassination of the charismatic, reformist presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán on April 9, 1948 by members of the Conservative Party. In the following years, armed groups formed in support of the Liberal Party reforms in the rural areas of Colombia to resist Conservative measures that

would have eliminated ancestral privilege to land titles (Murillo 2004: 46). Throughout this decade, over 200,000 Colombians died in the inter-party dispute (Meija 2011). The war then ended with the signing of the National Front, which was created to divide political power evenly between the Liberals and Conservatives. The era of the National Front in Colombia placed restrictions on political competition and participation, as it was limited to the two dominant parties in the system. Because of limited associational space within the political arena, peasant-led left-wing guerilla groups started to mobilize outside of state institutions as a means of gaining political and social power within the country as "some groups and communities refused to hand in their weapons or recognize the political agreement" (Meija 2011: 63).

Social and Political Violence in Colombia

The current state of social violence in Colombia is characterized by failure to meet basic human rights, and the steady decline in the quality of life for those in poor urban areas and rural areas (Giugale 2002). Human capital in these areas has started to erode as violence directly limits access to education and healthcare while also hindering the state's ability to provide these services (Giugale 2002).   The country has one of the highest homicide rates in the world, 50 times that of a typical European country, and in 2003 (when the peak of the conflict had already passed), the rate was triple that of Brazil and Mexico (McIlwaine 2003). Ongoing forced displacement has caused male unemployment rates to increase by 28% in 1999 alone, thereby "reducing the capacity of many households to function effectively as a unit" (Giugale 2002: 47). These male unemployment rates in many areas coincide with increased alcohol abuse leading in turn to increases in reported domestic violence (Giugale 2002: 48).

The levels of violence in Colombia have dramatically affected social capital. In Colombian culture, society has long organized and sustained itself through the central structure of *la familia,* signifying intra-familial and community-based social networking. It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain the significance and relevance of *la familia* in the face of violence in Colombia. Trust and cooperation have started to diminish in communities where violence by armed actors is more prevalent, and the social composition of neighborhoods is disrupted by displacement and resettlement (Giugale 2002). Fragmented communities exist after years of continual internal displacement, with thousands departing from their communities of origin every year. In such fragmented communities, "policy solutions to the problems of violence and insecurity are less likely to be effective; they are likely to drive wedges between social groups and create distance between them" (Fruhiling 2003: 5).

The Dominant Discourse of Security in Colombia: Uribe's Seguridad Democrática

Implemented in 2002 after being elected, President Alvaro Uribe's Democratic Security Policy, *Seguridad Democrática,* has been emblematic of the government's strategy towards ending the internal armed conflict. As aforementioned, Uribe entered into the presidency unwilling to acknowledge the historical underpinnings of the internal armed conflict and thereby refusing to recognize the political and social elements of the armed conflict (Giugale 2005). In doing so, he chose to characterize the internal armed conflict as a battle between a few terrorists versus a democratic state (Giugale 2005). Uribe has strategically utilized the term "terrorist" in order to delegitimize the armed actors while at the same time emphasizing the state's push for and protection of "democracy," a strategy modeled after George w. Bush's "War on Terror" (Giugale

2005). As stated by Uribe, "[There is] no armed conflict [in Colombia]. There was armed conflict in other countries when insurgents fought against dictatorships. Here [in Colombia] there is no dictatorship; here there is a profound, complex democracy. What we have here is the challenge of a few terrorists" (Giugale 2005: 23). Despite the serious cases of state oppression and human rights violations, Uribe has been able to cloak state-sponsored oppression through the Democratic Security Policy under the guise of the War on Terror (Giugale 2005).

Uribe declared "the actions of the guerilla to be 'terrorism' and opted to continue the war against them while starting a one-sided peace process with the paramilitaries" under the Justice and Peace Law passed by his administration in 2005 (Meertens 2010: 152). International organizations, members of the Colombian civil society, and foreign governments have criticized the Democratic Security Policy for the manner in which paramilitaries are demobilized. Uribe's administration has set no minimum sentence for crimes against humanity, and many paramilitaries have been released without punishment (Giugale 2005). At the same time controversy has arisen as to the need for reparations, truth and justice on behalf of the victims of paramilitary-inflicted violence (Giugale 2005).

On December 10, 2003, Uribe's administration passed a constitutional reform that directly threatened the civil liberties of the Colombian people. First, the reform allowed for persons to be detained by the military for up to 36 hours without cause or due process. Second, it allowed for the military to keep tabs on the population through a registry of personal data. Third, it permitted the military to be able to intercept communication and search homes without a judicial order or warrant. And lastly, it granted judicial police

powers to the military where members of the military could interview suspects and collect evidence at the scene of a violent event, including those in which the military may have taken part in (Giugale 2005). These reforms, which facilitate and enable human rights violations while simultaneously voiding civil liberties, reflect the changed relationship between the state and its citizens (Giugale 2005). Those who have spoken against Uribe's Democratic Security have been confronted with verbal accusations by the president of being 'the intellectual bloc of the FARC' (Elhawary 2010). Uribe has ignored repeated recommendations by the UN High Commission for Human Rights and has violated international human rights agreements previously signed by the Colombian government (Giugale 2005). Therefore, it seems as though his "grand plans for 'Democratic Security' have left the Colombian population less secure than ever" (Giugale 2005: 24).
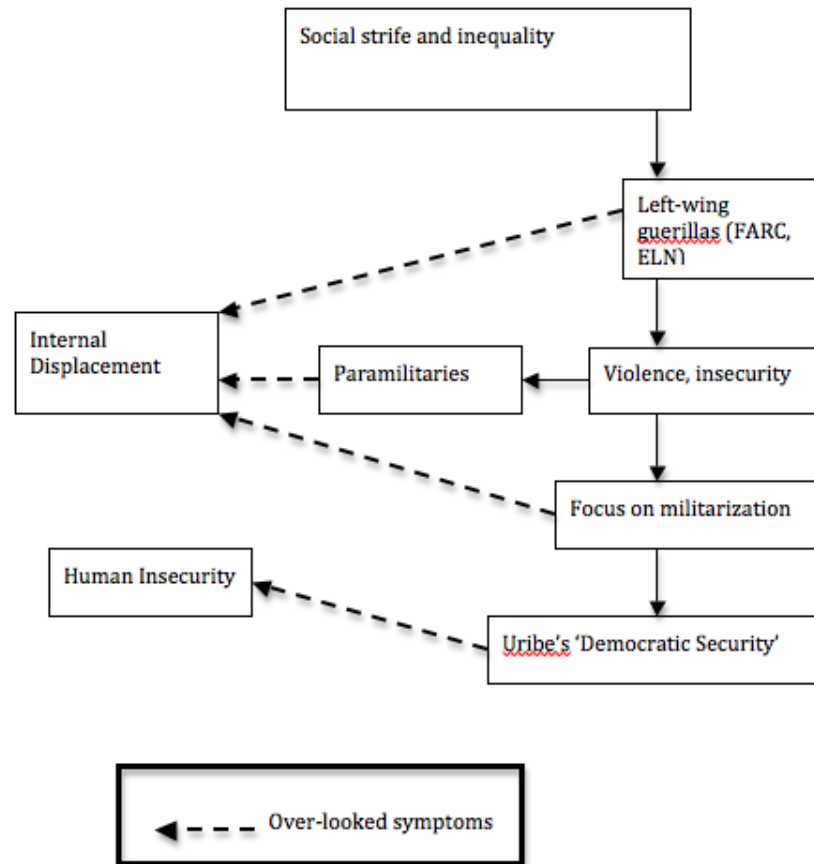
Uribe's 'Democratic Security' Paradigm

Figure 2.

Women, Afro-Colombians, the Impoverished and the Internally Displaced

Internal displacement is a multidimensional process that extends beyond the arrival in a new city and incorporates "legacies of the past and orientations towards the future" (Meerteens 2010: 133). It encompasses both the act of being and the act of doing and therefore embodies more than distance traveled, property lost and periods of unemployment. As in most cases of armed conflict, in Colombia there are certain populations that have suffered more deleterious consequences of the war due to their social and economic standing within society. As demonstrated in the following chart

constructed by the Colombian Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, Afro-

Colombians and indigenous persons make up a large portion of the displaced population

in Colombia, a disproportionate amount to that of their population size within the
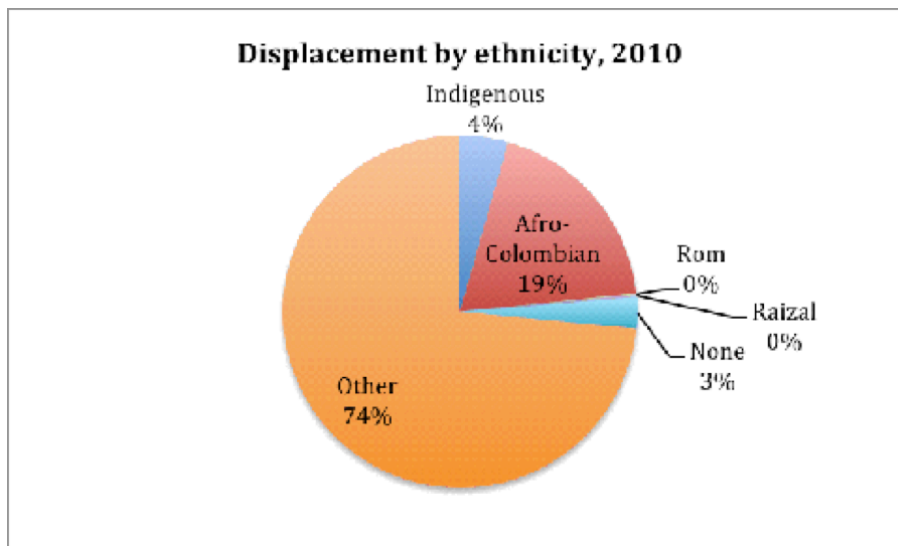
country's demography (2011).

Figure 3.

Colombian women, Afro-Colombians, and those living below the poverty line have all

been disproportionately affected by the internal armed conflict in Colombia. Around 70%

of the IDP population is composed of women and around 19% of the IDP population is

Afro-Colombian although they make up less then 5% of the country's total ethnic

population. The majority of the displacement in Colombia takes place within the rural

areas of the country where state control is weak and armed actors are able to mobilize in

and out of rural communities, forcibly recruiting some and massacring others. Therefore,

the rural, poor, female, Afro-Colombians and Indigenous in Colombia have

disproportionately borne the consequences of the internal armed conflict.

THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN SECURITY

The concept of security has traditionally been defined as the "security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interests in foreign policy or as global security from the threat of a nuclear holocaust" (Human Development Report 1994: 22). As the case in Colombia, the term is more synonymous with traditional security rather then the security of people as individuals. The concept of 'human security', as developed in the Human Development Report of 1994, seeks to explore a humanistic approach to understanding security. It understands human security to be a concept that embodies the concerns of ordinary people who seek security in their daily lives. Their concerns are legitimized within the concept and are understood to be as urgent and extreme to persons as physical and militaristic threats to security. This section discusses the concept of human security in its entirety. Starting with the development of the concept of human security and the primary document that established it as an international idea (the Human Development Report of 1994), it then analyzes of the concept in terms of its scope and the ways in which it is employed in relation to and in contrast with human development.

Development of the Term and Concept of Human Security

Human security embraces more than the absence of violence. It encompasses many differing goals and objectives ranging from good governance to access to education to health care "and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfill his or her own potential…Freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of the future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment" (Commission on Human Security). It is an ancient phenomenon dating back to historical plagues, wars,

enslavements, genocides, famines and floods. What has changed within the concept of human security are the fears, threats and insecurities within humans' lives and the institutional and structural possibilities of change.

Historically, human well-being has been understood to advance alongside economic growth (King 2001). The creation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund symbolize the focus of per capita income with the idea of security, as both bodies seek security through economic development. The basic needs movement emerged in the 1970's in response to the "dissatisfaction with improvements in the circumstances of the most impoverished nations and the plight of the poorest in all nations" and the insufficiency of measuring well-being by income (King 2001: 586). In the 1980's, many governments of countries with low levels of income per capita, such as India, Cuba, Sri Lanka and Costa Rica, started to recognize that income does not necessarily constitute all components of well-being. Academics, NGOs and policymakers started to explore new means of alleviating poverty and raising the well-being of the countries' most vulnerable populations (King 2001:586).

Reflecting such concerns, the United Nations' Human Development Report of 1990 argued, "Development must be focused on people (even though grouped by country) rather then the security of their national boundaries, and on advancing health, education and political freedom in addition to economic well-being" (King 2001: 587). Although the Report was referencing human development and not human security, this was the first stride in recognizing that human beings have universal needs that are at times separate from the needs of the state as a political and economic actor. Running parallel to human development, NGOs, international and national actors and academics started developing the concept of human security and the ways which it can be facilitated

in the modern world as a means to non-conflict resolution and poverty alleviation, particularly now that intra-state conflicts have became more prominent in the post-Cold War period.

Traditional views of security have focused on the security of the state (e.g. defense policy, foreign policy, and ways to win, prevent or avoid interstate disputes). As of 2001, an amount equivalent to 49% of the world's income was spent globally on military security (King 2001: 588). While at times these funds have undoubtedly helped to increase "the relative security of individual nations at times," the number of people who have died as a result of direct or indirect military conflict each year increased until 1990 (King 2001: 588). This exemplifies that even effective and successful examples of territorial security do not always facilitate the security of the country's citizenry (King 2001). Those who are proponents of human security understand the concept to include disease, natural disasters and hunger – all of which have killed, and have the capacity to kill, more people then terrorism, war and genocide combined (Human Security Report 2005).

In 1994, the United Nations Development Program released an innovative new Human Development Report, which focused almost exclusively on the concept of human security. The report outlined human security as embodying the following four characteristics: (1) it is universal; (2) its components are interdependent; (3) it is best ensured through prevention; and (4) it is people-centric. It proposed that the threats to human security could also be grouped into seven main categories: economic, health, personal, political, community, food and environment (King 2001: 589). Although these categories provide a structure for policy-makers and influencers, they only partially encompass the manifold aspects of human security (King 2001: 589).

The Definition of Human Security and the Vital Core

Some critics of human security point to the lack of a clear definitional space and its immeasurability on many levels as characteristics that can turn the concept into an inconsistent and overly broad one (King 2001). This has called into question the feasibility of the application of the concept within policymaking and academia (Paris 2001). Human security has at times been compared to 'sustainable development' – "where everyone is for it, but few people have a clear idea of what it actually means" (Paris 2001: 2). The broad concept includes anything from psychological well-being to natural disasters. This may call into question how policymakers are to prioritize competing policy goals and how academics are to have a sense of what is to be studied, yet the elasticity is exactly what empowers advocates of human security (Paris 2001). The concept allows for a coalition of academics, state actors, NGOs and development agencies to collaborate under the unifying idea that can encompass the varied perspectives and objectives of all actors within the coalition (Paris 2001). Therefore, the concept "unites a diverse and sometimes fractious coalition of states and organizations" (Paris 2001: page #).

Adherents of the broad scope and large definitional space of human security point not only to the coalition and inclusiveness that the term facilitates, but also to the problematic consequences of prioritizing the principles and goals implied by the term (Paris 2001). Not wanting to infringe upon the inclusiveness and holism conveyed by the concept, adherents have attempted to avoid prioritization within the definition by means of treating all objectives and interest in the concept as of equal validity (Paris 2001). Instead, adherents of the vague definition point to the value of judgments to formulate a

vital core of prioritized rights, freedoms, objectives and social services endemic to specific situations. While treating all objectives, interests, rights and freedoms within human security with equal validity is ideal, I argue that prioritization is necessary in order for the concept to be exercised effectively and realistically within political and organizational structures.

In order to address the issue of the vagueness of the definition of human security, the concept can be contained by definitional scope. While all proponents of human security acknowledge the primary goal of it to be the protection and well-being of individuals, not all aspects of humans' lives should necessarily be included in the term. Human security protects a limited vital core of elements of security for the human body and for the human as a societal actor. These may be variously described by "certain fundamental human rights, basic capabilities or absolute needs" (Alkire 2003: 3). Examples of the elements of the vital core of human security include "fundamental human rights which all persons and institutions are obliged to respect or provide, even if the obligations are not perfectly specifiable" (Alkire 2003: 3). These elements encompassed by the vital core are necessary for the securing of survival and livelihoods and for the obtaining of basic human dignity.

Assessing the vital core in situations in need of intervention allows for a valuable judgment to be made based in the prioritization of the values, objectives, rights and freedoms articulated by the full, broad definition of human security. In making these judgments there are "foreseeable tensions" such as participatory engagement, which may result in scrutiny of the "core" by those who have differing perceptions of what the core

should embody. In these cases the wide working, vague definition of human security

serves as "imperfect but operational in response to this tension" (Alkire 2003: 3).

Differing Scopes of Threats Within the Concept of Human Security

One of the main objectives of human security, which distinguishes it from human

rights and human development, is that the concept works to protect what is perceived to

be the vital core of people's lives from possible critical and pervasive threats (Alkire

2003). In understanding what is meant by 'threats' within the concept of human security

it is important to distinguish between the "adverse events in human life that are threats to

human security versus those that are merely bad news" (Alkire 2003: 29). I divide threats

into two categories: direct and indirect threats, and also further distinguish between

idiosyncratic versus covariant risks.

Direct security threats are intentional. They are conscious actions by a system,

group (guerilla groups or paramilitaries), or institution to directly threaten an individual

or group of persons. The groups that cause the threat can be agents of the state such as

police or military forces that violate human rights law or threaten human security.

Policies implemented by the state, which includes economic, social or political exclusion

of individuals or groups of persons, are also direct threats and can be understood as acts

of commission. Indirect threats differ in that they are less intentional and are by-products

of an action that are not always foreseen, although the action was initially taken for a

specific purpose. They are structured and caused by an institution, group or system and

therefore can be understood as an act of omission (Alkire 2003).

The classification of threats within human security can be further analyzed

through idiosyncratic risks and covariant risks. Idiosyncratic risks narrow the scope of the

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threat to an individual or a household such as a loss of property due to displacement or the unemployment of a key provider in the household. In contrast to idiosyncratic risks, covariant risks are those that affect groups ranging from the micro level (i.e., individuals, communities) to the macro level (i.e., regions, nations) (Alkire 2003). Examples of covariant micro risks include landslides, flooding, deforestation in the area, and unemployment in communities, while covariant macro risks can range from war to earthquakes.

Human Security and Human Development

Human security and human development have become synonymous concepts. Many critics of the term human security understand the two to be highly intertwined in both goals and objectives, rendering human security indistinguishable from its counterpart. Human development is best characterized by the opportunities of humans to expand their choices and freedoms per socio-economic policies, which focus on health, income and education; much of what is also encompassed in human security (Stewart 2004). While there are clear connections between human development and human security, the two concepts have different implications and those who adhere to either one have differing priorities and understandings of the processes that ensure the well-being of individuals. The two are intertwined in that human security contributes to placing the human being as the "end of development, not only as a means to increased economic productivity" because it is people-centric and shifts the focus to human rights and human development, away from instrumental objectives (Alkire 2003).

Both terms occupy the multi-dimensional conceptual space that highlights the importance of freedom, human rights and human choices. Yet they are remarkably

different in scope and purpose. Human development has a broader and more vague scope

as opposed to human security. While human security focuses on the aspects of

livelihoods that are necessary in order for human to sustain life and well-being, human

development focuses on individuals' opportunities and their ability to exercise freedoms

and rights through growth with equity. Human development relies more on the

infrastructure of society whereas human security exists in a realm beyond that of society

focused on "downturns with society". The purpose of human security is to guarantee that

a human's basic needs will be provided even in the case of a societal or economic

downturn (Alkire 2003).

RESEARCH METHODS

To undertake this study of human security in Colombia, I used a combination of interviews and surveys through the auspices of the Colombian non-governmental organization LIMPAL.

Interviews

Almost all interviews were recorded on a video camera. A group of women (all of whom were from San Jacinto) chose to either have the video camera point to the ground or to only be recorded by the voice recorder to avoid their identities being revealed. Fourteen open-ended interviews were conducted on video camera and two only by voice recorder. Sixteen percent of the women chose not to reveal their name or faces during the research process. All interviewees were asked the same open-ended questions allowing them to draw upon their own experiences to either answer the question or to utilize the question as an opportunity to discuss an experience or opinion that was brought to mind. Open-ended interviews allowed for these individuals to express information that they see relevant and important. At the same time having a structure to the interviews provided a more efficient framework as interviewees were guided along certain themes or subtopics, enabling the comparison of different answers to substantially similar questions. When women felt more comfortable participating in group settings, open-ended interviews were also used as a means to facilitate the group discussion. Two group interviews were done, one with three thirteen-year-old girls and another with three elderly women.

Interviews were conducted at LIMPAL's workshop (*talleres*) by fellow student Sophie Curtis and myself. Sophie and I attended almost every workshop LIMPAL held

in the regional area throughout our two months in Cartagena. We participated in some of

the group activities, assisted the women with extra help as needed and were in attendance

at all group discussions and lectures. Building relationships with the women of LIMPAL

outside of the interview process and attending and recording group discussions allowed

for a broader range of data collection. The process of interviewing the women took place

at the end of the workshops after we were introduced to the group. At the beginning of

each interview we explained to the women both of our intentions with the data we were

collecting and also that some of the video footage taken would be used to make a video

for LIMPAL. It was imperative that we explained the difference between the questions

we were asking for our own personal academic uses versus the questions that were being

asked on behalf of LIMPAL for their video. The questions asked for LIMPAL would be

used to compile a video to post on the organization's website and therefore the women's

faces and responses would be made public.

Surveys

Within the first two weeks of conducting interviews, our two mentors in the

organization, Paolo Mercado and Bexi Cruz Torra, introduced the idea of utilizing

surveys in some circumstances in order to give the women more anonymity and to

maximize time efficiency if the workshops ran long.   The survey created for my research

was a compilation of multiple choice questions, short answer questions and general

demographic information (such as name, date of birth, and place of origin). While the

idea seemed feasible at first, after conducting our first round of surveys I realized it had

placed some of the women who were illiterate in uncomfortable positions and forced

them to ask other women for help reading and answering the questions, some of which

were fairly personal. The surveys also subtracted from my ability to directly communicate with the women and build a sense of trust before asking them to reveal experiences and opinions, which could be emotional, personal and embarrassing for them in some circumstances.   Over thirteen surveys were conducted and from then on, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and personal narrative were strictly used via voice recorder or video camera.

Study Population

Twenty-nine women participated in the study through either on camera interviews or surveys.   All of the studied populations were females between the ages of 13-86. While the majority of the participants in the workshops were Afro-Colombian, the women in charge of organizing the workshops were *mestiza*. All of the women considered themselves either an IDP or directly affected by displacement through the displacement of their parents, children, spouse or other close family members, which may have resulted in their later displacement. And all the women spoke Spanish fluently while an unknown number were illiterate.

This study was conducted in the Caribbean coastal region of Colombia. Most of the communities where research took place are neighborhoods (*barrios*) within the city of Cartagena or in the surrounding area. These barrios include San Jacinto, San Jose de Companos, Chinquiquira, Libano and San Juan Betulia. Although these were the locations of the workshops where the interviews and surveys took place, the majority of the women had traveled to these locales from other neighborhoods. Thirty percent of the women who participated were from San Jacinto while the rest were from neighborhoods in the surrounding areas including Boston, Líbano, San Juan Betulia, del Carmen de

Bolivar, Sucre, Chocana and San Jose de los Companos. San Jacinto is a dominant locale in the research due to the high number of participants in the research who reside there and the city's unique experiences with armed actors and current paramilitary infiltration of the local governing system.

Possible Limitations of the Study

One potential weakness of this study pertains to the context in which women were interviewed. The women interviewed were all affiliated with the organization of LIMPAL and most regularly attended the workshops where they learned about issues of violence and security. Because these women had been subject to the organization's empowerment and educational agendas, one can assume that their prior knowledge weighed into the terminology they used in their responses during the interviews. For example, although the workshops were based around empowerment, awareness and togetherness for the women of the communities, the women were taught certain terminologies they had not been exposed to before, such as 'domestic abuse.' A few of the leaders of LIMPAL noted that many of the women did not have prior knowledge that being forced to engage in sexual intercourse with one's spouse or physical and emotional violence by one's spouse are issues of 'abuse' and more specifically GBV and domestic abuse. While the exposure to certain terminologies may have affected the way the women chose to articulate their experience and may have helped them recognize unjust forms of violence and insecurity in their lives, their experiences and opinions are still their own.

Another possible limitation of the study is the two-month period; six weeks were spent in the city of Cartagena working with LIMPAL. Significant relationships could not be built in the short time span and only seven workshops were attended. Association

with the organization of LIMPAL limited the study as the interviews and interactions with the women were constrained to the organizations designated spaces and time allowance. Because of the sensitive situation of IDPs in Colombia and their vulnerability as targets of armed groups, trust and confidence between IDPs and persons they don't know who are conducting research is essential. While LIMPAL helped to establish these relationships, the relationships between the women and myself were restricted to the space of the workshops and the time allotted for interviews at the end of the workshops.

THE NEED FOR THE PRIORITIZATION OF HUMAN SECURITY IN
COLOMBIA

In this section, I present the original research collected through surveys and interviews, which support my main argument that human security is of vital importance as it can encompass embodied, structural and inter-personal elements vital to livelihood. I will show that even in a country with profound physical threats posed by rebel armed groups, paramilitary forces, often abusive military and police institutions, and drug traffickers, basic human needs should be a top priority for policymakers just as it is to the country's most vulnerable populations. This section is organized around what I argue are the three defining dimensions of the concept of human security: embodied elements (food security, health, psychological well-being and internal displacement); structural elements (internal displacement, economic dependency, human rights, poor infrastructure, and illiteracy); and inter-personal elements (intra-family violence, social capital, community security).

Theoretically all eleven elements of human security analyzed in this section are interwoven and dependent upon one another to create human security within a society. When analyzing these elements I have chosen to disaggregate them through a process of prioritization where I start with embodied elements of human security since they refer to the vital and biological needs of the human body in order to survive in any given environment. I will then move into structural elements of human security given that they directly affect an individual's ability to obtain or exercise their embodied elements within a society. And last I will discuss inter-personal threats to human security as they affect an individual's ability to comfortably operate within both their bodies' and society. The

disaggregation of the elements of human security into analytical categories provides a scope for the concept while also making it more comprehensible. At the same time it is important to recognize that this disaggregation of the elements does not ignore the dependent relationship between many elements of human security. It seeks to provide structure to their interconnectivity by first grouping the elements through analytical similarities, such as where they are insecurities imposed upon the biological body, imposed through structural means or through inter-personal relations. It then provides further structure through prioritizing these analytical categories not to separate them, but to realize that human security encompasses a series of processes and prioritizations within those processes. Certain elements cannot be secured without the securing of others that prelude them urgency. Solving issues of illiteracy and poor infrastructure within a society can only be done if individuals within that society have some level of food security or health security. An individual cannot be expected to learn to read without food in their stomach; just as having enough food to eat has only a minimal impact if you do not have a place to sleep at night. Therefore, the disaggregation of the elements of human security stresses the need for comprehensive approaches to human security that are "cooperative and multi-sectoral response that bring together agendas", rather than fragmented and piecemeal (UNTFHS 2009: 8). Below, the data collected is presented through a chart organized by both the individual elements of human security mentioned by the women and the three analytical categories proposed by this thesis.
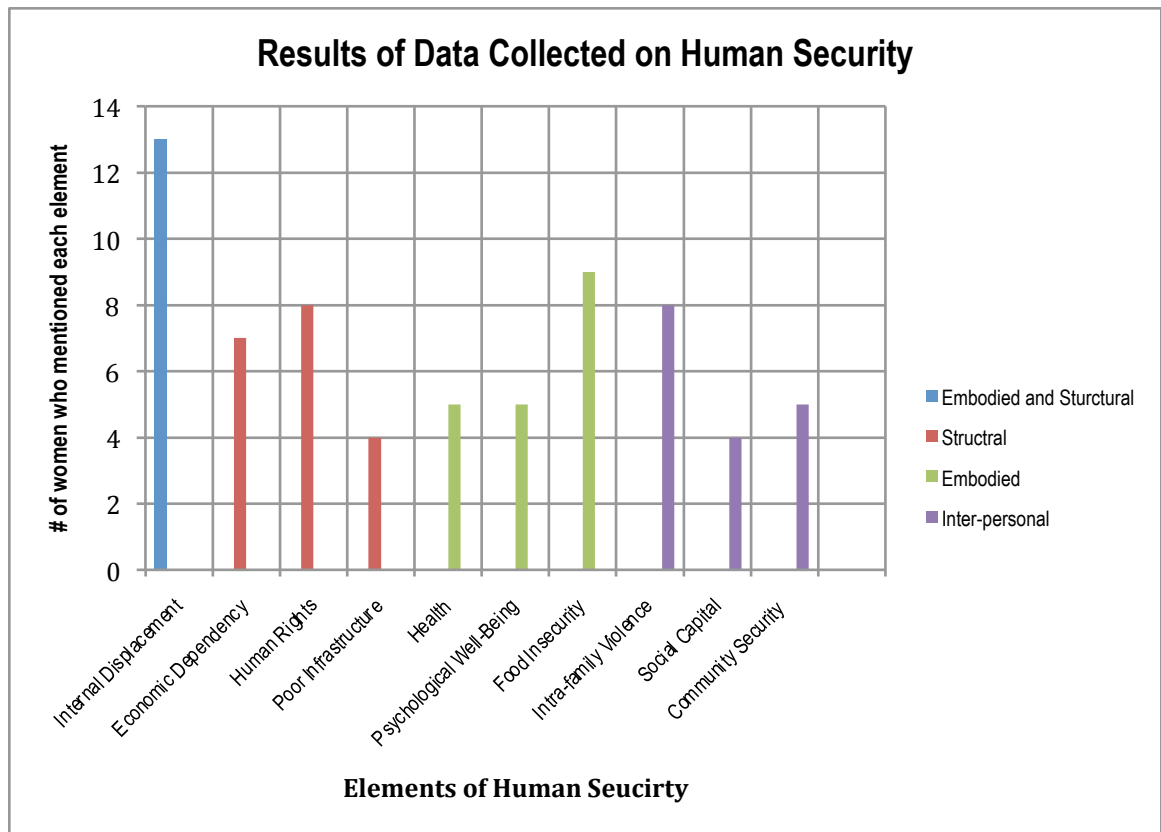
Results of Data Collected on Human Security

Figure 4.

Embodied Elements of Human Security

For purposes of this thesis embodied elements of human security can be understood as the vital needs of the biological body in order to survive within a given environment. The threats posed to embodied elements should be understood to be grave, and basic to obtaining all other elements of human security. Without the functioning and the life of the body, structural and inter-human securities for the human that is the body cannot exist. Given that majority of the data collected points to internal displacement, food security, health and psychological well-being as the strongest embodied threats to human security within the study population, these threats will encompass the definition of embodied elements of human security within the context of this paper and argument.

Internal Displacement

Internal displacement can be understood as the source for the embodied and structural threats experienced by the study population. Where internal displacement is a by-product of the internal armed conflict and Uribe's Democratic Security Policy, the other embodied elements of human security are by-products of internal displacement. Food security, health and psychological well-being were all discussed as threats women faced in direct correlation with their status as IDPs. The mutual relationship between internal displacement and the dwindling of humans' basic needs in order to biologically survive have long been of concern to human rights activists. In similar cases to Colombia, such as Burma, where the country has experienced high levels of internal displacement combined with high levels of militarization, the United Nations Refugee Agency has recognized the direct linkages between a lack of food security and internally displaced persons, recognizing that it is "a daily reality" for IDPs (UNHCR 2003: 1). Within the element of food security, women contrasted their current situation with food insecurity to their former ability to provide enough food for themselves and their children before displacement. As it will be later addressed in the following section, the inaccessibility of arable land for cultivation, the inability to trade crops with persons in their community, and the exorbitant food prices at the local market were all new threats that the women faced that were not problems in their communities of origin.

The psychological well-being of IDP post-displacement is also of grave concern. The experiences of "fleeing and subsequent post-migration tribulations have been found to affect the psychological well-being of forcefully displaced populations" which have been found to result in "severe and lasting psychological effects" (Rosseel 2010: 1097).

These affects range from anxiety disorders, behavioral problems, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Rosseel 2010). As will also be further discussed, none of the women in the study led me to think that they suffered from any of these particular mental health symptoms, yet they have certainly confronted psychological challenges and lasting memories of displacement and food insecurity, as well as the lack of justice or reparation served for those who have committed wrongs against them.

Food Security

"To me, security is…is when we have everything we need, when we don't need anything, when we have a livelihood. For example, food security" (Interview #31).

In 1996 the World Food Summit recognized that it was every human's fundamental right to be free from hunger (UNHCR 2003). Some right-based proponents to food security understand "human rights and fundamental freedoms including the right to development, democracy and the rule of law…are essential for food security" (UNHCR 2003: 9). This sentiment is highly appropriate for Colombia. Uribe has attempted to create food security through policies aimed at development and democracy, which has resulted in his disregard for the fundamental human right to adequate food, leaving 6 million Colombians without food security (Giraldo: 2011). The two core concepts of food security are based in the availability of the food and the accessibility of the food (UNHCR 2003). Hunger and famine are the most common and most evident threat posed by issues of food insecurity. Furthermore, it is important to understand that food security does not refer directly to a shortage of food supply within a country or population but rather "inequality and the deprivation of entitlements to access food," demonstrating the inextricable connection to other elements of human security (UNHCR

2003: 10). In most countries, such as Colombia, national food supplies are sufficient for the population size. Thus, issues of food insecurity address a lack of food entitlement and accessibility. Availability encompasses the supply and production of the food whereby accessibility can be understood to relate to the "entitlement for acquisition" of the food (UNHCR 2003). Adequacy is also taken into account for cultural and economic terms in relation to nutritional requirements as what constitutes as an 'adequate' supply of food can be defined subjectively.

For many of the women in the communities I studied, food security and the ability to provide their children with a sufficient supply of sustenance was of top concern. Issues of food security place fears and threats upon the communities that it affects as it calls into question the ability to obtain life in the near future and the biological health of not only themselves, but those dependent upon their access to food (i.e., children, elders). Overall, women referred to three main factors leading to food insecurity within their communities and their nuclear families. The three factors include: changing sources of their food after displacement, high prices of food and no access to land in their new localities, and economic dependency on their spouses.

Many women who have been internally displaced referenced the change in food sources from before they were internally displaced to after displacement. Five internally displaced women cited food security to be a new issue within their families' that arose post-displacement. One woman, internally displaced and living in San Jacinto, explained that she used to part take in crop exchanges within her community, exchanging one type of vegetable or livestock for another so that there was always a variety of food available (Interview #13). A system of crop exchange as described by the woman is not only a

means to placing variety in the diet but a way to generate social capital, which in turn generates security for tomorrow. The basic premise for food exchanges within rural communities is that sharing mitigates variability in food acquisition; generalized reciprocity enables households to spread the risk of not having enough. For example, if your neighbor is short on *yuca*[2] and you give them some of yours, tomorrow when you do not have enough milk, you can almost be certain they will give you some of theirs.

The other four women juxtaposed food security in their community of origin where their families' cultivated their own crops as opposed to Cartagena where now they must buy all the food they from the market. One of the women talked of how her family used to grow all their own food, mostly *yuca* and *maíz*[3], and could sustain themselves off their land in the following words:

> When we lived in the countryside my dad would cultivate crops on our land and he could provide the food for the house. Now its much more difficult after displacement. Now here, my dad doesn't access to land. Now our economic situation is much more difficult. When we lived in the countryside we had yucca and yamis and if you needed to buy food it wasn't that expensive, but here it is so expensive. Yes, this situation is so difficult. And if one doesn't have food to eat, what are they supposed to do? (Interview #44)

In both these cases, the women remarked about the high food prices in Cartagena, unemployment and lack of land ownership to cultivate enough crops, and insufficient livestock for their families as issues that arose post-displacement. Of the fourteen internally displaced women surveyed, none of them cited insufficient food or water supply in their previous communities as issues that contributed to their displacement.

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[2] Yuca (*Manihot esculenta*) is a popularly cultivated plant in South America that is high in carbohydrates and a staple to many diets.

[3] Maíz is the Spanish word for corn (*Zea mays*). Like yuca, it is also a staple food for many people in Latin America.

Therefore, the issue of food security became most problematic post-displacement. It is an issue that arose from displacement and consequently is a result of not only the armed conflict but also the ways in which people responded to the conflict.

Second, women referenced the high food prices in the region in comparison to the food prices they paid in their home of origin. One internally displaced woman living in San Jacinto first reminisced on when she used to be able to grow her own food and then reflected on her current situation where now she has times when she must choose between buying food or clothing for herself and her children (Interview #13). Unemployment and lack of access to land access were cited as issues that created food insecurity in addition to high food prices the communities. If people cannot find employment and do not have access to land to cultivate their own food supply, then they cannot afford to pay the high prices for food from the market.

Third, economic dependency was of issue for women who felt that economic dependence upon their husbands meant that their children's food supply and their own were at risk. None of the women openly discussed domestic abuse as an explanation for why economic and food dependency on their husbands was an issue of security. But issues with economic dependency could be tied directly into issues of domestic and sexual abuse by their spouses, which almost all women listed as an issue of security in their communities. The women understood economic dependency as an issue that directly correlated to food security where they alone did not have the power to provide sustenance to their children or themselves, and have to rely on their husbands' employment and income. An essential part of human security that differentiates it from much of the humanitarian work conducted around the world is the emphasis on human dignity and the

ability for all human to have access to the things necessary to sustain life independently. Economic dependency in all aspects, but especially that of food security, infringes upon this vital component of the concept where women must rely on an outside source apart from themselves for their sustenance to maintain life.

Health

"To me, security means health. That there is a access to health care services" *(anonymous woman, San Jacino).*

Since 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human rights has acknowledged the right of every human being to adequate health and well-being of the individual and their family through not only food, clothes and housing but also medical care and treatment (Aginam 2011). A lack of health security through inaccessibility and low-quality health care services poses the threats of unsafe food, malnutrition, and deadly infectious diseases while "the burden of health problems, disease, hunger, starvation and death lies heaviest on vulnerable groups who are least able to afford medical treatment and preventative measures" (Aginam 2011). Health is essential to human security and can be assessed as part of the vital core in almost any context. It is essential because the purpose of security is to protect human lives both objectively through the physical body and subjectively through psychological well-being. Health is instrumental to human security and dignity in that it enables persons to look ahead to the future and make plans, to exercise choice and to seek social opportunities.

The study population demonstrated a clear awareness as to the critical nature of health within the realm of security as they explained health within the context of other elements. In discussing food security within their daily lives, many women connected it

to health, understanding that "if you don't feed yourself well, you will not be healthy" (Interview #43). Thus the women themselves were drawing the interconnectivity of aspects of human security where the insecurity of one element, such as food leads to the insecurity of another element, such as health. Another example of this was the discussion of the relationship between structural issues, such as unemployment and economic dependency, where one woman explained that her children are not well fed and healthy if she cannot pay for meat (Interview #18). Another women, a LIMPAL leader of women in her community of San Juan de los Campanos, acknowledged health issues within her community not only as an issue of security but also as a form of violence against women. She referred to the difference between the threats posed in the public and private environment. First stating that in the private environment, within the home, women are physically abused, while in the public environment they face equal humiliation and threats through the lack of proper infrastructure to serve their health needs as women. She stated that in "the environment of health there is a certain type of violence. The women don't have access to health care or services, because of this they don't have access to justice" (Interview #5).

Psychological Health

"Security? I am a displaced women, I have lived through displacement and there, during displacement, you see death, you see violation, you see a lot of pain everywhere. And still today… I can see all the blood" (Interview #31).

Some leading scholars in the field of human security have acknowledged psychological health as a vital part of human security (Paris 2001; Mels 2010). They see the implications that psychological well-being has on individuals as part of their ability to

control certain fears and threats. As aforementioned, internally displaced populations such as the study population for this thesis, have received specific attention surrounding the issue of psychological well-being. This is due to the impacts of war, violence, and the lived experiences that caused for the forced internal migration as well as the post-migration tribulations (Mels 2010). For women who have been witnesses to the violence of the internal armed conflict and are displaced, their sense of security is not only impacted by the death, violence, and bloodshed they have seen but also by the insecurities that internal displacement has generated within their lives such as food insecurity and a lack of reparation or justice served for those who caused their displacement.

One woman recalled the atrocities she witnessed during the height of the armed conflict and commented on how she still lives through her memories of it today (Interview #31). Not only does she recall the death, violation and pain of the things she witnessed but she states that she can still "see all the blood," as if she is still living within her own memories (Interview #31). Another women, a female leader from her community, listed justice and reparation for the displaced as a aspect of security that has prevented them from being able to move past the conflict (Interview #5). Many paramilitaries who have taken the lives of hundreds, and displaced millions, have been demobilized without punishment in Colombia. The knowledge of such atrocities and justices left not served creates sentiments of looming fears and threats in these communities. First it creates a sentiment of foreboding as though the state, which is supposed to be protecting its citizenry from such atrocities, lets such violent actions go unpunished which then poses a threat to the communities and a fear for the future. In a similar way, witnessing such violent actions pass without persecution from the state or

any reparations paid to the perpetrators make such events seem more viable to happen again in the future. These lived experiences by the women affect their sense of security in their present lives because of the fears and threats imposed by others onto their own livelihood.

Structural Elements of Human Security

Structural elements of human security can be understood as the threats and fears placed upon individuals that affect their ability to operate and live within certain social, economic or political structures. The threats posed by structural elements of human security are indirect, like the embodied elements of human security in that they are also by-products of internal displacement. Internal displacement affects the ability not only to sustain and embody life, but also to maintain a livelihood. In order to contextualize structural challenges faced this study population and, this aspect of human security will be divided into the topics of internal displacement, economic dependence and unemployment, poor infrastructure, environmental hazards, illiteracy and human rights.

Internal Displacement

Although internal displacement within the context of the embodied dimensions of human security has already been discussed, it is important to also recognize the ways in which internal displacement penetrates every aspect of the society. It is a force that infiltrates the body through the control of all elements necessary to sustain life, yet also affects all social, economic and political elements one's relation to and placement within society. Therefore it can be understood as a structural threat in that it has bearings on the components of an individual's relationship to society.

Economic dependence

Economic dependency and unemployment are structural elements of human security. Economics (such as financial capital) are often the gateway for individuals to protect themselves from threats to the embodied elements of human security, such as a proper and adequate food supply. Economic activity is what links the individual to the tools necessary in order to strive within society. Therefore issues such as women's economic dependency upon their spouses and unemployment of the primary providers of the household are threats posed to the structural dimensions of their human security. It directly affects the ability to actively participate in society as an economic, social and political entity whereby without the economic tools necessary, individuals cannot sustain livelihood nor participate in the market. The concept of human security "stresses that people should be able to take care of themselves: all people should have the ability to meet their most essential needs and to earn their own living" (Human Development Report 1994: 25). Often during financial hardships resulting from internal displacement, the poorest and most vulnerable populations cannot survive even a short period without some sort of income to provide for themselves, and therefore reliance on family support is often vital (Human Development Report 1994).

Economic dependence and unemployment were of top concern to the study population. It came only second to displacement and food security in the order of how many women discussed it as an issue of security. Almost all women who referenced economic dependency and unemployment as an issue of security remarked on its interconnectivity with almost all other aspects of human security, such as food security, adequate housing, access to health care, and ability to cope with change after

displacement. Women were mainly concerned with their economic dependency upon their spouses, their spouses' inability to find adequate employment nearby and their own inability to find employment or generate a livable income when "there isn't any employment" (Interview #31).

Unemployment

In listing their top three defining aspects of security, seven women mentioned economic independence and the ability to find employment. One woman remarked on the "impotency" in the job market that her husband faced when the best job he could find was working in the field for ten pesos a day (Interview #40). She utilizes the term impotency as synonymous with the hopeless and destitute situation of employment in her community in the following words:

> "This situation is impotent, and this impotency, it affects many because at the least, if you travel to a displaced community like this one, everything is so difficult. If you come to a place where no one has a job, there is a sentiment of impotency about employment, and this is what generates insecurity" (Interview #40).

Hopelessness and destitution contrast a key component of human security, which ensures individuals opportunities for tomorrow, and the security that they will not disappear the day after (Human Development Report 1994).

A group of a few women referenced the change from before displacement to after displacement in relation to their economic situation. Being forced to work within the handicraft (*artesanía*) business in Cartagena because it is one of the only forms of employment women can find was cited as an issue of security by women. One woman spoke about her previous domestic and agricultural work, jobs she found value in because they directly benefited her family. When this was no longer possible due to displacement,

she exclaimed her frustration with being forced to work in a business (*astesanía*) that she did not see value in but upon which she is now dependent. As outlined by the Human Development Report of 1994, a component of economic security is persons in Third World countries being forced to "accept any work they can find, however unproductive or badly paid" (Human Development Report 1994: 25). Another internally displaced women commented on how their was never a shortage of jobs in her old community, someone always needed a helping hand somewhere but now there are too many people searching for jobs in the area of Cartagena (Interview #13).

Poor Infrastructure

"A secure place? A secure place would be a roof for me to live under, that's security. Because if I didn't have a place to live, what would I do?" (Interview #41).

For purposes of this thesis, infrastructure refers to physical infrastructure, such as civilian property or societal structures. For the women interviewed, the existence of poor infrastructure and a lack of housing make evident the true lack of vital resources in these communities. In one interview, an internally displaced woman from San Jacinto listed a "safe space" as one of her three defining elements of human security. As demonstrated in the opening quote to this section, when I asked her to define what a safe space meant, she referred to a place to live with a roof over her head (Interview #41). Thus, the woman was deeply concerned with having a place to sleep at night and shelter throughout the day -- despite the reality that indentified armed groups were still present in her community. A safe space to her was a house, not necessarily a place void of physical threats.

Environmental Hazards

Environmental hazards are becoming an increasing concern to adherents of human security as local ecosystems and the global system are undergoing environmental degradation due to a rapid population increase and intensive industrialization (Human Development Report 1994). For 'developing' countries such as Colombia, issues of water scarcity and deforestation are common. Human security focuses on access and distribution of these resources that are vital to life, such as water, rather then the abundance of the resource. It is the threat of not having access to water today, and the fear and possibility of not having access tomorrow, that is of main concern. One woman listed clean and available water as a main issue of security within San Jacinto, commenting on her inability to do any chores around her house or feed her children without it (Interview #11). Environmental hazards are faced most often in impoverished areas where "risk and vulnerability to poverty-related health threats are compounded by environmental threats, especially the lack of clean drinking water and sanitation" (Commission on Human Security 2003: 99).

While visiting San Jacinto, I had taken note of the issue of a clean water supply when visiting three different homes of women who did not have running water and were reliant on rain water bins for drinking, cleaning and cooking. At the same time, outside of San Jacinto in other communities based around the hillsides of Cartagena, many of the women were living in areas prone to flooding. There, a small amount of rain in the morning would prohibit them from being able to travel to the site of LIMAPL's workshops or at times even to leave their homes. Persons who are able to afford land in more stable environments would consider these areas inhabitable.

Illiteracy

Intrinsic value is found in basic education where individuals' quality of life is improved through their ability to write and read. Illiteracy not only impedes upon an individuals ability to continue their daily life as an active citizen within their society but also affects their human dignity (Tadijbakhsh 2007). As previously discussed, a defining characteristic between human security and human development is that individuals can be assured the continuation of daily life and the dignity of their being (Tadijbakhsh 2007). Instrumental to the concept of human security is people abilities to act on their own behalf and illiteracy in our modern world can threaten this sense of human security. Illiteracy imposes threats upon individuals who cannot "read public notices or bus signs, utility bills or newspapers, letters or street signs, wills or loan applications" as they are forced to seek help in others, whom they can confide in and trust for some matters which they cannot complete on their own (Commission on Human Secuirty 2003: 115). It hinders their ability to obtain control over all aspects of their lives and to freely express themselves through knowledge, and debate. Hence, in many ways illiteracy prevents individuals from promoting their own human security and the human security of those around them.

At the same time, illiteracy affects other elements of human security such as employment (economic stability) and health. Education helps to improve the economic prospects for an individual within Latin American society where literacy is more important now than ever before in the job market. Therefore illiteracy poses the threat of unemployment and economic instability where individuals are forced to take jobs for low pay that do not require literacy, such as working out in the fields. Illiteracy also imposes

health threats where it hinders an individual's ability to obtain knowledge about sanitation, immunization, prevention, and nutrition. If individuals are unable to educate themselves about infectious diseases, proper sanitation tactics or medical instructions, they are most susceptible to health risks. While none of the women were actively questioned about their literacy, an unknown majority were unable to read or write when surveys were passed out during a trial period of my methodology.

Human Rights

"*Your rights give you more security. They always talk about human rights, but they are always violated*" (Interview #19)

Although human rights do not operate within the same economic or political realms as the aforementioned elements that are structural, they are implemented and protected by a governmental structure unto its citizens (Boyle 2004). While human security stresses the importance of human rights, the two are differing concepts with separate functions. They are mutually reinforced as "human security helps identify the rights at stake in a particular situation… human rights helps answer the question: How should human security be promoted?" (Boyle 2004: 5). Human rights encompass rights to education, housing, health and food, while the freedom to enjoy such rights without the threat or worry of lacking in any of them is human security (Boyle 2004). As stated in the Human Development Report (1994: 32), "one of the most important aspects of humans security is that people should be able to live in a society that honours their basic human rights." The vital core of human security can be understood to be the fundamental human rights that are basic to human life and the violation of human rights poses threats upon individuals' security (Alkire 2003).

The women constantly mentioned human rights. Throughout the interviews, they kept listing "my human rights" as one of their three defining aspects of human security. I started to ask them what human rights to meant to them and how it would improve their lives. Women cited the empowerment one gets from having rights; whether they are violated or respected, having human rights makes them feel more powerful. The empowerment and thus dignity awarded to these women through their human rights creates a basis for human security where their fears and threats become managed through the understanding that they have rights and abusers of those rights are in violation of the law. Overall, eight women listed human rights as a defining aspect of human security and five women distinguished between having human rights and knowing about them. In comparison to other defining aspects of human security, human rights were one of the most discussed among then women. In referring to human rights, the women listed entitlements to a food supply, clean water supply, clothing or housing yet more consistently referred to being able to speak their mind, to participate politically, and to be included in socio-political processes in the community. These were all entitlements that the women also listed as issues of insecurity in their community. Therefore, many of their human rights were being violated and now providing or protected by the state. The violation of human rights directly coincides with human insecurities, where human rights are not being met human security dwindles.

Inter-Personal Elements of Human Security

Inter-personal elements of human security are the threats and fears imposed by one human being upon another. They encompass both embodied elements and structural elements in that they are based upon the interaction between two societal, biological

beings. Crime rates, incidents of sexual abuse, spousal violence, abuse of the elderly, abuse of children, and gender-based violence increase during conflicts and immediately following conflicts (Commission on Human Security 2003). An increase in general insecurity usually results in an intensification of the threats posed by inter-personal relationships as violence generates violence. The anger, bitterness and resentment generated by some in post-displacement who have not received reparations or justice permeates into other aspects of their lives. Inter-personal relationships and community networks are affected by the traumas faced during conflict and "from the broader issues of the breakdown of law and order, the police and judicial systems and health and education services, as well as the loss of legitimacy of social and ethical norms" (Commission on Human Security 2003: 23). Within the context of this research and thus, the argument being made, inter-personal elements of human security will be defined as intra-family violence, social capital and community security.

Intra-family Violence

"When talking of security, I start with the family because my partner, the father of my kids, treats me so bad. I am a woman who has suffered a lot because of him. After displacement he always treated me bad. Then ultimately, with LIMPAL, I started to know my rights, and understand that it was not okay" (Interview #16).

After the meeting of the body's biological needs to sustain life, one of the most vital aspects of human security is the protection from blatant, physical violence (Human Development Report 1994). When human life is threatened by unpredictable, sudden acts of violence such as threats against women (e.g. rape, domestic violence), it is an issue of human security. Although thus far in the thesis the focus has been upon forms of

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human security that confront more institutional and gradual forms of violence, such as poverty, hunger, and health issues, it is also important to acknowledge physical forms of violence which implicate threats upon women. The incorporation of threats and fears into the concept of security is one of the core characteristics of the concept that distinguishes it from other concepts, such as human development and state security.

As mentioned earlier, *la familia* is a pivotal concept in Latin American countries such as Colombia. An often over-looked sector of human security takes place within the family home and within the family structure. In Colombia intra-family violence is prevalent (McIlwaine 2003). It is "not only widespread, but also perceived by many of its victims as the root cause of all other types of insecurity in communities with manifold ramifications as the how the communities function" (McIlwaine 2003: 120). As stated by a young boy living in Bogotá, "Violence begins in the home, and it is one of the most important factors in the harmony of the community" (McIlwaine 2003: 120). Intra-family violence was of great concern to the study population as eight women listed it as one of their three aspects of security. One woman referenced spousal abuse as the most relevant form of insecurity for women in San Jacinto, the community she lived in.

Social Capital

"In this city, there is less security because one doesn't know who they are living with. There are people who you don't know, and because of this, I imagine that it is very insecure here, because you don't know what kind of person is next to you" (Interview #19).

Social capital can be understood as the "rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity, and trust embedded in social relations, social structures, and societies institutional

arrangements that enable its members to achieve its individual and communal objectives (McIlwaine 2003: 119). Internal displacement highly affected the study population's social capital as women felt threatened by the fact that they are now living next door to persons whom they do not know. In an internal armed conflict where the most dangerous accusation is political (i.e. alleged support for the FARC or for paramilitaries), social or economic association with groups on either side of the conflict and not knowing what type of persons one is alongside in a community signifies not only a lack of trust but also a source of fear. The reestablishment of social capital is crucial "so that divisions can be healed, and trust promoted" (Commission on Human Security 2003: 58).

Another issue of social capital mentioned in the research related to displacement was the value of social capital in food security. As aforementioned under the section on Food Security, social capital has bearings on other elements of human security such as economic security, and employment. The ability to obtain and utilize social capital within a society is a way to create stability so that an individual has other means to providing livelihood. Reciprocity is a key example of the significance of social capital within food security because individuals can exchange crops and other forms of sustenance when needed. One woman referenced food exchanges that used to take place in her community of origin between different farmers and commented on how now no one has access to land to build the relationships necessary for exchanges and instead buy food from the market (Interview #13). Within economic security, individuals are more likely to find a job when they obtain social capital within a community as there are certain levels of trust and understanding between people who have social capital. Supportive family and close friends who are part of one's social capital also aid in providing economic stability where they can help financially through rough times and rely on one another when needed.

The inability to trust local authority figures such as members of military and police institutions is problematic in relation to inter-personal human security. Protection is inherent in the concept of human security. Human security recognizes that individuals and societies often face threats that are outside of their control, and therefore there should exist infrastructures of protection, which help individuals counter threats and support those who are threatened in order to produce more stable livelihoods and a more stable environment. Issues of protection in not only IDP communities but also in the big cities have long existed in Colombia as there are many cases of corruption, poor training and harassment that takes place by the local police and military persons. While some women referenced the need for adequate housing and the importance of having a home to sleep in, others referenced the problematic issues of protection in their community where they only felt safe in their home because of the mistrust of local authorities.

In San Jacinto, one woman commented on only feeling secure when she is inside her house, never wanting to leave because she does not trust anyone to not attack her, including the local police (Interview #35). Another women discussed the passivity of the police force stating that, "The police in general pass through and leave. There isn't really a police presence here" (Interview #38). The same women followed up her statement by clarifying that although the police and military do not have a true presence and fail to accomplish their duties, she is not indifferent to them. She does not want them there. "The truth is, the police do not give me confidence in them and the military men don't give me confidence in them either. This is because of experiences that I have lived, because of things that have happened to me; those men do not give me any confidence in

them. I do not trust them" (Interview #38). This particular situation and context of the quote exemplifies the argument being made in this paper. Despite physical forms of insecurity in the communities (such as thieves, vandalism and intra-family violence as evidence from other interviews), woman are more concerned with the fear, mistrust and the threat felt by not being able to trust the local police and military than having protection against the aforementioned physical forms of insecurity in the community.

Concluding Points

Throughout this section I have argued for the necessity of the prioritization of human security in Colombia through reflecting the threats and fears the country's most vulnerable populations face. In doing so, I have also worked to prove the criticality in approaching human security as a process with multiple phases starting with addressing the bodily threats and leading to the structural and inter-personal threats. The embodied, structural and inter-personal insecurities faced by the population study are implications of not only the historically strong roots of violence and political, social, and economic insecurity in the country, but of the ways in which Álavro Uribe has chosen to address these roots. Through his militaristic approaches to security in Colombia, the ways in which it has worsened the state of human security in the country and contributed to the cyclical nature of violence and insecurity have become apparent. The figure below demonstrates the ways in which Uribe's 'Democratic Security' Policy had adverse affects on all three analytical categories of human security as addressed in this paper. The figure further exemplifies the interconnectivity and flow of threats between the three analytical bodies as when one actor or process threatens one of the categories, all become affected as a result of the dependency of their relationship to one another. This again demonstrates

the gravity of taking a comprehensive approach to human security issues, as it is a multi-faceted concept that encompasses many elements essential to livelihoods.
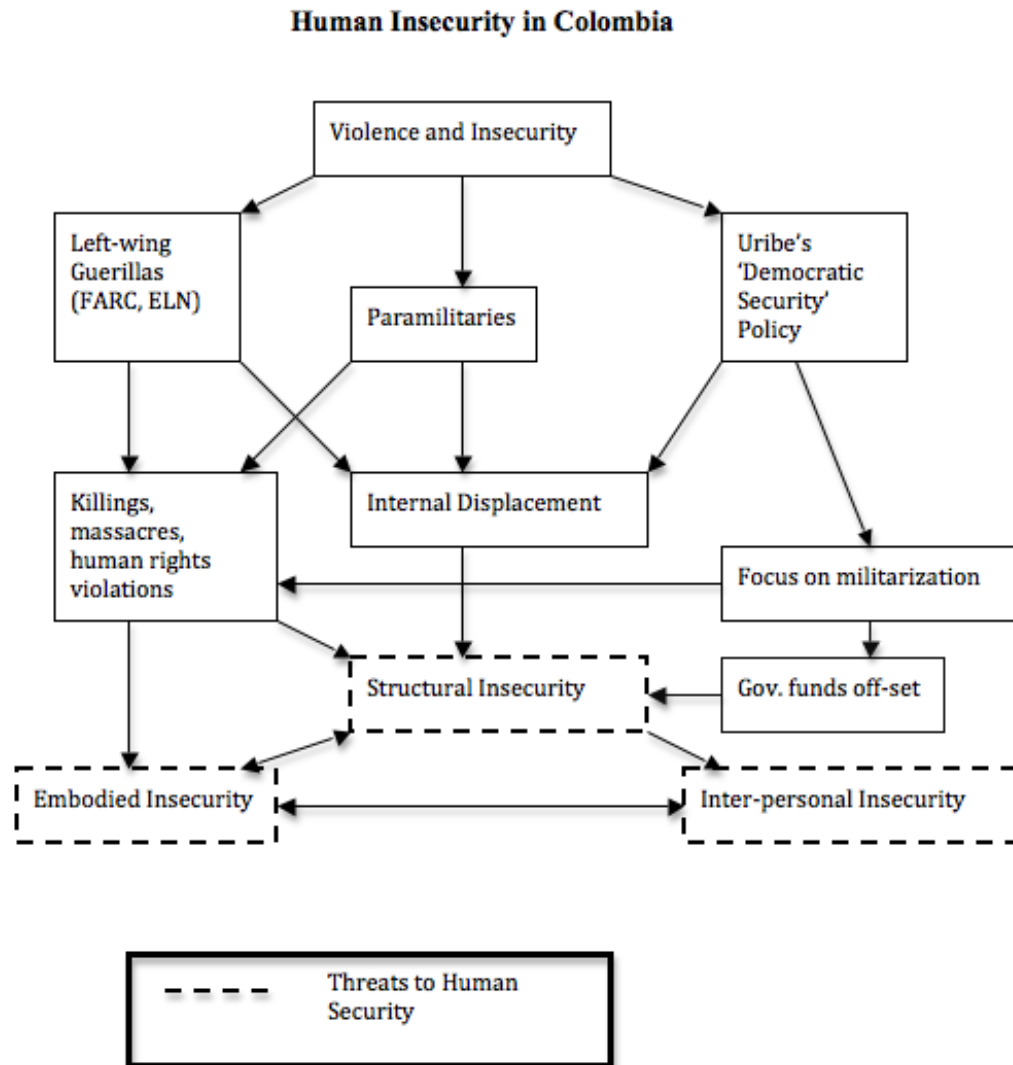
Human Insecurity in Colombia

Figure 5.

CONCLUSION

My arguments in this thesis reference two scales of concern. On a macro level, this thesis has addressed the following question: In our modern world how should we address the evolving security issues of the day? In the search for an answer, I first point to the failure of traditional security approaches in providing citizens with adequate security, void of threats and fears in their lives that impede upon their ability to have faith in a tomorrow. In this way, I look to the findings derived from my original research conducted on the Caribbean coast of Colombia with internally displaced Afro-Colombian women. The Colombian case undoubtedly strengthens the argument being made in this thesis due to the dramatic figures it presents in the levels of violence, unrest and social strife in the country that has last over a century. Its citizens are some of the most vulnerable in the world to displacement, massacres, murders and disappearances yet in my original research conducted in a extremely marginalized and vulnerable population in Colombia, women were most concerned with issues of human security. Through my analysis of the interviews conducted, I prove that in addressing modern security issues, we must look directly to the security of the people and to their vital needs, and thus make the case for the necessity of prioritizing human security over traditional forms of security. I further point to Uribe's 'Democratic Security' Policy and the concept of militarization as factors that not only did not take into account issues of human security, but overall worsened the state of human security of Colombians.

On a micro level, the thesis looks to answer the following question: What is the useful entry point to assuring the human security of people within policymaking and academia? Through my data analysis, I argue that the prioritization of elements within the concept is necessary as many scholars have critiqued the concept of human security for

lacking a clear definitional space and therefore being too inclusive in all aspects of security within ones life. On the same level, they argue that the vagueness of the term makes it impractical for the actual implementation of it within international and domestic laws. Therefore within this thesis I point to the capability of the concept to obtain a more narrow scope through the creation of a vital core of the elements of human security in any context. I then argue that the vital core can then be further prioritized through the disaggregation of the elements within the core into three analytical categories. In my data analysis, I disaggregate the elements into the following three analytical categories: embodied elements, structural elements and inter-personal elements.

The disaggregation of these elements into categories allows for their prioritization within policymaking and academia and therefore enhances the feasibility of the utilization of the concept of human security. The ordering within the thesis, in which embodied elements is first discussed, followed by structural elements and then inter-personal elements, is deliberate in that the latter components are predicated on the former. While embodied elements secure life through assuring the biological needs of the human body such as food and psychological well-being, structural elements address the need of the biological being within society. Structural elements include things such as infrastructure and literacy, addressing the tools necessary for a human being to secure a livelihood, while inter-personal elements address how humans can live freely and securely amongst themselves. This prioritized structure of the elements of human security allows for policymakers to effectively use the concept to formulate agendas. It eliminates the potential problem in which one element of human security is prioritized within a policy agenda, but is later undermined by the insecurity of another dependent element.

An example of this would be choosing to address a structural element of human security, such as illiteracy, while disregarding an embodied element such as food security.

This call for the prioritization of human security and the feasibility of it within policymaking, is one which looks to the future as a place where conflict can be mediated through new means where the primary focus is on the state of humans as individuals who share a need for 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want'. At the same time it is a response "to the proliferation of menace in the 21st century—a response to the threats of development reversed, to the threats of violence inflicted" (Commission on Human Security 2003: 2). In the case of Colombia, it is important to take the complicated history of the country into account. Its century long civil armed conflict, which has resulted in the lives taken of thousands of innocent civilians and the internal displacement of millions more, makes it a unique case in the quest for human security.

Can the prioritization of human security help to end the armed conflict in Colombia perpetrated by thousands of armed actors and fueled by millions of dollars spent on military agendas? The answer is yes. Issues of human insecurity can be understood as the root cause of the armed conflict. In the beginning of the 20th century the country faced vast inequality and social strife where a large population of the country's citizenry was illiterate, living in poverty, and suffering from a lack of human rights during an era of political exclusion and destabilization. All these factors led to threats of human insecurity such as food instability, unemployment and poor infrastructure. During La Violencia and the National Front era, the tension increasingly grew within the rural areas, as there was no political associational space for the peasantry to voice their demands for a better livelihood, resulting in the armed mobilization of

thousands of persons into left-wing guerilla groups. Over the last century with the militarization of Colombia, there has been a worsening state of the human security of the people. Without a doubt many of the armed actors who claim to be fighting for the assurance of many of the elements of human security have contributed greatly to the state of human insecurity themselves. Therefore, in a situation where human security should be of top concern, it has no actors truly fighting on its behalf within the armed conflict. The government has sought security through militaristic means, while the left-wing guerilla have sought security through similar means of violence, creating a cyclical nature to the fight as the two main actors continually strike back and forth; one in the name of security of the people, and the other in the name of securing a livelihood for the people.

Many efforts are being made to increase the state of human security on global and local scales. While some organizations, policymakers and academia utilize the term to refer to the concept, some actors actively participate in employing the concept within their work without consciousness of the term. The organization of LIMPAL empowers women through collective action and community engagement to deal with fears and threats within their communities. Through their workshops, LIMPAL brings together internally displaced women to discuss their lived experiences and teaches them the terminology necessary, such as 'human rights', to articulate their lived experiences within a language that triggers a global understanding of the urgency of their situation. A majority of the women in the study who discussed their human rights noted that LIMPAL had introduced them to the idea that women had certain rights under international and domestic law that legally recognized them as equals to their male counter-parts. One woman, a leader from San Jacinto, said that the majority of the women she has encountered in LIMPAL had no concept of human rights beforehand. She recalls,

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They didn't know…then in this process with LIMPAL, this orientation, many women who were victims of abuse, sexual or domestic violence began to know their rights. Before, they didn't see it like that, but LIMPAL taught them, if you don't want to perform the sexual act and they make you, if you are beaten, that is abuse, you have rights. The women started to also learn about psychological abuse, emotional abuse" (Interview #39).

'Knowing your rights' to the women signified the ability to acknowledge injustices committed against women in the community that were before understood as social norms or private matters that were not of concern to the public eye. The answer to human security is not rested in the fragmentation of the adherents from others who seek a more just world, but it is in the unification of those who call for human security with those seek development, human rights and security in all areas.

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APPENDIX

Interview Questions:

1) *Describe seguridad en un frase.*

2) *Cuales son los 3 aspectos mas importantes que defenir seguridad.*

3) *Describe tus experiencias con aspectos de inseguridad.*

4) *Como una mujer, ¿que significa "paz" para ud?*

5) *Cuales son las formas de violencia que ha encontrado como una mujer que dificultar su sentido de seguridad?*

6) *La habilidad a provenir suficiente alimento a su familia es una importante parte de seguridad, como una mujer como ha efectado su seguridad por acceso a comida?*

Picture 1. Church where LIMPAL workshops are held; Libano, Cartagena, Colombia

Picture 2. LIMPAL workshop; San Jacinto, Colombia. The women have gathered around the make maps of their community with marked areas of insecurity.

Picture 3. LIMPAL workshop; San Jacinto, Colombia. Women sit outside one of the participant's home during a workshop.

Picture 4. LIMPAL workshop; San Jacinto, Colombia. Women watch as others present their community maps.

Picture 5. LIMPAL workshop; San Jacinto, Colombia. The women present their maps drawn of the community.

Picture 6. A row of houses where many LIMPAL women lived; San Jacinto, Colombia. Out of the houses I entered along this row, none had running water and there was signs of severe flooding along all the homes.