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State of the Art of the Literature on Internal Displacement in Latin America

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Abstract

This paper reviews the scholarship on internal displacement in Latin America. This includes not only the vast literature on internal displacement in Colombia, and the responses to that protracted situation, but also the research on other emerging scenarios of internal displacement in the region, particularly Mexico and countries in the north of Central America. The paper starts by describing the main internal displacement trends in Latin America. It then reviews how scholarship on internal displacement in this region has developed, respectively, in the fields of law and policy, other social sciences and humanities, and health and medicine. It ends by offering conclusions on the scope of existing research and directions for future study.

This review of the scholarly literature seeks to identify principal trends, gaps and opportunities relating to research on internal displacement. Towards this end, the review concentrates on academic publications, including monographs, chapters in edited volumes and peer-reviewed articles, from the early 1990s until the start of 2020, a period of approximately 30 years. It thus offers not only a critical review of the state of the art in this field of study but also a key point of reference for researchers looking to develop our understanding of internal displacement from the standpoint of a variety of different disciplines and themes.

The paper forms part of a series of papers published in this Working Paper Series that review the state of the scholarship on internal displacement at the global level and in particular regions as we enter the decade of the 2020s. This research forms part of the Interdisciplinary Network on Displacement, Conflict and Protection (AH/T005351/1) and Global Engagement on Internal Displacement in sub-Saharan Africa (EP/T003227/1) projects, pilots of which were supported by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). It should be read in conjunction with the other review papers in this series.

Keywords

Internal Displacement, IDPs, Conflict, Latin America, Colombia, Mexico, Central America

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1.   Introduction

There are striking contrasts when one examines internal displacement in Latin America. For over a decade, Colombia has consistently occupied first place on the list of countries with the highest number of people in this situation. The Colombian government has tackled this phenomenon with a complex set of public policies that incorporates elements of humanitarian assistance, protection of human rights, socio-economic stabilization and, since 2011, reparation and transitional justice. Both the magnitude of the phenomenon and the response by the authorities have attracted the attention of the international community and numerous local and international academics and researchers. This displacement has thus led to a wide and varied production of books, papers and articles. On the other hand, the internal displacement that occurs in other countries in the region has resulted in hardly any specific measures by the respective States. The interest generated in the academic community has also been modest, as has the volume of literature produced. While it is true, as noted in the first section, that the number of people affected in these countries has been significantly lower than that of Colombia, this lack of interest on the part of the authorities and the academic community responds to complex factors.

This paper compiles and analyzes the literature that has been produced by academia regarding forced internal displacement for reasons associated with armed conflict and widespread violence in the region. It also covers work undertaken by civil society organizations, based either on its relevance to the fields researched, indicating the hitherto ignored presence of tensions and scenarios, or because it provides valuable elements for the comprehension of this phenomenon.

It has been chosen to focus this state of the art on five countries: Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. There are three reasons for this decision. First of all, these countries have populations whose internal displacement is growing; they are, in other words, currently facing unresolved situations involving conflict and violence, which are leading to the expulsion of their people. Secondly, the number of people affected by this phenomenon is relatively high in each of them and their vulnerability has attracted the attention of the international community, thus meriting their inclusion in the annual reports of organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDCM). Thirdly, and finally, there has been scholarly literature on each of these cases in a volume sufficient to warrant analysis. These three arguments explain the exclusion of countries such as Peru and Venezuela. Peru faced forced internal displacements in the past, in the context of the confrontation between the insurgent group Sendero Luminoso and the State. This conflict, however, seems to have been resolved and no new displacements are recorded. As for Venezuela although there are significant signs of forced displacement within its borders, no data or studies are available on the subject.

The document is divided into three sections. The first of these presents the internal displacement figures for these five countries and the profile of this phenomenon in each case. The second collects and analyzes literary production in the fields of arts and social sciences, law and public health. The third offers some brief conclusions.

2.   Figures and profiles of internal displacement in Latin America

Forced displacement has been present throughout the contemporary history of Latin America. In the 1980s, armed conflicts in Central America resulted in the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of people, many of whom are still in a situation of internal displacement.[1] In the 1990s and at the start of the twenty-first century, the confrontation between the military government, guerrillas and paramilitary groups in Colombia escalated in intensity and violence, forcing millions of people to leave their land and homes. Finally, in Peru the actions of insurgent groups such as Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) and the armed response of the State led to the displacement of thousands of people.

At the dawn of the third decade of the twenty-first century, internal displacement continues in the region. The characteristics of this phenomenon, however, have changed. The armed conflict has lost prominence as a cause of forced displacement, replaced by the activities of organized crime groups and drug cartels. Even in Colombia, where guerrilla groups still operate, criminal gangs and post-demobilization groups have now occupied an important place as perpetrators of expulsion.[2] Moreover, this phenomenon has assumed a strong urban component. While still affecting rural areas, its impact on cities has increased considerably.[3] These common features should not lead one to conclude that internal displacement is homogeneous in the region. The dynamics differ from country to country and both the displacement and the affected populations themselves vary.

2.1   Colombia

The internal armed conflict that has evolved in Colombia over the past 50 years has been identified as being responsible for severe forced displacement that has affected more than 10% of its population. The reality, however, is far more complex. The internal forced displacement that takes place in this country is the result of an amalgam of factors that include the agrarian conflict, the struggles of various armed groups, massive and continuing violations of human rights, a state apparatus that is traditionally weak - and therefore with limited control over the national territory - a development model that favors large rural property, environmental disasters[4] and an all-powerful drug industry. The latter has permeated every instance of national life with its corruption and its considerable resources, which have acted as fuel for the aforementioned social unrest, endowing it with unprecedented brutality.[5]

This complexity, however, has not been recognized by public policy created to assist and protect the displaced population. The state response conceives this population as consisting only of those who have been driven from their homes due to causes related to the internal armed conflict.[6] Accordingly, official figures on this phenomenon only reflect the displacement directly

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1   Winton, A. (2018) *Desplazamiento por violencia en Centroamérica: entre la movilidad y la inmovilidad,* Madrid: Universidad Pontificia de Comillas.

2   Rojas, G. (2016) "Post-demobilization groups and forced displacement in Colombia, Rojas, Gabriel, in Cantor, D and Rodríguez N (Ed.) *The New Refugees. Crime and Forced Displacement in Latin America*, Londres: ILAS-SAS. Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2016), *Grupos Armados Posdesmovilización (2006 - 2015). Trayectorias, rupturas y continuidades*, CNMH, Bogotá.

3   Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) (2019), *Global Report on Internal Displacement. 2019,* Ginebra: IDMC, p. 41.

4   Sánchez- Mojica B.E and Rubiano S. (2018), *Territorios en transformación, derechos en movimiento. Cambio ambiental y movilidad humana en Colombia*, Sánchez-Mojica, Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes.

5   Sánchez-Mojica B.E. and Urueña R.(2017) "Colombian Development-Induced Displacement – Considering the Impact of International Law on Domestic Policy", *Groningen Journal of International Law*, Vol 5(1), p.74.

6   Regarding the debate on IDP definition in the Colombian public policy see, among others, Sánchez-Mojica B.E. and Urueña R.(2017) y Sánchez- Mojica B.E y Rubiano S. (2018).

related to this war, to which the *Final Agreement on the Termination of the Conflict and the Building of a Stable and Lasting Peace* signed by the central government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC-EP) in 2016 has not put an end.

As of April 30, 2020, according to information provided by the Victims Register, 8,027,045 people had been forcibly displaced internally by events linked to the internal armed conflict.[7] The magnitude of this figure is explained, in part, because it reflects all the people who have been recognized as internally displaced by the State since 1997, namely, those who have been driven from their homes by the action of the various armed actors in this long war, whether they be guerrillas, paramilitaries or armed forces of the State. However, this figure does not account for those who have managed to return home throughout these many decades. Therefore, the number cited by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), in its report of 2020, is much lower. This observatory puts the number of people currently facing displacement in this country at 5,576,000.[8]

A system for the official registration of internal displacement in Colombia is, however, no guarantee of certainty as to the number of people in this situation. This record includes only those who have been expelled due to the internal armed conflict. For years, there has been a debate in the country regarding the inclusion in the official registration system of those who have been expelled by other armed groups not considered participants in this war. In the early years of the last decade the discussion revolved around people displaced by the action of so-called criminal gangs (*bandas criminales* – "BACRIM"), also known as post-demobilization groups.[9] These are armed groups that emerged after the demobilization of the paramilitaries who benefited from Law 975 of 2005. These new structures are absorbed much more clearly than their predecessors in the networks and the logic of common crime and drug trafficking.[10] They also have a significant presence in urban areas. However, their methods for acquiring and controlling territories are similar to those of their predecessors, so that forced displacement is an important factor among such methods.[11] In 2013 the Constitutional Court appeared to end the debate when it ordered the recognition of the status of displaced persons, as well as the inclusion in the official register, of persons expelled by these groups. The very authorities responsible for implementing the process resisted this order and this has resulted in the production of an ample series of decisions in this respect.[12] However, this array of decisions has not settled the matter.

The context of the post peace agreement of 2016 has led to the emergence of other armed groups, whose link to the armed conflict is not always obvious. They have been classified as Organized Armed Groups (*Grupos Armados Organizados* - GAO), Organized Criminal Groups (*Grupos Delincuenciales Organizados* - GDO) and Residual Organized Armed Groups (*Grupos Armados Organizados Residuales* - GAOR).[13] Again, the Constitutional Court has ordered the inclusion of people displaced by the action of these groups,[14] and again has met with resistance from the

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7   The Victims Register (Registro Único de Víctimas) is the official system that includes the information of people affected by the armed conflict, including IDPs. More information is available at. http://www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/es/registro-unico-de-victimas-ruv/37394

8   IDMC (2020), *Global Report on Internal Displacement. 2019,* Ginebra: IDMC, p. 11.

9   The label "post-demobilization groups" is used by the Center for Historical Memory in reference to BACRIMS at the report *Grupos armados posdesmovilización (2006 - 2015): trayectorias, rupturas y continuidades*, published in 2017.

10   Alonso M and Valencia, G, (2008) "Balance del proceso de Desmovilización, Desarme y Reinserción (DDR) de los bloques Cacique Nutibara y Héroes de Granada en la ciudad de Medellín" *Estudios Políticos,* N° 33, p. 30.

11   Ídem, p. 127-128.

12   The first Constitutional Court decision on that sense was Writ-119 of 2013. In 2014 judgements T-006, T-517, T-689 y T-834 reinforced such a position. Finally, judgements T-556 de 2015, T-290 and T-417iof 2016, as well as T-163 of 2017 consolidated this jurisprudence..

13   Republic of Colombia, Law 1908 of 2018.

14   Corte Constitucional de Colombia, judgement T-163 de 2017.

authorities responsible for registration. In this case, the situation is even more complicated, because the entire set of rights that should actually be guaranteed to these people is not yet clear.[15] This situation, which is expected to be extended in the coming years, is a clear indication of the complexity of the processes causing the expulsion of people throughout the country.

This complexity is also reflected in the dual nature of the internal displacement in the country. It is, on the one hand, a strategy employed by all parties to the armed conflict - and now by criminal and post-demobilization groups - to acquire control over territories and corridors that are strategic for enabling their armed struggles or criminal activities. This same strategy also leads them to destroying the social bases of the enemy. On the other hand, it is also a mechanism for the dispossession of land coveted by armed actors, either in order to increase personal wealth, or with the intention of using it to develop infrastructure, mining and agribusiness projects.

This double-purpose to internal displacement was already identified by some of the earliest studies published on these issues. Both the report submitted by the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement (*Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento* - **"CODHES"**) in 1999,[16] and the work of sociologist Alfredo Molano, published shortly afterwards,[17] agree that the various actors involved in the armed conflict have violently expelled individuals, families and communities with this dual purpose. The passage of time has not modified this facet. Neither have the two processes of demobilization of combatants that have taken place in the course of this conflict, namely the one implemented with the United Self-Defenses of Colombia (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* - **"AUC"**) in 2005 and the one agreed with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (*Fuerzas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército Popular* – **"FARC-EP"**) in 2016. This is reflected in the most recent studies on this phenomenon, among which we would note - for its size and complexity - the one published by the Center for Historical Memory in 2015.[18]

A second feature of internal displacement that has been maintained over the decades are the patterns of movement of the displaced population. Unlike other countries, in Colombia this displacement has been mainly at the individual and family level. Although there have been mass displacements, these have been relatively rare.[19] This feature, already identified by the CODHES study of 1999 has remained consistent over time. Proof of this is that through December 2014, the data provided by the Victim's Register indicated that 89% of displacements were individual and only 11% *en masse*.[20] However they occurred, the movements that these people have been forced to undertake follow, generally speaking, the same route. They originate in the field and from there are directed towards the urban centers. 87% of the displaced are from rural areas,[21] which is fully consistent with the findings that have been made in relation to the interest of the agents causing the displacement in appropriating land that is fertile or suitable for the development of infrastructure projects, or which involve the extraction or exploitation of natural resources. It is worth mentioning at this point that, contrary to what one might think, an im-

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15   Pérez Fuentes, C. *et al.* (2019) "Análisis jurisprudencial de las garantías de los derechos de las víctimas del conflicto armado por bandas criminales en Colombia*" Revista Estudios Socio-Jurídicos*, vol. 21, núm. 2, p.191.

16   CODHES (1999) *Un país que huye. Desplazamiento y violencia en una nación fragmentada*, Bogotá: Guadalupe.

17   Molano, A (2000). "Desterrado*s", Papeles de cuestiones internacionales*, Centro de Estudios para la Paz, Nº 70 y (2001) *Desterrados. Crónicas del desarraigo.* Bogotá: El Ancora Editores.

18   Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2015). ***Una nación desplazada: informe nacional del desplazamiento forzado en Colombia***, Bogotá, CNMH – UARIV. See also, Steele, A. (2017) *Democracy and Displacement in Colombia's Civil War*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, and Lozano, F (Coord.) (2018) *Desarraigos, saqueos y resistencias. Tres décadas, otras mirada*s, Bogotá: Universidad San Buenaventura.

19   See, Ibañez, A.M.(2008) *El Desplazamiento Forzoso en Colombia: Un Camino Sin Retorno Hacia a Pobreza*, Bogotá: Ediciones Uniandes.

20   Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2015), p. 39.

21   Ídem, p. 18.

portant percentage of the people forced to leave rural areas were owners or possessors of land and property that allowed them to live in conditions of reasonable welfare. Expulsion from their homes and the loss of their possessions has signified a process of impoverishment and loss of human capital that is extremely difficult to recover, as explained by the work of the economist Ana María Ibáñez.[22]

As for displacement within urban areas, although traditionally a minority of the cases, in recent years it has increased in frequency and magnitude. This trend, which largely involves cases of revictimization of the displaced population, is linked to the presence of guerrilla cells in cities, as well as the increasingly urban profile of the new criminal groups.[23]

A third trait that has also remained constant is the fact that this type of displacement affects certain groups of the Colombian population with particular intensity. Undoubtedly, small farmers and communities linked to land have been the primary target of the actors responsible for the displacement. However, within these groups it is possible to identify some that have been affected particularly severely. First are the ethnic minorities. 15% of the Afro-descendant population of the country has been displaced, as well as 10% of the indigenous population. These figures, in themselves very high, take on a new dimension if one considers these two ethnic groups represent, respectively, 10% and 2% of the population of the country. A second group particularly affected, given its vulnerability in the context of a patriarchal society, are women.[24] Children and adolescents[25], older adults[26], people with disabilities[27] and people of the LGBT[28] sectors also suffer disproportionately from its effects.

A final feature of the movement in this country is the stigma faced by those who have been forced to flee their homes. Despite the public policies have been implemented in the country since 1997, displaced persons continue to be perceived by the host communities as being responsible for their own misfortune, bearers of violence and therefore as a potential threat to the stability and welfare of those who receive them. The marking of these people as potential enemies of the community that receives them is mentioned in scholarly works of the first decade of this century.[29] Almost a decade later, this prejudice refuses to disappear.[30]

To conclude this section, it must be noted that the signing in 2016 of the peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP - the main guerrilla group in the country - has not stopped the generation of internal displacement. In 2019, the IDMC reported 139,000 new displacements. The fact that 145,000 were reported in 2018 and 2017 shows that 139,000 is a clear indication that the expulsion of people is still active.[31] Those responsible for this process

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22   See, among others, Ibáñez (2008); Ibáñez A. M., y Moya, A. (2010). "Do conflicts create poverty traps? Asset losses and recovery for displaced households in Colombia" Di Tella R., Edwards S., y Schargrodsky E. (Eds.), *The economics of crime: Lessons for and from Latin America*, Chicago: University of Chicago; Ibáñez, A. M., and Moya, A. (2010). "Vulnerability of victims of civil conflicts: Empirical evidence for the displaced population in Colombia". *World Development*, 38(4), pp. 647–663.

23   Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2015), p. 30.

24   Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2011), *Mujeres y guerra. Víctimas y resistentes en el Caribe colombiano*¸ Bogotá: Taurus y Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2015), p. 412.

25   Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2015), p. 414

26   Ídem, p. 418

27   Ídem, p. 419

28   Ídem, p. 421 y Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2019), *Ser marica en medio del conflicto armado. Memorias de sectores LGBT en el Magdalena Medio*, Bogotá: CNMH.

29   Vidal, R. (2007) *Derecho global y desplazamiento interno: creación, uso y desaparición del desplazamiento forzado por la violencia en el derecho contemporáneo*, Bogotá: Pontifica Universidad Javeriana, pp. 216 y 2017.

30   Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2015), p. 21

31   IDMC (2020), p. 56.

are both the new criminal groups, and the guerrilla groups of long standing who remain active (the ELN and EPL). The power vacuum caused by the withdrawal of the FARC in the territories they controlled, combined with the inability of the State to exercise a monopoly of force over these areas has resulted in clashes between different armed groups seeking to control these areas and appropriating the people's land and property.[32]

2.2   Mexico

Internal displacement in Mexico has responded, throughout its history, to different causes. Work undertaken by Laura Rubio points out that in the 1960s it was associated with clashes on religious grounds and access to land and natural resources. Thirty years later these movements joined those caused by the intervention of the police and the armed forces of the State in conflicts such as the uprising in the state of Chiapas. It is estimated that over 30,000 people were expelled from their homes and lands; and they have remained displaced ever since. Currently displacement is due to many different causes, such as violence associated with drug trafficking and the security strategy imposed since the government of Felipe Calderon (2006-2012) to combat it.[33]

In its report of 2017, the IDMC notes that, during 2016, 311,000 people had been displaced internally by violence-related causes in this country.[34] The following two reports of this organization indicate that in 2018 and 2019 respectively, there were 20,000 and 11,000 new displacements in this country due to violence.[35] The 2020 report indicates 7,100 new displacements.[36] Despite their size, the figures do not reflect reality, since in the absence of a formal registration system, an important percentage of this population is invisible. It is also important to note that the expulsion of the people is not only the result of the two factors listed above, since the displacement caused by organized crime and vigilante groups in certain areas of the country must also be added.

Despite this being an undeniable reality, the Mexican government has not clearly recognized the existence of this phenomenon in its territory. While the General Victims Law of 2013 refers to forced displacement, it does not offer a definition. Nor have official figures produced a diagnosis in this respect, civil society organizations and certain sectors of academia have sought to resolve this lack of data. The information that is provided, however, hardly relates to the true dimension of internal displacement in the country.

One of the main sources for drawing this profile is the study published in 2019 by the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (*Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos* - **"CMDPDH"**). This report was constructed based on the analysis of official statistics compiled by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía* - **"INEGI"**). Specifically, the work used data from three surveys, none of which is aimed specifically at the displaced population.[37] The cross-checking of data made it possible, however, to identify certain features related this type of forced displacement.

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32   IDMC (2019), p. 39.

33   Rubio, L. (2016) "Internal displacement in Mexico: the debate on concept, statistics and State responsibility", en Cantor, D and Rodríguez N (ed) *The New Refugees. Crime and Forced Displacement in Latin America*, London, ILAS-SAS, p. 47.

34   IDMC (2017), *Global Report on Internal Displacement. 2017,* Ginebra: IDMC, p.24

35   IDMC (2018), *Global Report on Internal Displacement. 2018,* Ginebra: IDMC, p. 1, (2019) p. 39.

36   IDMC (2020), p. 54

37   They were the National Survey of Demogaphic Dynamics (*Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica* (ENADID)), the National Survey of Victimization and Public Security Perception (*Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública* (ENVIPE)) and the National Survey of Occupation and Employment (*Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo* (ENOE)).

The first is that the population migrating from one state to another in the federation for reasons linked to widespread violence (whether related or not to drug trafficking) is predominantly female and with a low level of schooling. In the period between 2009 and 2014, 54% of the people who migrated to another state due to causes related to violence and insecurity were women, although they make up just over 51% of the national population. Children between 5 and 14 years and older adults are also populations that are particularly affected by this phenomenon.[38] The second feature is the mostly urban origin of these movements of people, even while also occurring in rural areas. In the period between 2012 and 2017 towns and cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants were both the origin and the destination of 70% of displaced homes.[39] The third is that displacement occurs both preventively and reactively.[40] Finally, it has been found that most of these displacements take place within the same federal state.[41]

In addition to these features, other studies have indicated that, just as in Colombia, it is not the poorest people who are moving. It is often individuals and families who, before the displacement, enjoyed economic stability. Expulsion from their homes and the loss of their property often drives them into poverty.[42] Furthermore, it has been found that although episodes of mass displacement do occur, particularly in relation to situations of armed conflict between criminal groups, most movements are in fact individual. This situation has contributed to the invisibility of the phenomenon.[43]

Before concluding this section, it must be pointed out that, along with widespread violence, environmental disasters constitute a second cause of internal displacement in the country. It is not possible to determine the number of people who have been affected, as this phenomenon is even more invisible to the authorities than the first.[44] Nevertheless, its existence is undeniable. In 2018 alone, 20,000 people were displaced as a result of environmental disasters.[45]

2.3   North Central America

Internal displacement in the northern part of Central America, a region encompassing Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras has been described as an essentially urban phenomenon resulting from a complex mixture of factors; a blend that includes structural violence, poverty, the presence of powerful Mexican drug cartels, activities of street gangs and *maras,* as well as security policies implemented by national authorities, based on repression and increasing penalties.[46] Less known is its rural aspect, where violence is exercised in order to guarantee the development of megaprojects and large-scale economic activities such as open-pit mining and tourism projects. The lack of legal certainty over land rights has also become a factor that impacts the dispossession process linked to the expansion of agribusiness and ranching. This second type of displacement mostly affects peasant and indigenous communities.[47]

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38   Pérez, B., Aquino Barbosa , L. y Castillo, M. (2019) *Entre la invisibilidad y el abandono: Un acercamiento cuantitativo al desplazamiento interno forzado en México*, México D.F.: CMDPDH, p. 55- 57.

39   Ídem, p. 72

40   Ídem, p. 73

41   Ídem, p. 94.

42   Díaz L. (2016), p. 50.

43   Ídem, p. 52

44   See, Sánchez-Mojica B.E. (2018) "¿Pájaros a punto de Volar? La Respuesta a la Movilidad Humana vinculada a Desastres Ambientales y Cambio Climático en América Latina" Jubilut L. *et al*. (Orgs) *Refugiados Ambientais* Boa Vista: Editora da UFRR.

45   IDMC (2019), p. 1

46   IDMC (2019), p. 40

47   Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH) (2018) "Desplazamiento interno en el Triángulo Norte de Centroamérica Lineamientos para la formulación de políticas públicas", OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 101, 27 Julio 2018, p. 10.

While internal displacement in this region is inevitably mentioned in all global reports on forced migration, the truth is that there are only fragmentary data on it. This was stated by the IDMC which, despite including the number of newly displaced persons in this area in all its reports, recognizes that it is impossible to trace their profile or define their true magnitude.[48] The fact that the authorities of the three countries have long resisted recognizing the existence of this phenomenon is undoubtedly behind the limited data on it. The first country to take the step and publicly accept the existence of this phenomenon was Honduras, through the creation of the Interagency Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence (*Comisión Interinstitucional para la Protección de las Personas Desplazadas por la Violencia* - **"CIPPDV"**) in 2013.[49] El Salvador has done so years later, in a process driven by a ruling of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of 2018.[50] In January 2020, this decision led to the Legislative Assembly approving the Special Law for the Integral Prevention and Protection of People in Conditions of Forced Internal Displacement[51]. Guatemala, however, has shown no interest in giving visibility to its displaced population and developing measures to address it.[52]

Depending on the level of recognition of this phenomenon by authorities in each country, we have a greater or lesser degree of certainty about the causes and extent of the phenomenon. It is therefore not a surprise to find that only Honduras has an official figure for the number of people internally displaced. A report by the CIPPDV revealed that in 2015, 174,000 people living in 20 urban municipalities were in a situation of forced displacement. The reasons that forced them to leave their homes were, in 67.9% of the cases, persecution and insecurity in the community, 20% threats, 17% assassinations, 12% for personal injuries and 10% due to extortion. The remaining 13% of the cases was motivated by situations of sexual violence, usurpation of property, kidnapping and forced recruitment.[53]

El Salvador lacks comprehensive official data about internal displacement, although it is estimated to be very high in proportion to the population of this country, whose inhabitants number only 6,630,000. In its 2017 report the IDMC estimated that the number of people in situations of internal displacement was 220,000.[54] Three years later the same observatory put the number of displaced people at 454,000 in 2019 alone.[55] However, contrary to all predictions, the first study carried out by the government in the matter indicates that the magnitude of this phenomenon is much lower. It argues that in the period between 2006 and 2016, in 1.1% of the country's families, at least one of its members had been forced to change her/his place of residence due to causes related to violence. Murder, threats and constraints are a major cause of displacement, present in 87% of the cases. Extortion is the second leading cause of flight, being the triggering factor in 24% of the cases. Finally, the situation of violence or insecurity in the communities of origin is behind 20% of the displacements. It is also common that the movement is motivated by a combination of two or more of these causes.[56]

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48   IDMC (2018), p. 40.

49   Executuve Decree PCM-053-2013

50   Supreme Court of El Salvador- Constitutional Chamber, *Resolución del Amparo* 411-2017, July 13th, 2018.

51   Parlamente of El Salvador, Decree 539, January 23th, 2020.

52   Sistema Regional del desplazamiento interno en el Triángulo Norte de Centroamérica (2018) *Señales de una crisis. Desplazamiento interno por violencia en El Salvador, Guatemala y Honduras*, p. 61. Available at http://static1.squarespace.com/static/5784803ebe6594ad5e34e-a63/t/5d0012d5f3b1fe00013da1c4/1560285925561/Sen%CC%83ales-de-una-Crisis.-Desplazamiento-forzado-2018+FINAL.pdf

53   Comisión Interinstitucional para la Protección de las Personas Desplazadas por la Violencia (CIPPDV) (2015) *Caracterización del Desplazamiento Interno en Honduras*, Tegucigalpa: CIPPDV.

54   IDMC (2017), p. 22.

55   IDMC (2020), p. 55.

56   Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Pública de El Salvador (2018), *Caracterización de la Movilidad Interna a causa de la violencia en El Salvador*, San Salvador: Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Pública.

Finally, Guatemala, in accordance with the government's position, has not developed any official diagnosis. In its report of 2017, the IDMC noted that the number of internally displaced in the country amounts to 257,000.[57] At the same time it recognized its inability to offer a characterization of this displacement, beyond pointing out the high rates of violence as their main trigger.[58] The academic community has undertaken work to fill this information gap, although it has not been possible to provide specific figures. In this sense, a study by Universidad Rafael Landivar of Guatemala has identified the violence committed by organized crime groups, large-scale business activities and disasters caused by environmental events and climate as the major factors leading to the expulsion of the population.[59]

Although internal displacement in each of the Northern Central America countries has its particular features, studies have identified certain common traits across the region. The first is the particularly severe impact of internal displacement on certain groups, which were already vulnerable before their expulsion.[60] The situation of women and LGBTI persons is subject before, during and after the displacement, to the conservative patriarchal culture shared by the three countries and makes their position even more fragile. Children and adolescents are the target of forced recruitment by gangs, *maras* and criminal organizations, and many of them, by trying to avoid this, become displaced. Finally, indigenous people are the most affected by economic development projects in the region, because forced displacement not only deprives them of their land but threatens their traditional way of life. Secondly, the displaced have been stigmatized by society and the State itself, which has not hesitated to designate them as members of the same groups responsible for their own exodous. Consequently, the number of cases that are reported to the authorities is quite low. Thirdly, successive displacements are relatively common. This happens when the person or household has displaced from one area to another and in the relocation area a new aggressor arises who forces a new flight. It is not uncommon that this new victimizer is an enemy of the gang (*mara*) that caused the first displacement. Finally, throughout the region disasters associated with environmental and climate events are a factor in displacement. The extent to which this element relates to violence in the generation and development of the displacements has not, however, been analyzed.[61]

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57   IDMC (2017), p. 24

58   IDMC (2018), p. 40.

59   Hernández, S. (Coord.) (2018), *Desplazamiento forzado interno en Guatemala: Diagnóstico 2010-2016,* Guatemala: Universidad Rafael Landívar- Editorial Kamar.

60   See, Sistema Regional del desplazamiento interno en el triángulo norte de Centroamérica (2018) and CIDH (2018).

61   See, among others, IDMC (2017), IDMC (2018), CIDH (2018), Sistema Regional del desplazamiento interno en el triángulo norte de Centroamérica (2018) y Sánchez-Mojica B.E. (2018).

3.   Review of the literature on internal displacement in Latin America

3.1   Colombia

Preparing a state-of-the-art review of the scholarship on internal displacement in Colombia is a challenge given the amount of works that have been produced in the last twenty years on this issue and the variety of perspectives that have been taken. This document seeks to assemble those that have had greater impact, and others which, despite being less known, offer new elements or delve deeper into ignored aspects. Inevitably, however, involuntary omissions occur.

3.1.1   Social sciences and humanities

Given the volume of work dedicated to the disciplines of social sciences and humanities, this study clusters them according to their central themes.

3.1.1.1 Disputed territories and lands seized: The causes of displacement and their consequences for the affected persons

Diagnosing displacement is one of the first issues that have been addressed in the work produced by academics, civil society organizations and even government agencies. The first study in this area dates back to 1995 and was drafted by the Colombian Episcopal Conference.[62] It was able to visualize a phenomenon, to that time hidden and completely unattended, offering figures, tracing routes and documenting dynamics. The work developed by the NGO CODHES in subsequent years follows a similar logic, relying on numbers and quantitative data that measure both the displacement and its impact on the rights of those who are forced to confront it.[63] Studies have also been based on qualitative methodologies, such as the work of Alfredo Molano,[64] which reflect on the uprooting through case studies.

In recent years the production of this type of work has decreased in the academic community.[65] One possible cause is the role in this regard of the Center for Historical Memory. The aim of the work of this government entity is to clarify the historical facts surrounding the expulsion of the population during the armed conflict, with the dual purpose of constructing memory and contributing to guaranteeing the rights to truth and reparation of the victims. At the same time, it has developed the most comprehensive and complex diagnosis available. The book *A nation displaced: national report on forced displacement in Colombia* (*Una nación desplazada: informe nacional del desplazamiento forzado en Colombia)*[66], , presents a broad overview of this phenomenon. That same year, the Center published two more books analyzing displacement from a regional perspective: *Licensed to displace - Massacres and territorial rearrangements in Tibú, Catatumbo* (*Con licencia para desplazar - Masacres y reordenamientos territoriales en Tibú, Catatumbo)* and *Devastated villages. Memories of forced displacement in El Castillo (Meta)* (*Pueblos arrasados. Memorias del desplazamiento forzado en El Castillo (Meta)).*

Part of the findings of the aforementioned diagnoses, has been presented in the first section of this text. One of the points in which several of them coincide, is the historical origin of displace-

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62   Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana (1995) *Derechos Humanos y desplazamiento interno en Colombia"*, Bogotá: Kimpres.

63   See, among others, CODHES (1999) y CODHES y Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana (2006) COLOMBIANA**,** *Desafíos para construir nación. El país ante el desplazamiento, el conflicto armado y la crisis humanitaria. 1995-2005,* Bogotá: Rubens Impresores.

64   See foot note 17.

65   Existen, por supuesto, excepciones. Una de ellas es Shultz, J *et al.* (2014) "Internal displacement in Colombia: Fifteen distinguishing features" (2014), *Disaster Health*, 01 January 2014, Vol.2(1)

66   See foot note 18.

ment in Colombia. This phenomenon precedes the armed conflict that takes place today since it can be considered a constant that has occurred throughout the history of the country and has been instrumental in the process of national construction.[67] Not surprisingly, it has been considered a *"motor of the history of the country, a sort of vicious axis of destruction-reconstruction-destruction of the economic relations, technical, ecological and cultural policies of Colombian society"*.[68] The persistence of this phenomenon is linked to the functions it performs and the actors it serves. As noted, it is a mechanism that has been used over time by different actors and for different purposes. It has been a weapon of war to gain territorial control used by all players in the many wars that have developed in the country,[69] an instrument resorted to by the landowners to extend their domains[70] and an instrument for facilitating the implementation of projects linked to a development model based on exploitation and extraction of raw materials.

The work of Alejandro Reyes Posada[71], is a reflection on the first two functions in the context of armed and agrarian conflict. While displacement is not the focus of his work, it is presented as an inevitable consequence of the process of usurpation of rural land that has taken place in the country since the 1980s due to the action of the guerrillas, paramilitaries and drug traffickers. His position is particularly enlightening when presenting the role of drug trafficking in this process. He notes that the drug barons' need for laundering assets and having the infrastructure and the space needed to continue to operate as well as their interest in accumulating recoverable assets, led to massive land purchases. Many of these properties were obtained on the Atlantic Coast, the Magdalena Medio and the Llanos; areas that until then were under the control of the guerrillas. This led to the formation of armed squads to defend the newly acquired possessions. These structures flourished, although they have not always been funded or run by drug traffickers. Over time, they gave way to paramilitary organizations. The actions of these new groups led to the peasants' displacement, either as a strategy for controlling the territory in military terms, or for the benefit of large landowners. It also created a new dynamic in armed conflict, in which insurgent groups also become agents of the displacement.

The third function attributed to the displacement - its role as a mechanism for facilitating a certain development model - has been explored in some academic papers, although their number is not very large. It is mentioned in the work of Molano[72] and of CODHES[73], and is analyzed in greater detail in the case study of the communities of Curvaradó and Jiguamiandó prepared by Tatiana Alfonso, Lidia Grueso and Magnolia Prada. The former study finds that the expulsion of these two Afro-descendant communities, as well as the usurpation of their lands, has been associated with the expansion of oil palm cultivation in the area.[74] The scenario profiled in this study is further examined and extended in the article authored by Beatriz Eugenia Sánchez-Mojica and René Urueña. These authors also reflect on the reasons why this dimension of displacement has been excluded from public policy developed to address this phenomenon.[75]

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67   CODHES (1999), Centro de Memoria Histórica (2015)

68   CODHES (1999), p. 75.

69   Molano (2000), p. 34

70   Peasants' expulsión by large landowners is a practice rooted in Colombian history, that precedes the current armed conflict..See Legrand C. (1995) "Los antecedentes agrarios de la Violencia: El conflicto social en la frontera colombiana, 1850-1936" en Sánchez, G. y Peñaranda R. (Comp.) *Pasado y presente de la violencia en Colombia*, Bogotá: Fondo Editorial CEREC.

71   Reyes A. (2009) *Guerreros y campesinos: El despojo de la tierra en Colombia*, Bogotá: Editorial Norma.

72   Molano, A (2000), p. 35.

73   CODHES (2011), *Boletín informativo de la Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento,* 77, Bogotá, p. 8.

74   Alfonso T., Grueso L. y Prada M. (2011) "Caso 2. Curvaradó y Jiguamiandó" en Lemaitre J. (Comp.) *Derechos enterrados. Comunidades étnicas y campesinas en Colombia, nueve estudios de caso,* Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes.

75   Sánchez-Mojica B.E. y Urueña R, (2017).

At this point it should be noted that there is some debate as to whether one of these three functions has precedence over the others. Abbey Steele's work favors territorial control over any economic interest. From a historical and political analysis, she argues that the expulsion of the population - far from being an accidental consequence of the armed conflict - is a mechanism used by parties in conflict to ensure the loyalty of the inhabitants of the territories they control. This is a strategy to "cleanse" those areas of political opponents.[76] A radically different position is held by Fabio Lozano and Kelly Muñoz, also based on a historical analysis of the conflict.[77] In their view, internal displacement is linked to the imposition of a development model that requires the accumulation of land for economic development and infrastructure projects. The war ultimately has acted as an excuse to justify the dispossession in rural areas.

Land dispossession is, precisely, one of the issues that is present across the board in the special-ized literature. Much of the published works touch, in one way or another, on this issue. Not only is it not possible to understand forced displacements in the country without this element; it is not possible to analyze its consequences or undertake the search for durable solutions without taking it into account. The fact, starting with Law 1448 of 2011, that a process of land restitution has begun that benefits the displaced persons, has contributed to increasing its study. However, in most cases the usurpation of rural land is in no way the backbone of published works. There are, however, exceptions. One of these is the article of the economists Stefanie Engel and Ana María Ibáñez, *Displacement due to Violence in Colombia: Determinants and Consequences at the Household Level*.[78] This paper reveals that in the context of the armed conflict, persons owning or possessing lands are among the most likely to be displaced, together with members of com-munity organizations and young householders. However, expulsion is not automatic. Despite the conditions of violence and insecurity, some of the rural land owners and lessees resist being expelled. The disastrous consequences for their future and that of their families, drives them to fight against the loss of their land and property.

A later article by Ibáñez, this time made with the collaboration of Pablo Querubín, delves into the relationship between internal displacement and land.[79] In this work a narrow link is identified between the concentration of this asset and expulsion of the population. Territorial expansion and appropriation of agricultural land by armed groups lead to the expulsion of rural households with access to land. At the same time, it recognizes that this asset holds the key to IDPs' return to their land and to overcoming their vulnerability. Therefore, it relies on the development of a State program that guarantees the restoration of rural properties and offers a series of recom-mendations for its design and implementation.

The premises raised in this article are adopted and expanded by Ibáñez in her book *Forced Displacement in Colombia: an Irreversible Path towards Poverty* (*El Desplazamiento Forzoso en Colombia: Un Camino Sin Retorno Hacia la Pobreza*) published in 2008.[80] This work indicates that the expulsion of the former rural landowners involves not only loss of land and property, but also of their human capital, since their knowledge and skills are inadequate for a living in the city. The loss of networks and social fabric must be added to this, resulting in a situation where 95% of the displaced population live below the poverty line and 75% in situations of distress. In

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76   Steele A. (2017)

77   Lozano F y Muñoz K. (2018) "Tres décadas de desarraigo: historias y explicaciones" en Lozano, F (Coord.) *Desarraigos, saqueos y resisten-cias. Tres décadas, otras mirada*s, Bogotá: Universidad San Buenaventura, 2018.

78   Engels S. e Ibáñez, A. M. (2001) "Displacement due to Violence in Colombia: Determinants and Consequences at the Household Level" ZEF – Discussion Papers on Development Policy No. 41. Bonn University.

79   Ibáñez, A.M y Querubín, P. (2004) Acceso a tierras y desplazamiento forzado en Colombia. Documento, Cede Nº 23. Universidad de los Andes, Facultad de Economía. Bogotá: CEDE.

80   Ibáñez (2018).

addition, the presence of these people negatively affects the most disadvantaged groups in the host communities. They are competitors in the inflexible labor market, leading to falling wages, particularly in the informal market. To address this situation the design and implementation of a public policy for IDPs' return to the land is proposed which, to be sustainable, must ensure the restitution of land and secure conditions in the territories to which they return and guarantees of non-repetition. It is also essential that the State deliver monetary compensation to these people, since it is the means for allowing them to again become autonomous and escape the poverty trap.

The economic consequences of the displacement for the people suffering from it is a theme present throughout the work of Ibáñez. She is not, however, the only author to analyze this issue. Andrés Moya and Michael Carter analyze it from a different perspective.[81] Based on the analysis of a sample of 344 internally displaced persons, they conclude that it is not only the loss of land and material assets that plunge them into poverty. Eviction from their homes generates traumas and psychological harm that significantly condition their resilience and progress. A central hypothesis is that violence alters the perception of the prospects of economic and social progress, etching very low limits to what they can accomplish in the psyche of the victims. This means that unless mental health programs are activated, these people are trapped in a vicious cycle of hopelessness, low levels of performance in any type of project, and misery.

3.1.1.2 The city as a receiver and generator of internal displacement

The city as a destination of internally displaced persons is mentioned in all the studies, and virtually all other works mentioned in the previous section. However, there are only a few studies that delve into this matter. These include the work of the anthropologist Rubén Guevara that reflects the lifestyles developed by peasants, indigenous and African descendants forced to live in urban areas. Focusing on the experience of Afro-descendant communities from the Pacific and the Andean indigenous, it analyzes the new social, political and cultural forms that have developed and the economic proposals for peacebuilding.[82] Political analyst Gloria Naranjo reflects on the effect, both on the cities and construction of the concept of citizenship, of the massive and daily reception of people of rural origin expelled in the context of an irregular war.[83] She also points to the need for State action in supporting the rights of these people and overcoming their vulnerability by including training in citizenship and democracy. Ángela Carrillo presents, from a humanitarian perspective, the consequences of the arrival of displaced persons in urban environments. She emphasizes the difficulties faced in adapting to an environment where their skills and knowledge have no longer any value and also highlights the conflict that arises in host communities where their situation as beneficiaries of a public policy is perceived as a privilege.[84] Finally, Clara Atehortúa, Jorge Salcedo and Roberto Vidal address the challenges that have to be assumed by the authorities of large urban centers, with the massive influx of population from rural areas and problems of coordination with national authorities.[85]

The city as a space for the expulsion of population has received greater literary attention. Spe-

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81   Moya A. y Carter M.R (2019), "Violence and the formation of hopelessness: Evidence from internally displaced persons in Colombia", *World Development*, Vol. 113.

82   Guevara-Corral, R. D. (2003). La nueva colonización urbana. El desplazamiento forzado. *Anuario Americanista Europeo,* Nº 1.

83   Naranjo-Giraldo, G. (2004). Ciudadanía y desplazamiento forzado en Colombia: una relación conflictiva interpretada desde la teoría del reconocimiento. *Estudios Políticos, 25* (julio-diciembre).

84   Carrillo A. C., (2009) "Internal displacement in Colombia: humanitarian, economic and social consequences in urban settings and current challenges", *International Review of the Red Cross*, 2009, Vol. 91 (875).

85   Atehortúa C., Salcedo, J. y Vidal (2013), R., *Desplazados internos fuera de los campos. El papel de las autoridades locales de Bogotá y Cali*, Bogotá, Brookings-LSE.

cifically, intra-urban displacement has been addressed by several studies. Some of them point to the State's difficulties, and resistance to including such forced migrations in the category of internal displacement, and consequently the obstacles faced by the victims in obtaining assistance and protection.[86] Others focus on the dynamics of the process of expulsion and its multiple facets.[87] The emphasis of some is more on the nature and objectives of the expulsing agents, indicating the increasingly prominent role of the BACRIM.[88] Most, however, analyze this phenomenon based on local situations; few offer a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon. This latter category includes the study conducted by Clara Atehortúa-Arredondo, which establishes a profile of this phenomenon based on research carried out in Medellín, Bogotá, Cali and Soacha.[89]

3.1.1.3 Displacement of ethnic minorities

Afro and indigenous minorities have been particularly affected by internal displacement. One would therefore expect a greater interest in the field. Surprisingly, there is not. While many of the diagnoses and general works refer to these communities, there are few that are geared specifically to the analysis of their particular situation.

The short book *Afro displacement. Land, violence and rights of the black communities in Colombia* (*El desplazamiento afro. Tierra, violencia y derechos de las comunidades negras en Colombia*), written by César Rodríguez, Tatiana Alfonso and Isabel Cavelier is one of the first works to focus on the displacement of the ethnic minority. It analyzes, from an essentially legal perspective, the effects of displacement and its devastating impact on the right to territory, pointing out the need for a public policy that incorporates an ethno-differential perspective in all its components and whose results can be measured through indicators designed specifically for these communities.[90] A completely different work is the one prepared by Roosbelinda Cárdenas.[91] Her article analyzes the emergence of the 'Afro-displaced' category as a new political subject and its extensive recognition in humanitarian discourse, while objecting to this view. She notes that this phenomenon involves risks, since it facilitates establishing a direct and exclusive link between the violence of the conflict itself and the discrimination suffered by black people, ignoring social structures and systemic racism in Colombia. Likewise, it only looks at certain forms of the suffering of this community, such as displacement – while hiding others, such as poverty and institutional neglect.

Regarding the expulsion of indigenous communities, Ángela Santamaría reflects on the challenges of managing cultural diversity in the context of an armed conflict.[92] The work of Irene Vélez, who believes that the State's response to the displacement of ethnic minorities reveals the failure of multiculturalism in the country, is in a similar vein. The inability of institutions to

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86   Sánchez-Medina, L. A., & Atehortúa-Arredondo, C. (2009). "Límites para el concepto de desplazamiento forzado intraurbano. El papel de la acción de tutela y de la jurisprudencia en su construcción. *Diálogo de Saberes,* Nº 30; Sánchez-Mojica, B. E. (2013). A City Torn Apart: Forced Displacement in Medellín, Colombia. International Law: *Revista Colombiana de Derecho Internacional*, Nº 22

87   Atehortúa-Arredondo, C. (2008). Narraciones sobre la experiencia del éxodo. El caso del desplazamiento forzado en la comuna 13. *Vniversitas*, 117; Atehortúa-Arredondo, C. I. (2009). "Caracterización del desplazamiento forzado intraurbano. Medellín 2000-2004". *Opinión Jurídica, 8* (16);

88   Rojas, G., *et al* (2013) *Desplazamiento forzado intraurbano y soluciones duraderas. Una aproximación desde los casos de Buenaventura, Tumaco y Soacha*, Bogotá: CODHES, 2013; Rojas, G., *et al.* (2014) *Desplazamiento forzado intraurbano y soluciones duraderas. Vol. II Bogotá, Cúcuta y Quibdó,* Bogotá: CODHES; y Sánchez- Mojica, B. E. (2016).

89   Atehortúa-Arredondo C. (2018) "Balance sobre el desplazamiento forzado intra-urbano: la permanencia del fenómeno" en Lozano, Fabio (dir.) *Desarraigos, saqueos y resistencias. Tres décadas, otras miradas,* Bogotá, Universidad San Buenaventura.

90   Rodríguez C., Alfonso T. y Cavalier I.(2009) *El desplazamiento afro. tierra, violencia y derechos de las comunidades negras en Colombia*, Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, Facultad de Derecho, CIJUS, Ediciones Uniandes.

91   Cárdenas, R. (2018), "Thanks to my forced displacement': blackness and the politics of Colombia's war victims´", *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies*, Vol.13(1)

92   Santamaría, A. (2009), "Desplazamiento forzado indígena por la violencia en Colombia: una de las paradojas del multiculturalismo colombiano" Viana A. (Coord.) *Repesar la pluralidad*, Valencia: Tirant lo Blanch.

differentiate their manner of treating ethnic minorities expelled from their territory and their failure to understand the origins of the displacement, as well as its relationship with a historical social formation based on dispossession and marginalization, are two examples that evidence this failure.[93] A different perspective is adopted by the Centre for Historical Memory in its report, *Times of life and death. Memories and struggles of the indigenous peoples of Colombia* (*Tiempos de vida y muerte. Memorias y luchas de los pueblos indígenas de Colombia*).[94] Although not focused on displacement, it addresses the spiritual harm caused to these communities as well as the changes imposed on their territories and worldviews.

3.1.1.4 Gender and displacement

The analysis of displacement from a gender perspective has generated an extensive and varied literature in Colombia. This diversity can be grouped into three broad categories. The first, and most significant, consists of works focused on the particular vulnerability faced by women before, during and after the displacement; as well as the disproportionate damage cause by their expulsion in the context of a patriarchal society.[95] Studies addressing the sexual violence inflicted on them, either as a method to force them to abandon their land and homes, or as a control or pressure mechanism exerted by the armed groups that control the territories they inhabit, are within this group.[96]

The second category consists of studies that critically analyze the public policies and measures designed to address their specific needs for assistance and protection. An article by Donny Meertens, *Forced displacement and women's security*, examines the need for actions that are truly sensitive to gender. This assumes that they not be limited to facing the consequences of inequity that affects women, but rather that they face and transform existing situations, which is also indispensable in the process of building peace.[97] The work of Julieta Lemaitre is also critical of public policy. The narratives of women reveal the failures of the transitional justice policy, which focuses on alleviating the poverty to which it would seem that the victims are doomed, under redistributive policies. The voices of women, on the other hand, speak of other problems that are not being attended to, such as the effects of war on the loss of individuals' moral agency and the destruction of local government structures, replaced by the control mechanisms of armed actors on social and political life.[98]

Finally, a third group discusses strategies developed by organizations of displaced women to reclaim their rights from the State, rebuild their lives and resist armed actors. The work prepared by Julieta Lemaitre, Kristin Sandvik and Juliana Vargas is a good example of this type of literature. These authors have analyzed these organizations' resistance and mobilization strategies, with-

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93   Vélez, I. (2013), "Desplazamiento y etnicidad: fracasos del multiculturalismo en Colombia", *Desacatos*, Nº 41.

94   CNMH- ONIC (2019), *Tiempos de vida y muerte. Memorias y luchas de los pueblos indígenas de Colombia*, Bogotá: Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica.

95   See, among others, Alzate, M. M. (2008) "The sexual and reproductive rights of internally displaced women: the embodiment of Colombia's crisis" *Disasters* Vol.32(1); Meertens, Donny (2010) "Forced displacement and women's security in Colombia", *Disasters*, April 2010, Vol.34; y Guerrero, Gloria, (2018) "Mujeres desplazadas: acercamiento a los impactos psicosociales del despojo y/o abandono forzado." Lozano, F. (ÇDir.) *Desarraigos, saqueos y resistencias. Tres décadas, otras miradas,* Bogotá: Universidad San Buenaventura.

96   See, among others, Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2011), *Mujeres y guerra. Víctimas y resistentes en el Caribe colombiano*, Bogotá: Taurus, Céspedes-Báez, L. M (2010) "Les vamos a dar por donde más les duele. La violencia sexual en contra de las mujeres como estrategia de despojo de tierras en el conflicto armado colombiano", *Revista Estudios Socio-Jurídicos*, 12 (2), y Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2018), *Memoria histórica con víctimas de violencia sexual: aproximación conceptual y metodológica*, CNMH, Bogotá.

97   Meertens, D (2010) "Forced displacement and women's security in Colombia", *Disasters*, April 2010, Vol. 34.

98   Lemaitre, J (2013) "After the War: Displaced Women, Ordinary Ethics, and Grassroots Reconstruction in Colombia" *Julieta, Social & Legal Studies*, October 2016, Vol. 25 (5).

particular emphasis on the use of judicial litigation.[99] Furthermore, based on a case study, they reflect on the ability of women's associations to create knowledge and use it to build their agenda and manage their relationships with donors and the government. This capability gives them a certain degree of agency, although that is limited by the conditions of poverty, violence and the local balance of power.[100]

3.1.1.5 Durable solutions

Literature on the trio of durable solutions in Colombia (voluntary return, local integration and resettlement), combines work produced by social sciences, economics and law. It has been decided to jointly analyze them in this section in order to provide as complete a picture as possible about the work carried out in relation to this issue.

Return has been analyzed from two perspectives. The first, which has a strong legal component, addresses the legal and institutional framework within which these processes should be developed and their implementation in practice. David Cantor's book follows this line, since it analyzes the application of international standards to the Colombian case in the years between 1997 and 2007, a period marked by deepening conflict and increased displacement.[101] It should be noted that despite having a domestic legislation founded on the Guiding Principles of Francis Deng, the context prevented the return processes taking place at this stage from adhering to these provisions. The weak presence of the State, particularly in the rural areas, a very moderate presence of the international community and the absence of a registration system of land ownership were the main obstacles to return being carried out in a safe and dignified manner. Jorge Salcedo's work also follows this line, but opts for a more 'political science' view, noting that the extremely important role of public policy granted by the special judicial decisions - particularly those adopted by the Constitutional Court - together with the exclusion of strictly political variables, led to a lack of guarantees for the return of the vast majority of the displaced during the same historical period.[102]

The second perspective addresses restitution as a return strategy. This issue, widely discussed by the aforementioned work by Ibáñez, is also analyzed by Jemima García-Godos and Henrik Wiig.[103] Their article analyzes the strengths and limitations of the process of land restitution in Colombia in order to assess its potential contribution to the post-conflict and its ability to meet the expectations generated by the peace agreement between the FARC-EP and Government.

The second lasting solution, local integration, is analyzed by María Aysa-Lastra.[104] Her work analyzes the process of adaptation by displaced persons in urban environment, seeking safety and security through incorporation into the formal and informal labor market. The research reveals that these people have higher rates of unemployment and links to the informal economy than

99	Lemaitre, J., Sandvik, K. y Vargas J. (2014), *Organización comunitaria y derechos humanos. La movilización legal de las mujeres desplazadas en Colombia*, Bogotá: Colección Justicia Global- Universidad de los Andes, 2014 y Lemaitre, J., Sandvik, K. (2015) "Shifting Frames, Vanishing Resources, and Dangerous Political Opportunities: Legal Mobilization among Displaced Women in Colombia", *Law & Society Review*, 2015, Vol. 49 (1).

100	Lemaitre, J., Sandvik, K. (2013) "Internally displaced women as knowledge producers and users in humanitarian action: the view from Colombia", *Disasters*, Jul 2013, Vol. 37.

101	Cantor, D. (2018) *Returns of Internally Displaced Persons during Armed Conflict: International Law and its Application in Colombia*, Boston: Brill Nijhoff.

102	Salcedo, J., (2018) "El retorno de la población desplazada en Colombia (1996-2016). Entre la hiperjudialización constitucional y la invisibilidad política.", Lozano, F. (Dir.) *Desarraigos, saqueos y resistencias. Tres décadas, otras miradas,* Bogotá, Universidad San Buenaventura.

103	García - Godos, J. y Wiig, H. "Ideals and Realities of Restitution: the Colombian Land Restitution Programme", *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 2018, Vol. 10(1).

104	Aysa-Lastra, M. (2011), "Integration of Internally Displaced Persons in Urban Labour Markets: A Case Study of the IDP Population in Soacha," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Volume 24, Issue 2.

the local population. It also notes that the possibilities for these people to join the formal market decline over time. It concludes by pointing out the need for public policies for employment both for displaced populations in urban environments and for their host communities, which are often the poorest.

Finally, relocation has been studied by Abbey Steele.[105] Her article analyzes the resettlement patterns of the displaced, finding that people driven out of one area tend to cluster in the new area, as a means of protection that also seeks to recover and reinstate their social and economic tissue. The problem is that this tends to make IDPs more vulnerable, since it facilitates their identification by violent groups and increases their exposure to risk.

3.1.1.6 The catchall: sundry displacement issues

Various aspects of internal displacement in Colombia have been addressed sporadically in several works. These works are not related to each other and the issues studied have not been further developed. Therefore, it has been decided to present them in this section, following the chronological order of their publication. The first of these works is the book written by Cristina Churruca and Donny Meertens, the result of a joint process of dialogue between two universities, a Spanish one and a Colombian one. The purpose of the work is to provide recommendations to international actors, particularly the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (*Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional* – **"AECID"**), concerning their role in prevention and attention to internal displacement in Colombia.[106]

A completely different issue is developed by Carolina Olarte and Illan Rua Wall. Through the combined vision of critical geography and critical legal studies, they analyze the strategy used by groups of displaced people in Bogotá in 2009 to peacefully occupy public spaces.[107] This is a reflection on the ability of these people to mobilize in an organized manner, claiming their status as political subjects and resisting the normalization of their situation. The latter issue, the risk that the omnipresence of displacement in the political discourse ends up rendering it invisible, is also addressed by Ulrich Oslender. His work refers to the trivialization of this phenomenon - using the tools offered by the philosophy of Hanna Ardent - while analyzing the attempts of civil society and the Constitutional Court to prevent it.[108]

The fourth work is an investigation into the possibilities offered by technology applied to public policy to improve the lives of the displaced. The development of an experiment, consisting of incorporating SMS messages into the system of notification of decisions on requests for inclusion in the official register system of the victims of the armed conflict, leads to two conclusions. The first is the undeniable advantages of its use in terms of speed and clarity, which in turn leads to a better guarantee of the rights of the displaced. The second is the resistance of the bureaucratic system to new technologies, to the point of blocking its introduction.[109]

In a fifth work, Gabriel Rojas analyzes the role of post-demobilization groups in the generation of

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105   Steele, A. (2018) "IDP resettlement and collective targeting during civil wars: Evidence from Colombia", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.55 (6).

106   Churruca, C. y Meertens, D. (2010). *Desplazamiento en Colombia: Prevenir, asistir, transformar. Cooperación internacional e iniciativas locales*, Bogotá, La Carreta Social, 2010.

107   Olarte, C. y Wall I.T. (2012) "The Occupation of Public Space in Bogotá: Internal Displacement and the City", Social & Legal Studies, Vol. 21.

108   Oslender, U. (2016), "The banality of displacement: Discourse and thoughtlessness in the internal refugee crisis in Colombia", *Political Geography*, Vol. 50.

109   Blanco, M. y Vargas J.F (2016). *Empowering IDPs with SMS: A randomized controlled trial in Bogotá,* IDB working paper series; p. 222.

internal displacement in the context of the FARC-EP demobilization.[110] Finally, Sandra González has compared Colombian and Peruvian public policy in attention to internal displacement. She analyzes the number of people affected, the duration of the conflict and recognition of victims, issues that warn against the continuity and transformation of conflict and the limitations of States in guaranteeing durable solutions for the victims.[111]

3.1.2   Health sciences

The health situation of displaced persons, as well as the challenges and failures of the Colombian public system against this population, have been the subject of reflection by several studies. The topics addressed by these works are as varied as the research methods employed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it should be noted that much of the research points to the need to improve the programs that are intended to protect this population. They also agree that little attention is paid to the mental health of these people.

One of the first works published in this area was developed by Amparo Mogollón, María Luisa Vázquez and María del Mar García who - based on a set of semi-structured interviews - assessed the health situation of internally displaced persons in Bogotá. Mental illness, psychosocial instability and diet deficiencies are identified as the main challenges facing this population. Gastrointestinal and respiratory problems are other challenges they face, but with a lesser impact. They also face all sorts of difficulties in accessing health services to which, according to public policy, they should be entitled. The authors are of the opinion that it is necessary, not only to improve access to health services, but also to develop specific strategies for the psychosocial rehabilitation of these people. Such rehabilitation programs should include both differential and gender approaches.[112]

Particular difficulties in accessing health services that are faced by displaced women, and the lack of coordination of the entities responsible for meeting them, is the subject analyzed by Gloria Alcaraz, Sandra Ochoa and Zulima López. Inadequate provision of this public service also entails revictimization for these people, whose health is profoundly altered from the time they are forced to leave their homes and continues to deteriorate throughout their displacement.[113]

Other research focuses on other criticisms of the health care received by the displaced. In an article published in 2012, Marlen Bosmans and his team analyzed the results of a program on education in sexual and reproductive rights for displaced adolescents, funded by the United Nations Population Fund during the period between September 2000 and August 2004. The program, which used a methodology based on artistic techniques, proved successful in the sense of helping restore the dignity of the young people attended and making them aware of their rights. However, it failed to empower them because of the restrictions they face in accessing sex- and reproduction-related health services.[114] The work developed by Alfonso Rodríguez-Morales and a group of researchers, in turn, points out how failures in health care, combined with the inequities of the health system, partly explain the disproportionate incidence of diseases such as dengue,

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110   Rojas, G. (2016).

111   González Díaz, Sandra Milena. (2018). "El desplazamiento forzado interno. Una comparación entre Colombia y Perú". *Estudios Políticos* Nº 53.

112   Mogollón, A. Vásquez, M.L. y García M.M. "Necesidades en salud de la población desplazada por conflicto armado en Bogotá" (2003), *Revista Española de Salud Pública,* Vol. 77 (2).

113   Alcaraz, G.M., Ochoa S.C. y López Z.A. (2012) "Atención en salud a mujeres en situación de desplazamiento: Una mirada desde los prestadores de servicios sociales y de salud" *Index de Enfermería*, Vol. 21 (3).

114   Bosmans, M. *et al.* (2012) "Dignity and the right of internally displaced adolescents in Colombia to sexual and reproductive health", *Disasters*, October 2012, Vol. 36 (4).

zika and chikungunya among the displaced population living in the city of Neiva.[115]

Finally, it is important to mention the work done by James Shultz and his team, who have undertaken a research project on the mental health of the displaced population in Bogotá, which has produced several publications. One of these examines the challenges facing health programs targeting the displaced in reaching their target population. The pattern of residence of these people and their attempts to pass unnoticed makes identification and therefore appropriate attention difficult. The publication also suggests various strategies to overcome these difficulties.[116] A second analyzes the psychological risk factors and trauma to which the displaced are exposed along the different stages of their flight, namely from receiving threats in their home, until they settle more or less stably in the receiving community or return. Applying the Trauma Signature (TSIG), an evidence-based method specifically designed for the analysis of complex disaster or emergency situations, the study concludes that in each of the phases that must be overcome by displaced people until encountering a more or less stable situation, involves facing new traumas. Therefore, at the end of the road - either in a host community or, less frequently, upon returning to their place of origin - they face a high risk of suffering psychopathology.[117]

3.1.3 Law

The complex regulatory and institutional framework developed by the Colombian government for assistance, protection and reparation of people in situations of internal displacement, has been a fertile ground for reflection from a legal perspective. The works that have been published in this area can be grouped into four main themes.

The first offers a critical look at the profound influence that the model for attention to displacement proposed by the Deng Principles has had on public policy in Colombia. The book published in 2007 by Roberto Vidal offers a critical reading of the process of creating the so-called International Law on Displacement and its implementation in the Colombian context. He notes that the interest of the international community in the formulation of this law focuses on containing refugees. Its implementation at the local level has led to the construction of a system that serves the state for the management of internal forced displacements, but has significant flaws in the comprehensive protection of people who have been uprooted. Despite the restrictive definition of the displaced, the absence of a true preventative component as well as the abandonment of any pretense at addressing the structural causes, the Colombian public policy has been presented as a perfect example of how to put in place the guidelines established by international law to cope with internal displacement.[118]

A later article, published by Beatriz Eugenia Sánchez-Mojica, suggests the same approach and criticism, noting that the main objective of International Law on Displacement is to control flows of forced migrants to prevent them from becoming transnational. Protection of those who make up their numbers is, in that sense, a desirable but not essential objective. The basis of this legal structure, which revolves around "the right not to be displaced" has been adopted by Colombia and incorporated into constitutional law by the jurisprudence of the Constitutional Court. The

115   Rodríguez-Morales AJ *et al. (2019)* "Arboviral diseases among internally displaced people of Neiva, Colombia, 2015-2017", *Journal of Travel Medicine* Vol. 26 (2).

116   Shultz, J. *et al.* (2014) "Outreach to internally displaced persons in Bogotá, Colombia: challenges and potential solutions", *Disaster Health*, Vol. 2 (2).

117   Shultz, J. *et al.* (2014) "Internally Displaced "Victims of Armed Conflict" in Colombia: The Trajectory and Trauma Signature of Forced Migration", *Current Psychiatry Reports*, Vol.16 (10).

118   Vidal, R. (2007).

result is a policy that fails to meet the challenges and needs of the displaced.[119]

A second line of work from the law perspective has been critical analysis of public policy. In this group one finds the collective work *Beyond displacement. Policies, rights and overcoming forced displacement in Colombia* (*Más allá del desplazamiento. Políticas, derechos y superación del desplazamiento forzado en Colombia*), a response to the Constitutional Court's request of academia, expressed in its Ruling 068 of 2008, to adduce evidence as to "the most critical and complex areas of attention to the displaced population." The book identifies six major issues related to these critical areas: the challenges to measuring displacement, guaranteeing rights to housing and land, the challenges of return, the pursuit of coordination between the various territorial levels involved in public policy, and determination of the purpose of displacement. Despite their diversity, these six issues are developed following a similar methodology. Existing policy is analyzed from a critical perspective, identifying barriers and bottlenecks to achieving the full possession of the right in question and offering suggestions for resolving the problems detected. International instruments are often used as benchmarks for the actions to be undertaken.[120]

René Urueña's work also addresses public policy, but from a very different perspective. It analyzes how the introduction of indicators has influenced the measuring of its results. They have changed the way certain issues are understood by the authorities and have helped to highlight and prioritize certain issues, while others are relegated to the background. These instruments have also been incorporated into the speeches of the various actors involved in the construction and implementation of public policy, also changing the language in which these debates take place and the process of decision-making. Finally, he emphasizes the importance of indicators in the complex Colombian context for stating the reality and connecting a series of situations - poverty, violence, prostitution and increased rates of suicide - with forced displacement.[121]

A third line of research deals with the criminal dimension of displacement. Alejandro Aponte has explored this subject in two papers that analyze the crime of forced displacement enshrined in the Colombian Penal Code. His work studies, from the perspective of criminal analysis, the problems raised by the interpretation and application of such offense; emphasizing the ineffectiveness of the existing system to identify and punish those responsible for the expulsions of population.[122] The impunity of this crime is also subject to reflection in the article by Zamir Fajardo, as well as the restorative potential of prosecution.[123]

Finally, there are the works that question the decision of the Colombian State to limit the definition of the internally displaced to people who have been expelled due to events related to the armed conflict, excluding those who have been displaced for other reasons included in the Deng Principles. It is a criticism that can be found across the board in specialized literature, questioning the exclusion of those expelled as a result of aerial spraying of illicit crops,[124] the implementa-

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119   Sánchez-Mojica, B.E. (2009) "Cuando los derechos son la jaula. Trasplante rígido del soft law para la gestión del desplazamiento forzado", *Estudios Políticos*, Nº 35, 2009.

120   Rodríguez C. (Coord.) (2010) *Más allá del desplazamiento. Políticas, derechos y superación del desplazamiento forzado en Colombia*, Bogotá, Universidad de los Andes.

121   Urueña, R. (2012), Internally Displaced Population in Colombia: A Case Study on the Domestic Aspects of Indicators as Technologies of Global Governance", Davis, K. *et al.* (Eds) *Governance by Indicators*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

122   Aponte, A. (2009) *El desplazamiento forzado como crimen internacional en Colombia. Reglas, principios de interpretación y fórmulas de imputación,* Monografico No. 1. Observatorio Internacional de ddr y Ley de Justicia y Paz, CIT PAX, Madrid-Bogota, y (2012) "El desplazamiento forzado como crimen internacional: nuevas exigencias a la dogmática jurídico-penal", *Vniversitas*, 125.

123   Fajardo. Z. (2009) "El delito de desplazamiento forzado como crimen de lesa humanidad: reflexiones sobre impunidad y acceso a la justicia en Colombia" Uprimny, R. *et al*. Reparaciones en Colombia: Análisis y propuestas, Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

124   CODHES (199), Molano A. (2000).

tion of development projects[125] and activities of armed criminal groups not directly linked to the war.[126] The article by Beatriz Eugenia Sánchez-Mojica and René Urueña also analyzes, from the global governance perspective, the reasons why it has chosen not to include in this concept the forced displacement associated with mining, extensive farming of biofuels and other development projects.[127] The book of Sánchez-Mojica and Sebastián Rubiano also questions the decision to ignore displacement due to environmental causes, while suggesting a connection between these movements and those in the context of the conflict.[128]

3.2   Mexico and northern Central America

Compared to Colombia, the literature that has been produced in relation to internal displacement in northern Mesoamerica is minimal. This situation is due to the fact that transnational population flows coming from this region have attracted the attention of researchers at the expense of internal flows. The fact that the states of the region have long resisted recognizing the existence of this phenomenon within their borders aggravates this factor. Consequently, there are no official figures - except for those offered by the government of Honduras - which has contributed to rendering the phenomenon invisible.

Research carried out so far addresses three major themes. The first, which includes most of the publications, corresponds to the diagnosis of the situation of internal displacement in the region. These works usually deal either with northern Central America or Mexico. Few of them conduct a joint diagnosis.[129] It should also be noted that there are no studies of this kind previous to 2010.[130] This, of course, excludes investigations concerning displacement that took place in Central America as a result of armed conflict in the 1980s. Of those dealing with the current displacement in northern Central America six papers should be highlighted.

The first, published in 2015, is the first attempt of the Interagency Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence (*Comisión Interinstitucional para la Protección de Personas Desplazadas por la Violencia*) to characterize internal displacement in Honduras.[131] Two years later, the researcher Juan Carlos Betancur conducted a study for the UNHCR which clearly establishes a link between the process of dispossession of homes and land in the country, and internal displacement.[132] A year later, four equally interesting works were published. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security of El Salvador issued a diagnosis of forced internal mobility in this country.[133] Sindy Hernández, meanwhile, coordinated an extensive study of this phenomenon in Guatemala.[134] Finally, two more works, made respectively by Alisa Winton[135] and a group of civil

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125   Lozano, F. y Muñoz, K. (2018).

126   Rodríguez, N y Durieux J-F (2016) "Desplazados como víctimas del crimen organizado. Una mirada comparativa a México y Colombia" Cantor, D and Rodríguez N (ed) *The New Refugees. Crime and Forced Displacement in Latin America*, London, ILAS-SAS y Sánchez-Mojica B.E. (2016).

127   Sánchez-Mojica B.E. y Urueña, R. (2017) "Colombian Development-Induced Displacement – Considering the Impact of International Law on Domestic Policy", *Groningen Journal of International Law*, Vol. 5 (1).

128   Sánchez-Mojica BE. y Rubiano, S. (2018).

129   Stein, S. y Walch, C. (2016) *Implicaciones humanitarias de la violencia no convencional en el Triángulo Norte de Centroamérica y México*, Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum, SSRC.

130   Centro Internacional para los Derechos Humanos de los Migrantes (CIDEHUM) (2012), *Diagnóstico: Desplazamiento forzado y necesidades de protección, generados por nuevas formas de violencia y criminalidad en Centroamérica*, San José: ACNUR; Comisión Interinstitucional para la Protección de las Personas Desplazadas por la Violencia de Honduras (CIPPDV).

131   CIPPDV (2015).

132   Betancur, J.C. (2017) *Informe sobre tierras, viviendas y desplazamiento en Honduras*, Tegucigalpa: ACNUR.

133   Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Pública de El Salvador (2018).

134   Hernández, S. (Coord.) (2018).

135   Winton, A. (2018) *Desplazamiento por violencia en Centroamérica: entre la movilidad y la inmovilidad,* Madrid: Universidad Pontificia de Comillas.

society organizations[136] conducted a comprehensive and thorough analysis of the processes that have led to the expulsion of thousands people across the region.

The six studies coincide in pointing to the complexity of the causes of this phenomenon. Far from being the result of a single type of violence linked to *maras*, other criminal groups and drug trafficking, population expulsion is the result of an amalgam of factors. Conflict over land, the implementation of an economic model based on large estates, a historical dynamic that has led to the dispossession of indigenous groups, widespread State corruption, interest in the development of megaprojects in the region and a patriarchal, racist and intolerant religious culture, are all factors that combine and weigh heavily on the processes of forced internal displacement. Hernández also adds disasters associated with environmental and climatic events to this equation. The particular vulnerability of women, children and adolescents, persons belonging to LGTBI sectors and ethnic minorities are also addressed; as well as the dynamics employed by the ejector agents, among them the forces of the State itself.

Diagnoses of the Mexican scenario are also fairly recent and even scarcer. The most recent work on the subject was published in 2019 by Brenda Pérez, Ligia Aquino and Montserrat Castillo, three researchers, members of the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights (CMDPDH). This study,[137] conducts a quantitative analysis of the phenomenon. A second publication by the same authors, released simultaneously, executes a qualitative analysis based on five case studies. An analysis of these cases presents a panoramic view of the causes of internal forced displacements, the stages faced by those who have been expelled and their needs in terms of protection and assistance.[138]

A second issue addressed by the literature relates to the dynamics of internal displacement. David Cantor identifies three types of criminal organizations as key agents of displacement both in northern Central America and Mexico. They are street gangs, the drug transporters of Central America and the Mexican drug cartels. Their mere presence in a territory, however, is not sufficient to cause displacement. This occurs, and adopts different patterns, depending on the strategies of appropriation of resources and control of strategic areas used by each of the armed actors. It is also noted that fleeing is an alternative for those who refuse to submit to the domination of these actors or the only escape for those who cannot meet the economic demands of these groups.[139]

Interesting studies have also been made at the state level. Luz María Salazar focuses on the situation of Mexico and her work is based on the concept of the dual nature of the displacement in this country. It is both a side effect of a complex system of violence against the civilian population, not linked to organized crime, and at the same time a strategy to escape such violence. Mobility patterns are analyzed subject to this premise, as well as the consequences faced by the impacted population in terms of increased vulnerability and impoverishment.[140] The work of Vickie Knox analyzes the complexity of forced displacement in El Salvador, questioning the reduced official figures mentioned in the first part of this study, while examining the causes and dynamics

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136   Sistema Regional del desplazamiento interno en el Triángulo Norte de Centroamérica (2018).

137   CMDPDH (2019).

138   Pérez, B., Aquino Barbosa, L. y Castillo, M. (2019) *Entre la invisibilidad y el abandono: Un acercamiento cualitativo al desplazamiento interno forzado en México*, México D.F.: CMDPDH.

139   Cantor, D. (2014) **"**The New Wave: Forced displacement caused by organised crime in Central America and Mexico", *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 33 (3).

140   Salazar, L.M. "Modalidades del desplazamiento interno forzado en México", *Iztapalapa. Revista de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades*, Vol. 35 (76).

of this phenomenon.[141] Finally, Elsa Ramos explores the relationship between internal displacement and transnational migration in the case of El Salvador. Her research reveals that many factors contribute to the two types of displacement affecting different populations.[142]

Alongside these works, which analyze regional or national realities, there are others focused on smaller areas. Séverine Durin's book analyzes the complexity of forced migration in northeastern Mexico from the anthropological perspective, in a region that comprises the States of Coahuila, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas.[143] She points out that the so-called 'war on drugs', initiated under the leadership of President Felipe Calderón, has unleashed a process that is becoming increasingly complicated and violent with the passage of time and which is resulting in the victimization of civilians. Flight, either to other regions of the country or to neighboring United States, is presented as the only way out for these people, from both urban and rural areas. The study conducted by Alba Patricia Hernández, addresses this on an even smaller scale, analyzing the internal displacement of a group of racially-mixed families from the municipality of Coyuca de Catalán, located in the Mexican state of Guerrero.[144] Finally, the work of Natalia De Marinis deals, from a gender perspective, with the dispossession and expulsion of the Triquis ethnic community from Oaxaca.[145]

Finally, the third theme that has been examined in the region is the state responses, or lack thereof. This situation is present across the board in the studies made and much of the work analyses the phenomenon. Some, however, focus on it. This is the case, for example, of the work of Laura Rubio, both on her own,[146] and in collaboration with Sebastián Albuja.[147] In both cases, they suggest that the official position is questionable, since it views internal migration faced by Mexico as economic by nature; a position that has not only led to the absence of public policy, but to a lack of data for formulating an accurate analysis. Regarding the situation in northern Central America, Cantor points to the lack of public policies designed to assist and protect the population in situations of internal displacement. He also questions the so-called "strong-arm" (*mano dura*) strategies employed by governments to confront these criminal groups.[148] An investigation by the Heinrich Böll Stiftung Foundation goes a step further and suggests that the security and justice policies in these three countries, together with the inequality and poverty gap have transformed social dynamics and facilitated non-voluntary displacements.[149]

The work of Nicolás Rodríguez and Jean-Francois Durieux is also related to this subject, but sees things from a different perspective. It explores the possibilities of internally displaced persons in

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141   Knox, V. (2018) *An atomised crisis Reframing displacement caused by crime and violence in El Salvador*, Oslo and London: IDMC y Refugee Law Initiative, School of Advanced Study University of London.

142   Ramos, E. (2016) *Desplazamiento interno forzado y su relación con la migración internacional*, San Salvador: Universidad Tecnológica de El Salvador-Colección investigaciones No. 56.

143   Durin, S, (2019) *Sálvese quien pueda! Violencia generalizada y desplazamiento forzado en el noreste de México*, Ciudad de México : Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social.

144   Hernández, A., P., (2019) "De Tierra Caliente a la Sierra y Costa Chica de Guerrero: desplazamiento interno forzado", *Revista Cultura y Representaciones Sociales* 14 (27).

145   De Marinis, N. (2017) "Despojo, materialidad y afectos: la experiencia del desplazamiento forzado entre mujeres triquis", *Desacatos* Nº 53, y (2019) *Desplazadas por la guerra. Estado, género y violencia en la región triqui*, Casa Chata: Mexico D.F.

146   Rubio, L., "Internal displacement in Mexico: the debate on concept, statistics and State responsibility", Cantor, D and Rodríguez N (ed) *The New Refugees. Crime and Forced Displacement in Latin America*, London, ILAS-SAS.

147   Albuja, S. y Rubio, L. (2014) **"**Criminal violence and internal displacement in Mexico: Evidence, Perceptions and Policy", Lindley, A (ed.) *Crisis and Migration: Critical Perspectives*¸ London, Routledge.

148   Cantor, D. (2014), "As deadly as armed conflict? Gang violence and forced displacement in Central America", *International Agenda* XXIII (34).

149   Heinrich Böll Stiftung (2019) *Políticas de Estado, desplazamiento forzado y migración: una mirada regional al norte de Centroamérica*, San Salvador, Ediciones Böll.

Mexico claiming their status as victims of organized crime to achieve protection within the regulatory and institutional framework derived from the Law for the Protection of Victims'.[150]

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150   Rodríguez, N. y Durieux, J-F. (2016).

4.   Conclusions

This analysis of the literature on internal displacement in Latin America reveals a profound imbalance between that which is related to the particular case of Colombia and that which deals with the situation of Mexico and northern Central America. And it is not just a question of volume. It also has to do with the breadth of the themes analyzed, the diversity of approaches and methodologies used, and the depth with which they have been addressed.

Internal forced displacement in Colombia has given rise to a vast production of books, papers and articles, ranging from the last years of the twentieth century to the present, and incorporating works from the social science, humanities, law and health science. This has been influenced by three factors. The first, without a doubt, is the volume of the displacement. Ever since the very first IDMC reports were published this country has figured importantly among those with the largest displaced population within its borders. The second is the existence since 1997 of a public policy that has a clear definition of the internally displaced, as well as a public registration system that provides acceptably accurate data on the number of people expelled and the circumstances of their displacement. Finally, one should not underestimate the interest generated by public policy itself, which is presented as one of the most complete developers of the model of attention to such displacements proposed by the Deng Principles.

The works that have been mentioned in this text provide a broad and deep understanding of the causes and dynamics of internal displacement which, despite suffering transformations over time, maintains certain constant features. The studies conducted reveal the depth of its historical roots and the complexity of its causes. It is particularly interesting that several of these have highlighted the dual nature of displacement - as a weapon of war and strategy for controlling a territory, on the one hand, and as a mechanism for the appropriation of land and property on the other. The second of these dimensions has also led to numerous studies of dispossession and the consequences which, in terms of impoverishment, follow.

The rural origin of most displaced people, consistent with the purposes sought by their expulsion for the agents involved, has been another of the widely-analyzed aspect, as also the challenges these people face when having to adapt to the urban environments where they seek refuge. Nevertheless, there is also a significant body of work on intra-urban displacement, in accordance with the new dynamics of the conflict in the country and the increasing impact of the BACRIM and other new criminal groups.

The limited number of studies on displacement of ethnic minorities is, however, surprising. Although there is consensus regarding the disproportionate impact that this phenomenon has had on these communities, both in terms of volume, and the effects that their uprooting has on them, very few studies have been made of this phenomenon. By contrast, the situation of women has received greater attention. Both the vulnerability suffered before, during and after the displacement, and their ability to mobilize effectively and resist, have been addressed. At this point it should be noted that the only research undertaken into anything other than the gender perspective has been regarding the processes of mobilization and the political significance of collective displacement. This vacuum, and the very limited research regarding ethnic minorities, is one of spaces that is yet to be researched. Another issue that still needs to be thoroughly researched is that of finding durable solutions. With the exception of the return, which has been analyzed in some depth, the end of displacement is still a task that, in good measure, is yet to be studied.

The work done in the area of health sciences points to ample room for analysis of the effects of

the forced displacement on physical and mental health, as well as the limitations of public policy to address the problem. While the literature published to date is extremely valuable, it is evident that there is still a lot that needs researching.

Finally, the publications in the field of law are dedicated to analyzing public policy from various perspectives. The IDP concept included in such policy (that excludes people uprooted by any cause other than armed conflict) has been questioned, the link between the national response and the Deng Principles has been critically examined, new ways for enhancing current legal measures has been suggested, and criticisms regarding its inability to criminally pursue and sanction those responsible for expelling population**s** have been raised. Although covering a wide range of topics, it has to be emphasized that most of the work is relatively old, since there has been little research into these matters from 2015 onwards. The new context, associated with the implementation of the peace agreement between the government and the FARC-EP, prompts many questions regarding the management of displacement and opens up new fields of research that legal studies are not yet addressing. This observation applies to other disciplines too.

Faced with the broad - but incomplete - panorama offered by the literature on the internal displacement in Colombia, the image the layman has of this phenomenon in Mesoamerica is very limited. Even though, generally speaking, the existing publications are characterized by their superior quality and provide an overview of the causes of internal displacement, the most affected populations, their dynamics and state responses - or lack thereto – they leave too many questions unanswered.

This is undoubtedly because the volume of research vis-à-vis the situation of these four countries is still very limited. Although internal displacement is not a new phenomenon, particularly in northern Central America, and despite the challenges involved in its study, it is still taking place in this region, yet has failed to awaken the full interest of the academic community. The absence of public policies and official data partly explains the relative lack of enthusiasm shown by academia. The fact that, historically, migration research in this area has focused on transnational population flows is probably also influential. In this sense, internal displacement can be perceived – falsely - as the prelude to the real exodus, one that must be examined in depth. But whatever the reason, it is clear that much more research is needed on this type of displacement in the region.

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