Illegal Drugs and Human Rights of Peasants and Indigenous Communities:
The Case of Colombia

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Management
of Social
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MOST-2 Policy Papers series uses a novel methodology aimed at enhanced dissemination and usability of research results for policy-making. Designed according to scientific policy analysis principles, this methodology is based on a generic structure for producing documents.

The generic structure first enables different types of documents to be produced from the same original content. For instance, collections of the summaries of the various sections from the Papers produce Policy Briefs (5 pages condensed versions). Both Papers and Briefs are available in print and in electronic versions.

The structure also gives all documents the same appearance, so ease of reading improves with familiarity of the format. A better indentation of the text further improves the location and utility of the information: the content of each section in the document becomes a fully-fledged knowledge item that is easy to spot, an extract to be better studied, compared and put into perspective.

This logic serves as the foundation for the interactive Policy Research Tool that MOST is currently developing. The online tool will provide free and speedy access to policy-relevant comparative information, giving users the ability to create research profiles based on subject categories, produce customized reports with select content from the original documents, and easily compare cases and assess the relevance of the policy options available.

MOST-2 methodology helps respond more efficiently to different types of information needs and facilitates knowledge feedback and analysis, thus improving the use of research results for policy-making.

Contents

Preface

This article focusing on Colombia is one in UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST) series of three case studies by Francisco E. Thoumi in collaboration with Carolina Navarrete-Frías of the Research and Monitoring Center on Drugs and Crime at the University of Rosario, Bogota. The series analyses the problematic of illegal drugs and human rights abuses in the Andes, paying special attention to the effects of the illegal drugs industry on indigenous and peasant communities and to their responses to the industry's development.

These case studies on Colombia, Bolivia and Peru derive from a larger work (available in an electronic version) by the same authors and are intended to be read in conjunction with each case placing its own particular context in the foreground. While each case study investigates the historical, economic, environmental, social and political contexts and consequences of the development of the illegal drugs industry and efforts to combat it in each individual country, the case studies share a theoretical and thematic perspective.

The case studies are especially concerned with social and geographic conditions in the Andean region, popular movements driven by Andean agricultural producers that have arisen in order to contest anti-drug policies, and the potential future alternatives to current policies and practices. In a shift away from a criminology-based perspective concentrating on the profits of illegal drugs and on countering drug production, traffic and consumption, the case studies instead advocate an approach which treats the development of the illegal drugs industry as a social and cultural issue. As Thoumi and Navarrete-Frías cogently emphasize throughout, "The point is simple and profound: to analyse the illegal drugs industry's causality and effects one should not use common models that consider drugs as products of exogenous factors but instead use those which treat drugs as products of endogenous processes and as symptomatic of unresolved social problems and conflicts".

Within MOST's reorientation programme (Phase II, 2004-2013), this series emerges as a continuation of projects set in motion during Phase I under the theme of "Globalization, Drugs, and Criminalization". In accordance with the MOST programme's mission to promote the development of policies relating to social transformations of global import, these case studies provide and promote research and information useful to political decision-makers and other interested actors.

SANTIAGO CASTRO

1. Introduction

1.1 *Summary*

Peasant and indigenous communities have been the weakest link in the drug trafficking production chain in the Andean countries, and thus it is important to investigate and understand the association between the illegal drugs industry and the violation of the human rights of these social groups. In order to advance this line of inquiry, this essay focuses first on why the illegal drugs industry establishes itself in a region or country and on the relationship between the industry and human rights violations. Next, it explores the association between the development of the illegal drugs industry and its impact on the human rights of the peasant and indigenous communities of Colombia, including the effects of illicit plantings on social decomposition, forced displacement, childhood and food security. This section also analyses the effects of anti-drug policies on human rights in Colombia. It pays special attention to human rights in rehabilitation and consolidation zones, to the criminalization of small coca and poppy growers and to the aerial spraying strategy implemented by the Colombian Government. And, it examines State interventions in human rights' situations with particular emphasis on the role of the early warning system, the campaign to prevent the recruitment of minors, the Houses of Justice, the "community defenders", and the strategy to decentralize human rights. The following section investigates the relationship between human rights and the armed forces and the police. Finally, it looks at citizens' responses to human rights violations with special attention to "peace communities", the Nasa community project and other precautionary measures.

Key Issues

The causality behind the development of the illegal drugs industry

The development of the illegal drugs industry is associated with large increases in human rights violations among the illegal industry's actors and the citizens of the towns and regions affected by it. It is a common assertion that the illegal drugs industry produces numerous negative effects on the societies in which it develops. Nonetheless, it is difficult to establish strong, clear-cut, causality relations.

Two currents of thought exist about the causes underlying the development of the illegal drugs industry. The more popular one explains the illegal drugs industry's development as rooted in causes exogenous to the society. Assertions such as "when there is demand, there is supply" are commonly made in Andean countries in order to attribute the industry's development to factors external to the region. This assertion is frequently followed implicitly or explicitly by a second one: "if someone is going to produce anyhow, why am I guilty if I am the one that does it?" From this perspective, high profits in illegal international drug markets, a factor outside the control of the producing countries, are the reason behind the growth of illicit crops.

Beliefs such as "drugs generate big earnings that are kept in consuming countries" reinforce the previous position and have led some popular analysts to affirm that: "far from generating any wealth in Colombia, they (illegal drugs) have drowned the country in corruption and violence. In the United States the drug business increases the gross domestic product, but in Colombia it destroys it" (Caballero, 1996: 139). This point of view is based on an economic illusion refuted by any market economy analysis. Indeed, if it were valid, we would see before us a novel doctrine of economic development based on illegality which would recommend that developing countries declare illegal all imports of goods like cigarettes or cellular telephones so that their concomitant price increases would raise the earnings of criminal smuggling organizations and in turn raise the gross domestic product.

Modern international trade theory, based on ample empirical studies, shows that the stock of production factors (capital, labour, technology and

natural resources) has been increasingly less important as a determinant of international trade, and that institutional and cultural factors have become important determinants of a society's comparative advantage. The geographical distribution of the illegal drugs industry supports this theory. If profitability determined an industry's localization, illegal coca and poppy would be cultivated in all countries having the natural resources necessary to grow coca and opium poppy, and cocaine and heroine would be refined in many other countries. Yet, in spite of the great profitability of illegal drugs, they are not grown in most of the countries that could produce them. In fact, the illegal drugs industry is highly concentrated in just a few countries. Currently Colombia produces about 70% to 80% of the world's coca and cocaine, and Afghanistan 80% or more of opium and heroin.

Traditional economic analyses cannot explain this concentration of production. In fact, when the production of a good using simple and well-known technology which does not require very specialized labour skills is declared illegal worldwide, comparative advantages are created in countries where State and social controls on individual behaviour are very weak. An analysis of the cocaine and heroin market concentration shows that profitability is only one necessary condition for their production and that their production is located in places where the structure of the society, its institutions and culture (values, beliefs and attitudes) facilitate their production. (Thoumi, 2005)

From this perspective the emergence of the illegal drugs industry in a country is due not to its profitability, but instead to the country's characteristics rendering it vulnerable to such development. The illegal drugs industry and other illegal economic activities develop in countries with significant structural, institutional and cultural problems and such problems act as catalysts which aggravate the illegal industry and other illegal activities. The solution to the "drug problem" is not only a matter of having the right policies to attack the industry's profitability, but rather it requires changes and reforms in social structure, institutions and culture. For that reason anti-drug policies which primarily attack the industry's profitability do not achieve sustainable results in the medium and long term.

The point is simple and profound: to analyse the illegal drugs industry's causality and effects one should not use common models that consider drugs as products of exogenous factors but instead use those which

treat drugs as products of endogenous processes and as symptomatic of unresolved social problems and conflicts.

For this reason we refer to "relationships or associations of the development of the illegal industry with human rights" as part of a process, but not as "direct effects" of such development.

This analysis concludes clearly that the strength and shape of the associations between the development of the illegal drugs industry and human rights depends on the structure, institutions and culture of the society in question, and therefore, that such associations differ substantially across societies. As shown below, the experience of the Andean countries supports this assertion. The illegal drugs industry has grown in Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, but its consequences have been significantly more benign in Bolivia and Peru than in Colombia.

Key relationships between illegal drugs and human rights

Illegal drugs have a strong association with human rights violations, and this association takes many shapes and forms.

The illegal drugs industry uses violence and the threat of violence to solve internal conflicts, to fight law enforcement, to improve the competitive position of its actors, and to achieve legislative goals.

It is important to note, however, that two distinct types of associations exist between the illegal drugs industry and human rights. The first type arises from the organization of the illegal industry in which it is functional to violate some human rights. The second results from policies against illegal drugs and the ways in which they are applied. Both associations vary from country to country, and frequently among regions of the same country, depending on the structure, institutions and cultures of the respective communities.

The study of the relationship between human rights and illegal drugs in Andean countries shows two contrasting patterns. First, in Colombia, violence, massive forced displacements, and violent confrontations between illegal actors and the State have generated high social costs. Second, in Bolivia and Peru, such associations have been much weaker although still significant within the context of the two countries.

In both cases there are close relationships among crime, violence and drugs. In the Colombian case, an extensive bibliography explores these

phenomena and confirms the nexus of illegal drugs, crime and violence. It also highlights the importance of the drugs industry's links with guerrilla and paramilitary groups (PNUD, 2003, Rubio, 1999, Gaviria, 2000, Barrera, 2004). In the Bolivian and Peruvian cases, available bibliographies also confirm these relationships (Thoumi, 2003, Bolin, 1998, Albó and Barrios, 1993, Léons and Sanabria, 1997, Cotler, 1999).

Introduction

2. Context

2.1 *Location*

Human rights violations have been centred in the rural areas of departments with concentrated illicit plantings, in areas of geo-strategic importance for drug production and trafficking, and also in the corridors through which drugs and weapons are smuggled. These areas include the departments of Putumayo, Cauca, Caldas, Chocó, Guaviare, North of Santander, Huila, Cesar, and the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta area.

There are significant concentrations of Indian and Afro-Colombian communities in these areas, and there has been a pronounced weakening in the ability of their traditional institutions to solve conflicts and prevent violence because local town councils and Indian governors have been threatened and many murdered. (People's Advocacy, 2004). Nonetheless, community members concur with analyses that the most effective and lasting solutions for sustainable peace come from within communities themselves and that re-establishing respect for traditional laws is central to such solutions.

2.2 *Illegal drugs and human rights of peasants and indigenous communities in the Andes*

Displacement of People

According to the United Nations, Colombia has the third largest number of people displaced by violence in the world after Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The main groups affected have been community leaders, peasants, Indians and Afro-Colombians.

Forced displacement violates a wide range of rights including the rights to life and physical integrity, to residence, to not being displaced, to association, to free circulation in the national territory, to work, to education, and to housing under humanly dignified conditions. It also generates food insecurity, a deterioration in health conditions, significant loss of family income, and stoppages in and difficulties with accessing education. The displacement of organized communities weakens social capital, social fabric, institutions and values. Such weakening makes it more difficult for communities to fight delinquency and drug trafficking.

According to the Colombian Organization, Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement (CODHES, 2001) "it is estimated that between 1985 and 2000, 2,060,000 people were displaced. This phenomenon worsened during the last four years. In 62% of cases, displacement has been individual or as family units, and in 35% of the cases as a collective exodus". ACNUR (2001) identifies the main characteristics of the displaced populations: "the high proportion of boys, girls and women; low income people of rural origin and strong presence of Indian and Afro-Colombian ethnic minorities that account for one third of the displaced although alone they are 11% of the Colombian population". Indeed, CODHES statistics also note that "57% of the displaced are women and 22% female heads of household". ACNUR (2001) also highlights the loss of traditional roles as land holders, producers, organizers and leaders among the displaced Afro-Colombian populations and those peasants of Antioqueño origin. As figures show, illicit crops and the worsening of the armed conflict are the main causes of human displacements in Colombia. Ninety per cent of people have been displaced by the armed conflict and the war against illicit plantings. The largest displacements have occurred in Catatumbo and Chocó. (Martínez Vivas, 2004)

The loss of the traditional role of male head-of-household has been another important result of displacements. ACNUR explains, "women took over providing psychological support and functioning as 'pillars' of their families in order to impede their families' disintegration. Overcrowded shelters and decline in quality of life have been aggravated by males' frequent physical and sexual abuse of women which is their only expression of masculine authority. Furthermore, women have then reproduced this pattern of violence with their children". (Ibidem)

Displacement has an additional negative effect in Indian communities. These communities are ruled by Councils of Elders that make the most important local decisions. When these councils are displaced the whole community loses its guiding force. It is of the highest importance that these Indian authorities participate actively in the Committees of Support to the Displaced Population.

The return of the displaced to their homes can have positive effects, especially for women, because returnees encourage "a new conception of community order and group life" (Ibidem). The reorganization process faced by these people during the displacement and after they return to their territory "had a positive effect as it gradually increased the participation of women. This has been in part the result of training in social organization, health, psycho-social support, agricultural technology, gender, land property rights and titling rights. The requirements of some NGOs that women participate on an equal basis in the projects were of great importance in this process". (Ibidem)

In the short term, displacements have important negative urban effects as they increase the unemployment rate, the demand for health and education services, the proliferation of informal activities and "rebusque",[1] informal traders' occupation of public space, the numbers of child and adult beggars, the number of gangs, and all types of crime.

Children and illicit plantings

The situation of children in illicit plantings regions is dire because health conditions in such areas are precarious and inadequate for children's development. The absence of water and sewer systems and of water treatment plants is common. There are no health services or vaccination campaigns. According to UNICEF, illicit plantings regions also have the highest indexes of malnutrition and of infantile morbidity (People's Advocacy, 2002c).

The People's Advocacy estimates that a large but uncertain number of children work in coca and poppy farms and that many abandon their studies to work exclusively in those plantings. There are already entire generations whose world is strongly circumscribed by illicit crops. Overall,

1. A common coping practice in Colombia where people go out every day willing to do anything in order to "pull themselves up by the bootstraps", but uncertain of their prospects.

these children have been trapped in a complex social situation that prevents them from having a healthy life in which their needs are met.

At present, thousands of children are part of armed groups, and the number of children recruited in recent years has increased considerably. Human Rights Watch estimates that the "total number of combatant children in Colombia probably exceeds 11,000", and adds that "this is a conservative figure that likely underestimates the actual one" (HRW, 2003). After Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia has the third largest number in the world (Human Rights Watch, 2003). While some Colombian children are forced to join armed groups, others have done so out of sheer necessity. For one, after having been involved with illicit crops, children are more likely to join guerrilla groups because they lack other job opportunities, particularly after aerial spraying has destroyed their livelihoods in the fields. Because of such children's deep scars and experiences with violence, hate, pain and desperation, their re-assimilation into civil society poses a great challenge for Colombia.

UNICEF estimates that there are today 6,000 to 7,000 boys and girls in the irregular armed groups, most of them 15 to 17 years old. FARC has the largest number of children followed by the ELN and the Paramilitary. "Of the total demobilized in Colombia in 2000, 48% were under 18 years of age…today approximately 15% to 20% of the members of the guerrillas and paramilitary groups are under 18 years of age" (http://www.unicef.org.co).

UNICEF also estimates that 33.3% of the children soldiers are attracted by weapons and uniforms, and 33.3% because of poverty. Another 16.6% joined because of their familiarity and daily contact with the armed groups and a small percentage to be with someone they love or because of a failed love episode. Fourteen per cent of those under 18 have been forced to join. "However the great majority declare that after they join they are not free to leave the group" (http://www.unicef.org.co).

Human Rights Watch (2003) has similar findings. It reports that Colombia has one of the largest numbers of combatant children in the world. At least one in four combatants in Colombia is under 18 and several thousands are under 15. Interviews of former child combatants indicate that many join to get food or physical protection, or out of plain fear. Others are homeless children who have nowhere to go. In both the guer-

rillas and paramilitary, the children who try to escape or to return to their families run the risk of execution" (Ibidem). Many of them cannot maintain any contact with their families.

The widespread use of landmines is another threat to children. These mines have been buried in many rural areas, frequently around illegal crop fields, and they have become hazards for thousands of civilians who either die or are seriously mutilated. The Ministry of Defence estimates that 15% of the national territory is mined and that about 5,000 children have died owing to landmine explosions.[2]

Food Security

The combination of armed conflict, displacements and the decrease in food yields owing to growth in illegal plantings puts food security at risk. Armed conflict has been a great obstacle to several projects designed to provide access to land to more people. For example, in 1994, the Colombian Government began a programme of collective titling of 600,000 hectares to benefit black communities in Bajo Atrato. This project was interrupted in mid-1997 by the forced displacement of peasants and worsening armed conflict. Also, lands seized and expropriated from large drug traffickers could be re-distributed to peasants and improve the country's land distribution ratios. It is not known, however, what risks would be faced by the beneficiaries if such a programme were implemented.

2.3 *Consequences of illegal drugs monies*

Peasant and native communities have suffered very strong consequences owing to their voluntary, forced, or occasional associations with illegal drugs that have had a profound effect on their social structures.

The involvement of communities in coca and poppy cultivation creates a downward spiral of social, moral, and cultural decomposition, increases insurgent groups' actions and weakens social controls on individuals' behaviour. Increased coca and poppy plantings worsen confrontations and generate criminal activity such as weapons smuggling. Alcoholism, prosti-

tution and drug addiction also develop in the involved communities; intra-family violence, particularly the abuse of women and children, becomes more common. The homicide, kidnapping, and disappearance of men, as well as general forced displacement, increases significantly the number of female heads of household.

Social decomposition is particularly prevalent in indigenous communities where youths have begun to ignore their communities' traditions and authorities and the use of weapons among peasants and Indians has become generalized.

The presence of large quantities of cash induces other forms of delinquency, but illegal revenues are highly concentrated and do not generate stable development. Concentration on one illegal crop increases communities' vulnerability, and ultimately communities become indigent when their illegal crops are eradicated.

Illegality victimizes small farmers and yokes them to big traffickers, guerrillas and the paramilitary (Vargas and Barragán, 1994).[3] When small farmers start planting coca and poppy, the activities of such violent players increase. Yet, activities of groups like FARC and AUC have generated contradictory feelings among the peasantry. For example guerrilla groups gain legitimacy when rural properties are fumigated and when the groups control local delinquency. The large size of illegal revenues places the police, the army, and local politicians at high risk for corruption, and many traffickers have accumulated assets that have given them political influence. (Ibidem)

3. Vargas and Barragán (1994) point out many events that illustrate these changes.

3. **Legal Framework**

3.1 ▶ *Anti-drug policies and human rights*

These policies aim to eliminate illegal drugs. They have, however, positive and negative consequences for human rights.

Areas of rehabilitation and consolidation

Current Policy
A few weeks after taking office, the Uribe administration created the Areas of rehabilitation and consolidation with the aim of strengthening institutional stability and protecting the civilian population. In these areas, the public force was granted judicial police powers that enabled searches and detentions without prior judicial warrants. The public force was also permitted to intercept phone and other communications, check loads in highways, remove safe-conducts, and restrict the right of the citizens' free movement. These measures were applied in Arauca and Montes de María in the South of Bolivar.

Experiences from Policy Applications: Applied Policy Results
According to Amnesty International (2004a) "the security measures adopted by the government have not restored order in Arauca. They have made civilians more likely to participate in the civil conflict, and they have guaranteed impunity for those who violate human rights, and they infringe on International Human Rights". Amnesty adds that arbitrary and massive detentions increased, primarily of rural and union leaders and human rights defenders, during the time this security measure was implemented. They

assert that there are indications implicating the armed forces in Arauca in tortures, disappearances, homicides, and collaboration with the paramilitary.

On 26 November 2002 the Constitutional Court declared that some parts of the decree establishing the policy could not be implemented. The Court's decision led to the policy's cancellation.

Criminalization of small coca and poppy producers

Current Policy

The National Narcotics Statute (Law 30 of 1986) criminalized small coca and poppy farmers. The New Penal Code defines any planting of 20 or more plants of marijuana, coca, or poppy as a crime, thus rendering any small, illicit crop farmer a criminal. This law has been an obstacle to dialogue between farmers and the State, and has created ambiguous and contradictory situations since government agencies acknowledge the need to provide alternative sources of income for these groups despite their criminal status. Plan Colombia, CONPES (the Government Council on Economic and Social Policies) and the National Plan Against Drugs differentiate between small and large illicit farmers making the former subjects of Alternative Development programmes. (People's Advocacy, 2002c)

Experiences from Policy Applications: Applied Policy Results

As scholars acknowledge: "The persistent treatment of production as a criminal behaviour by State decision-makers contributes to the generation of a subculture of illegality that makes it increasingly difficult to incorporate productive options other than illicit crops. Growers end up reaffirming themselves in their illegality. This generates a particular context of communication and a conflict resolution system outside the State which results in turn in high indexes of homicides and delinquency". (Vargas and Barragán, 1994)

Eradication strategy: aerial spraying with glyphosate

Current Policy

Aerial fumigation was authorized by Law 30 of 1986. This policy has been refined and gradually made more repressive. It started with authorized fumi-

gations of industrial plantings. It was then expanded to allow the spraying of small plantings and of those in which coca and poppy are mixed with food-stuffs. As noted, it is very worrisome that according to the current regime, all the small coca and poppy plantings of peasants are illegal, a condition that distances peasants from the State and puts them in a vulnerable position regarding illegal armed groups.

Experiences from Policy Applications: Applied Policy Results

There has been much fruitless criticism of fumigation. For example, Decree 1843 of 1991 requires that aerial spraying complies with agricultural authorities' guidelines. Nonetheless, there are frequent complaints that spraying does not comply with the herbicide's producer guidelines: "the herbicide Roundup label has a series of cautions and warnings, (…) to apply with calm winds (…) from a height of not more than 2 meters above the plants. These conditions are not met in the areas where the forced eradication programme is implemented". (People's Advocacy, 2002c)

In a similar vein, the EPA "observes with special concern the risk from the 'drift effect' which is closely related to the height of the planes' flights and the wind speed. It indicates (...) that fumigation can affect 50% of the plants located within 150 to 600 feet away from the sprayed area". (People's Advocacy, 2003)

Fumigation has also encouraged displacements "as a result of food insecurity caused by the chemicals used or by the coercion visited upon peasants by armed groups to get them to abandon their lands" (Ibidem). The government considers that the displacements attributable to the Programme of Eradication of Illicit Plantings (PECI) are not forced displacements. Thus people displaced because of this programme are prevented from receiving aid from the National System of Integral Attention to Displaced Peoples.

According to the People's Advocacy, "fumigations induce peasants to abandon or sell their lands to large landowners or drug traffickers after which they go and cut down more jungle. This way the historical cycle of land tenancy in the country is repeated".[4]

4. "The country's large landowners had 32% of land in 1984 and 45% in 1997. In the area near the Peace Highway the number of land owners declined drastically" (Martínez Vivas, 2004).

CODHES confirms these findings: "air spraying causes large displacements. There were close to 40,000 people displaced in 2002, 13,571 of them in the North of Santander department which showed the largest displacement index due to this cause in the country". (Martínez Vivas, 2004)

The People's Advocacy asserts that aerial spraying contributes to the destruction and emigration of aquatic fauna and the contamination of water sources. These problems are also caused by the chemical products used by coca and cocaine producers. One problem is that glyphosate acts in a non-selective way, and "aerial spraying has affected parts of the forests and the bodies of water near the areas planted with coca. The herbicide used in fumigations increases the damage and the contamination caused by the products used by peasants, settlers, and some natives who grow and process coca". (People's Advocacy, 2001). According to the People's Advocacy, fumigation contributes to a disastrous cycle of "triple deforestation": brought about by cutting jungle for planting, doing it again after fumigation, and the effects of the herbicide on the natural forest. These effects are particularly serious in the high mountain forests that are the country's prime water-generating areas.

The debate on fumigations has also focused on health effects. Many reports indicate cases of temporary partial blindness, as well as digestive, respiratory, skin, and other relatively small afflictions that disappear in a short time. There have also been reports of deaths associated with fumigation, especially those of children, but a lack of autopsies has prevented a determination of the causes of these deaths (Epidemiology Section, Departmental Institute of Health, Nariño, 2001).[5]

In contrast, a study sponsored by the Colombian and American governments concludes that the reported cases do not show intoxications but infections typical of those localities which cannot be directly attributed to fumigation. Since these populations are very poor and vulnerable, and 70% of them do not have their basic needs satisfied, fumigation could raise the probability of developing infectious diseases (Administrative Tribunal of Cundinamarca, 2001).

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5. For example, children can develop a rash that may get infected after they scratch it.

The use of many chemical products in coca and poppy plantings and in cocaine and heroin refining is a significant obstacle to establishing the actual effects of aerial spraying. Most of these chemicals are highly toxic and used without any preventive measures or appropriate handling (Ministry of Health, 2002).

Lack of coordination among agencies charged with managing fumigations and alternative development has been a cause of spraying errors that have affected food crops and alternative development projects funded by the National Government and international cooperation agencies. Collaboration and coordination among the authorities is weak, and the two programmes are insufficiently linked.

Fumigation errors appear to have resulted in part from lack of compliance with Decree 1843 of 1991: "Article 87 states that the application of pesticides in rural areas cannot take place at less than 10 meters, if applied from land, or 100 meters if applied by air, of any water body or stream, main highways, human or animal populations, or any other area that requires special protection. This is specified in Resolution 0005 of 2000 of the National Narcotics Council (CNE). Additionally, article 102 of the same Decree states that it is a pilot's obligation not to fly over populations, aqueducts, schools and other places that represent risks to humans, animals, and vegetation". (Ministry of Health, 2002).

A Compensation System, managed by the National Drugs Directorate (DNE) and the Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) of the American Embassy, exists to respond to claims of damages caused by aerial sprayings. The operation of this system is complex, it has been slow to respond to claims, and its effectiveness can be questioned. Further, people have frequently tried to take advantage of the system by making false claims which in turn harm valid ones. Occasionally, the system has been completely ineffective. Take for example a case "in which the Antidrug Police requested that the UMATA visit and inspect an affected property three years after a complaint was made" (People's Advocacy, 2001). And "according to the Department of State September 2002 report (..) although there is a verification system, no peasant has received compensation, and in only one case compensation has been approved. The report does not explain the procedure used to evaluate health complaints". (Latin American Working Group, 2002)

The Department of State reports that the damage claims of licit cultivations are transferred to municipal representatives who in turn refer them to a local agricultural agency for verification through a field visit. The verified complaints are referred to the Antidrug Police (DIRAN) and to the DNE by municipal representatives. DIRAN then has five days to certify whether fumigation took place in the proximity of the location of the complaint. If it is certified, DIRAN is supposed to make a field visit within ten days to evaluate the truthfulness of the complaint and the amount of the compensation to be paid. It should be noted that because the agency responsible for the operation of the air fumigation programme and the agency in charge of verifying the complaints are one and the same, there is no incentive to admit to fumigation errors. This is indeed a serious conflict of interest.[6]

DIRAN (2004) notes that by June 2004, 4,535 people, most of them residents of remote and unsafe rural areas had registered a complaint, 61% of which were rejected because: the application was late, no fumigation happened in the day that the peasant claimed that it happened, or the peasant had some coca plantings near his legal ones. Another 38.8% of the complaints were still under consideration and only 10 (0.2%) had resulted in compensations.

The People's Advocacy asserts that the Illicit Crops Eradication Programme does not violate the Constitution because it is a policy against drugs, but its implementation may sacrifice constitutional values and principles and "it has ignored the State's duty to provide special protection to marginalized groups, (Political Constitution art. 13) (..) including peasants, settlers and Indians who have small plantings". (People's Advocacy, 2002c)

3.2 *Alternative policies*

▶ Harm Reduction Policies: articulate the people displaced by spraying in the National System of Integral Attention to Displaced Peoples; monitoring and evaluation of health and environmental impacts; increased coordination to avoid licit crops spraying.

▶ Establish agreements between the government and the population for eradication.

▶ The Peace Communities do not trust the State or illegal armed groups. The State's presence via the police or armed services is regarded as an unfamiliar influence by the communities and rejected by them in order to avoid revenge from guerillas or paramilitary. The establishment of a Communitarian Police is a possibility for dealing with this issue.

Legal Framework

4. Initiatives for Change

State intervention in response to the human rights situation

The Colombian Government has developed diverse mechanisms to protect peasants, Indians, and Afro-Colombian communities and to prevent the violation of their human rights.

Early Warning System (SAT)

The SAT was established in November 2001 under the People's Advocacy with USAID backing. At the start it had difficulties "generated by the weak, bureaucratic, inopportune and uncoordinated government response and the extremely general information contained in the issued alerts". (Republic of Colombia, 2003: 22)

On 18 November 2002 an Inter-institutional Early Warning Committee (CIAT) composed of the Office of the Vice President and the Interior, Justice, and Defence Ministries was created to coordinate the government's role "to prevent massive human rights violations since it is the only intended user of the early warnings issued by the People's Advocacy to which it then must respond adequately". (Ibidem)

Goals

The SAT-CIAT is a very novel prevention strategy and has become quite effective. During 2003, CIAT received, processed and attended to "84

risk reports sent by SAT of the People's Advocacy on 132 municipalities, 36 (38%) of which were considered early warnings. The rest, not considered early warnings, were processed with the local authorities for specific actions" (Ibidem). There is no doubt that this has been an innovative strategy to prevent human rights violations.

Campaign to prevent the recruitment of minors

In 2004 the Ministry of Defence through the National Army started a campaign in schools to prevent recruitment by illegal armed groups. They visited schools attended by low income children and distributed 20,000 school books, pens and other school materials.[7]

Goals

This campaign is part of the Colombia Acts Against Terrorism programme that "seeks to reach children with positive messages so that they are not persuaded to join subversive groups outside the law, and at the same time, to contribute to the minors' trust and support of the Public Force and State institutions". (Ministry of Defence, 2004)

Characteristics of Implemented Policies

Despite its very good intentions, this prevention campaign is insufficient. Children need more than "positive messages". The campaign should focus on preventing the types of situations noted by Human Rights Watch and UNICEF that make children vulnerable to recruitment into armed groups. For example, since some children join these groups out of material necessity, this programme should try to alleviate extreme poverty. Since other children are recruited by force, there is also a need for protection and support networks. An information campaign for children, illustrating the consequences of joining armed groups the rough conditions and suffering members endure, the high probability of not seeing their families again or of ever returning to a normal life, and the high probability of either dying in combat or being murdered within the armed group is key. Such a campaign would open the eyes of many children who might otherwise

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7. At present, there are other inter-institutional initiatives to prevent children's recruitment and to re-integrate former combatants into society.

make wrong decisions due to inexperience, deception or manipulation. In addition, a support system extending beyond the campaign should be established to provide advice and protection, and to help youths confront pressures to join armed groups.

Houses of Justice

The Houses of Justice are another innovative development "whose main function is to prevent armed groups attacks or aggressions against the civil population".

Goals

The National Programme of Houses of Justice and Peace began in 1995 with the aims of facilitating community access to formal and informal justice, of achieving peaceful conflict resolution, and of strengthening coexistence and increasing civic participation.

It also seeks to increase the scope of the administration of justice, to promote and defend the human rights of citizens, and to coordinate community development programmes and justice policies. The government asserts that the beneficiaries of this programme are satisfied. (www.mininteriorjusticia.gov.co)

Characteristics of Implemented Policies

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Community Defenders' Programme

This project of the People's Advocacy sends professionals to the areas where displaced communities and those at risk of displacement reside in order to follow up and support their life projects.

Goals

The main objective of the programme is "to strengthen the State's action in places where its institutional presence does not exist or is very weak, to serve as a mechanism to prevent human rights violations and to protect civilian populations… and also to strengthen their identity and autonomy and to develop community organizations". (Ibidem)

Characteristics of Implemented Policies

This programme is under way in 13 regions of the country, including the Pacific Cost of Valle and Mariño Departments, the Bajo Atrato, Sierra Nevada of Santa Maria, and the Bajo Putumayo.

Strategy to decentralize human rights actions

The Government has formulated a policy to empower departments and municipalities to confront human rights issues in an active and participatory fashion. The Uribe administration has expressed its will to maintain "the programmes to protect human rights defenders, union members, promoters of Indian causes, and social activists who are subjects of persecution and threats". (www.derechoshumanos.gov.co).

Goals

The human rights policy goal in each territory is "to facilitate compromises among the organized or unorganized groups in civil society, and departmental, municipal, and national authorities present in those territories in order to prevent violations, and to defend and guarantee human rights across departments and municipalities". (Ibidem)

In order to strengthen processes to prevent human rights violations, the Development Plan aims "to strengthen decentralization of issue training and advising of local authorities involved so that they include strategies to prevent human rights violations and to incorporate humanitarian international rights in their development, territorial ordering and contingency plans" (Ibidem). It also seeks to "design and implement pedagogic strategies directed at the communities aiming to generate processes through which these communities appropriate human rights as a basis for a civilian response aimed at preventing and dissuading armed actors threats and aggressions". (Ibidem)

4.2 *Armed forces, police and human rights*

The mission of the Armed Forces is "to defend the sovereignty, independence and integrity of the national territory and the constitutional order, to contribute to the security of the populations and their resources, and to

contribute to the implementation of the State functions and the civilian duties". (http://www.fuerzasmilitares.mil.co /)

Goals

The presence of the Armed Forces is the first step in establishing State presence in many areas, although on many occasions this presence has been insufficient to counteract the activities of warring guerrilla and the paramilitary groups which have continued to infringe on Humanitarian International Rights and to violate normative human rights precepts meant to protect residents of the State. (People's Advocacy, 2003)

Characteristics of Implemented Policies

Unfortunately, on many occasions the presence of the Armed Forces has been accompanied by human rights violations. It is difficult for the Armed Forces to differentiate between civilians and armed actors. Indeed, a strategy of guerrillas is to camouflage themselves within the population. For that reason, from time to time, the military forces' attacks on guerrillas and paramilitary cause population displacements. This appears to have been the case of "Operation Genesis" begun in February of 1997 by the Colombian air force with troops of the Seventeenth Brigade of the Army against the 57th FARC front. "According to testimonies of the region's residents, in this operation the communities of Caño Seco, Tamboral and Arenales were bombarded (...) causing the displacement of approximately fifteen thousand peasants". (People's Advocacy, 2002b)

In the past there has also been evidence of the neglect of the public force to prevent homicides and to protect the citizenry. For example, in La Gabarra on 29 May 1999, 13 people were slaughtered by the paramilitary. Then on 17 July 1999, another massacre in which 11 people died in La Gabarra was perpetrated by the same actors. According to the investigations of the *Procudaruría* and the *Fiscalía*, these actions were committed by paramilitary groups with the leniency of the military and police operating in the region. These serious omissions weaken the State's credibility as guarantor of rights and freedoms and also pose a main obstacle to cooperation between the citizenry and the Colombian Government.

The Government attempted to deal with these problems by firing officials, creating human rights courses, and establishing behaviour proto-

cols for the armed forces and the police. These measures appear to have produced some results since the complaints against these organizations have diminished substantially.

4.3 ▶ *Civilian reaction in response to the human rights situation*

The depth and difficulty of the aforementioned issues have motivated many communities to create and organize their own alternative approaches to the conflict. Many of these approaches are innovative and the fruit of the community consensus and deep desires to stop the violation of fundamental rights. Two such approaches, the Communities of Peace and the Nasa project, are highlighted below.

Peace Communities

Peace Initiatives in Colombia have special characteristics that reflect their environment. Many have been formed by groups that have traditionally been excluded from political life, like peasants and Indians. The Peace Communities constitute an important development along these lines.[8 and 9]

In February of 1997, the people living in the Cacarica River basin had to abandon their homes for security reasons. About 3,500 people had to move to Turbo and the mouth of the Atrato river. (People's Advocacy, 2002b). After living for more than a year in inhuman conditions "they declared themselves neutral in the conflict and organized their Peace Community. The communities were supported in this process by the Diocese of Apartadó and of the Centre of Research and Popular Education (CINEP)". (ACNUR, 2001)

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8. Because of the nature of the Peace Communities, it is difficult to obtain first hand information from them. Also, their diversity and complexity make it difficult to do an in-depth analysis. For these reasons, this section has to be taken as preliminary.

9. The Colombian Government is very critical of the Peace Communities because they do not accept the armed forces presence in their territories. "The neutrality principle used by some communities to avoid the guerrilla, paramilitary and army's presence in their territories confronts a crucial test after Defense Minister Jorge Alberto Uribe declared that 'there can not be Peace Communities without the presence of the Public Forces'" (*El Tiempo*, 9 March, 2005).

Before deciding to form the Peace Communities, they had workshops in which they learned how to practice neutrality. These provided community members with information that allowed them to decide whether to join the project. In order to gain support and security to facilitate their return to their homes "the communities signed an agreement with the Government for their return called the 'Pavarandó Agreements', in which government agencies commit themselves to support the project.[10] Before returning to their original homes, people established Peace Communities in seven large settlements where the organization could be strengthened and their security could be evaluated". (Ibidem)

The first Community of Peace of San Francisco de Asis was created in Pavarandó (part of the Urabá region of Antioquia) in October of 1997 by 49 communities of displaced people who longed to return to their lands. They had the support of the Church and NGOs and a government commitment both to provide security in the places to which they returned and to request respect for those communities from the actors directly involved in the conflict. Between 1998 and February of 1999 two other communities, Natividad de Maria composed of 105 families and Nuestra Señora del Carmen made up of about 250 families, were established in Chocó. (*El Tiempo*, 8 March 2005)

Peace Communities have expanded. The creation declaration of a Peace Community expresses the community's situation, goals and motives: "We constitute a Peace Community as the only option to survive in this war. Some of us after three years have been able to return to our lands. Others decide to stay in San José. We still live with fear but united we will continue resisting and working. We form the community because only united can we win this war. We want the united community to go ahead and continue to resist, demanding respect for our norms and rights from the violent ones". (Hernández-Delgado, undated)

Goals

After the decision to join together in a community, the displaced population collectively formulates a set of rules that prohibits any participation in

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10. A main goal of the Peace Communities has been to return to their lands with dignity and security. They returned from late 1997 to late 1999 after signing agreements with the State (People's Advocacy, 2002b).

violent activities, carrying firearms, collaborating with the violent groups, and providing, manipulating or producing information for any of the parties in conflict. They also require the acceptance of these rules and commitments to a political and negotiated solution to the armed conflict, to strengthening community work, and to defending their cultural identity and their territory (People's Advocacy, 2002b). These populations have both a civil authority to settle conflicts and systems to protect their human rights. (*El Tiempo*, 8 March 2005)

Their main demands have been: respect for housing and work areas and for freedom of movement; the elimination of food supply restrictions; prohibitions on recruiting or pressuring people who have been declared part of a Peace Community; the continuation of the humanitarian truce, civic rights and Humanitarian International Rights, and respect for the principles and autonomy of the Peace Communities (People's Advocacy, 2002b).[11]

According to the CINEP the overarching interests of these communities are: the defence of their lives and their ancestral territory, the exercise of autonomy, and the recovery and defence of their identity and culture. (Vega-Lozano, 2005)

The Peace Communities' organizational structure has two levels: "internally, the committees that work in the settlements; and the negotiation and humanitarian commissions that represent them to the outside world. These two have relationships with state agencies that include monitoring the compliance of the signed agreements, dialoguing with the armed actors, so that their principles of neutrality and non-violence are respected, and lastly, seeking national and international support to strengthen that protection and to enable their return to productive life". (ACNUR, 2001)

According to a census of Network of Peace Initiatives (REDEPAZ) there are 52 Peace Communities at this time. (*El Tiempo*, 8 March 2005)

Characteristics of Implemented Policies

Peace Communities are intended as an instrument to strengthen and increase the cohesion of displaced communities and to improve their resistance to armed conflict while at the same time keeping them on the margins of such

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11. These rules and demands are those of the Communities in the Bajo Atrato. Other communities' rules and demands may vary.

conflicts. But this strategy has nevertheless generated violent reactions from the guerrillas and the paramilitary. From their perspective, "the one who is not with me is against me". They have accused Peace Communities of collaborating with their enemies, and such accusations have led to murders and other human rights violations (People's Advocacy, 2002b and Hernández-Delgado, undated). For example, there was recently a massacre of eight peasants in the Peace Community of San José of Apartadó (Urabá). No one has come forward to testify about this incident within the judicial system, while some people are willing to testify only in front of the Inter-American Human Rights Court. (*El Tiempo*, 9 March 2005)

Women's roles have been critical to the Peace Communities, and women "have developed a new consciousness of their potential and capacities and their rights to fair treatment. These are expressed through their demands for support for their incipient organizations, for technical training, and in their requests for technical and legal support in gaining access to and legal titling of land. Definitely, women claim an equal space in the representative organs and administration of the Peace Communities". (ACNUR, 2001)

Youths are one of the most vulnerable population groups, and thus the "ACNUR seeks to reinforce their incipient youth organization in the Peace Communities, and to diagnose their situation, identifying participative activities that would take into account their needs and concrete yearnings". (Ibidem)

The Nasa Project

In Cauca department there are important Indian organizations that have aggregated Indian populations. The Indian Regional Council of Cauca (CRIC) was created in 1971 with the aim of promoting respect for Indians' rights as a people. Its main objectives were: to recover and expand the *resguardos* lands; to strengthen the Indian councils; to avoid paying *terraje*; to make known Indian laws and to demand their fair application; to preserve their histories, languages and customs; and to train Indian professors to provide education in their native languages. Later, seven major projects were developed by local *cabildos* in the Northern Cauca region: The Nasa Project, (*Cabildos* of Toribío, San Francisco and Tacueyó); the Global Project, (*Cabildo* global); the Páez Unity Project, (*Cabildo* Miranda);

the Integral Project, (*Cabildo* Huellas Caloto); the Cxhacxha Wala Project, (*Cabildo* Corinto); the Oxhacxha Project, (*Cabildos* of Canoas, Munchique los Tigres and Nasa Kiwe Tekh Ksxaw); and the Sa´t Fxinxi Kiwe Project, (*Cabildos* of Delicias, Guadualito, Concepción, Cerro Tijeras and Pueblo Nuevo Ceral). (www.nasaacin.net)

Goals

The Nasa Project stands out among these projects. Its objective is to promote "the community's unity in order to strengthen its organizational processes and social cohesion through education and productive projects in order to gradually become a new society, without bad habits and respectful of its own values" (Ibidem). A primary resistance strategy of the Nasa Project is the "*Minga en Resistencia*", that is "a set of rules created by their assembly to allow them to respond jointly and peacefully to diverse expressions of the armed conflict" (Hernández Delgado, undated). This project has made it possible to recover 140,000 hectares of land and has increased the degree of democracy in decision-making processes.

The Association of Indian "*Cabildos*" of the Northern Cauca region (ACIN) was created in 1994 to improve Indian integration. This association runs several programmes, notably the Organizational-Political (Community, *Cabildos* and Mayor's office projects); Education (Indian University, UNESCO Chair, the Educational Community Project - PEC, Women and Youth Movement); Planning and Administration (charged with the development of plans, territorial organization, project design and administration, and the environmental plan); and Juridical Leaders' training in *Derecho Propio* (Native Law) and (*Guardía Indígena*) (Ibidem). The Indian University initiative, although not yet consolidated, has the potential to be very important, and its training in *Derecho Propio*, teaches Indian law, how Indian justice should be applied, resistance processes, and human rights.

ACIN has an Education Programme that seeks "to create its own education system to respond to the needs and character of the *proyecto de vida* (life project) originating in the Nasa, Guambian, black and mestizo communities of the Northern Cauca region". (Ibidem)

The Nasa UNESCO Chair has been established to recover historical processes and the future prospects of the communities. Approximately 150 people of the *resguardos* work for the "recovery of the 'collective

memory'" researching, organizing, and systematizing both information about how socialization occurs in these communities and about the "life histories of community elders, leaders, and those who fight for their land" (Ibidem). This is a fundamental Chair because it opens the way for Indians to return to their own traditions and roots, strengthening them in the face of the illicit drugs industry. Some Indians interviewed by Hernández-Delgado agreed that renewal of their traditions is the best "weapon" they have to face drugs, and the Nasa UNESCO Chair is the first option to make such a renewal possible.

The Youth Movement is very valuable because youth are particularly vulnerable vis-à-vis social breakdown. Close to 1,500 youngsters make up this movement whose main purposes are "the education and training of the youth to strengthen community life, leadership, healthy recreation, and the dynamics of regional organizational processes and organizational development". (Ibidem)

Characteristics of Implemented Policies
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Precautionary measures

In 1985 the Colombian Government recognized without restrictions the CIDH´s and the Inter-American Human Rights Court´s competence and jurisdiction, and "since 1996 the CIDH has granted 91 precautionary measures to Colombia. Three were decreed in 1996; nine in 1997, four in 1998, eight in the following year 1999, ten in 2000, 17 in 2001, 31 in 2002 and nine during the first six months of 2003" (Republic of Colombia, 2003b). "The CIDH has also granted one provisional measure during 2003 and another five since 1997". (Ibidem)

Characteristics of Implemented Policies

Precautionary measures in Colombia have been granted to labour, social, and community organizations, to individuals, to Indian communities, and to human rights defenders. The following actions have been carried out "on behalf of the *Pijao, Wiwa, Kankuamo, Embera Chamí, Embera Katío, Kogui* and *Arhuaco* Peoples: visits to their territories (..), mixed commissions to monitor the situation; confirmation of Indian Security Councils, (..) commitment of local authorities to providing protection and actions aiming to provide integral security, (..) and inclusion of their situation in the Local Development Plans". (Republic of Colombia, 2003a)

5. Implications of policies discussed

5.1 ▶ *Lessons learned*

The pattern of causation explained at the beginning of this essay postulated that not simply profitability, but structures, institutions and cultures (values, beliefs and attitudes) determine in which countries the illegal drugs industry develops. In turn, these same characteristics determine the consequences of such development. In Colombia, where controls on individual behaviour imposed by the State and society are much weaker that in the other Andean countries, the violence, the violations of human rights and the social decomposition associated with the illegal drugs have been significantly more generalized and serious than in Bolivia and Peru. It is not without reason that Colombia leads in the rates of homicides, children combatants and other atrocities.

5.2 ▶ *Potential problems/barriers*

As anti-drug policies have been formulated from a criminology perspective, they aim to address the profitability of the crime and focus on attacking the production, traffic, and consumption of drugs and on money laundering.

A clear problem persists among some policies that produce results in the short term but ultimately fail in the long term. For example, air fumiga-

tion in Colombia quickly obtains results but the damages it causes (some irreparable) generates long-term environmental problems and distances the rural and indigenous populations from the Colombian State. Further, it is also very likely that aerial spraying increases the number of peasants willing to join armed groups. And, while the health effects of spraying are probably negligible in the short run, there is great uncertainty regarding the potential for serious health effects in the long term. These long-term effects are much more delicate and difficult to deal with.

The conflictual nature of other policies is clear even in the short term. From an economic perspective, the design of repressive policies reproduces contradictory results since it aims to minimize coca and poppy prices so that peasants will not produce, and simultaneously to maximize consumer prices so that they do not consume. These contradictory incentives enable the illegal industry to endure.

5.3 *Potential harmful consequences*

The policies aim for short-term results using repressive and arbitrary means that produce negative, medium- and long-term social effects.

The current U.S. priority of fighting terrorism can produce results in the short term, but does not create the elements necessary to generate a national consensus and to fortify the relationships between peasants and the State which are very important in eliminating illicit drugs in the long term. The main issue is that the illegal drugs problem is not only a matter of policy, but requires the implementation of social, institutional and cultural changes in order to establish the rule of law. Frequently, repressive policies designed to fight terrorism contradict long-term goals.

5.4 *Replication/Transfer*

In spite of certain common features, the realities of Bolivia, Peru and Colombia are each complex and diverse, thus preventing the formulation of general conclusions about the three countries in regard to the consequences of the development of the illegal drugs industry. Yet, while these

consequences have been notably different, they also conform to the pattern of causation explained at the beginning of this essay which postulated that not simply profitability, but structures, institutions and cultures (values, beliefs and attitudes) determine in which countries the illegal drugs industry develops. In turn, these same characteristics determine the consequences of such development. In future, some of the strategies used in Colombia such as Peace Communities or the Community Defenders' Programme could be replicated in other countries or regions.

Implications of policies discussed

6. Monitoring and evaluation during implementation

Preliminary Evaluation

Human rights violations associated with illegal industry are very serious in each country. However, violations in Bolivia and Peru pale in comparison to those in Colombia. In Bolivia and Peru the strength of civil institutions has meant that violations are relatively weak compared with those in Colombia. It is clear that in Colombia the magnitude and gravity of human rights violations are symptomatic of the weaknesses of the institutions and structure of Colombian society.

Indicators

The main indicators used to measure policy success are the number of coca hectares eradicated, the number of laboratories destroyed, the number of traffickers captured and extradited, the amount of drugs seized, the reduction in the number of consumers, and the increase in prices and the decline in drug purity at the retail level. While it is true that these actions in many ways weaken the illegal industry in the short term, they do not attack the structural and institutional causes behind criminal behaviour. For that reason, in the medium and long term these successes are only pyrrhic victories.

The indicators used to measure the results of the strategies to respond to the human rights situation, for example, the number of community defenders and of regions benefited by this programme, the number of alerts issued by the SAT-CIAT and the number of precautionary measures, are significant because they illustrate what the programmes cover. Nevertheless, the most important indicators will only be able to be evaluated in the medium and long term and will indicate to what degree the enrolment of children in armed groups has been reduced, the accidents with *quiebrapatas* mines and, in general, the massive violation of human rights. They will also show the generation of social networks, social cohesion, changes in values and culture, and conformation of social capital.

6.3 ► *Feedback Mechanisms*

In the three countries the drugs have acted as catalysts for processes that result from persistent unresolved conflicts. This catalysis has increased violence and a disdain for human rights. Even if the illegal drugs industry is eliminated, these societies still have high thresholds for violence as part of their cultures. Many members of these societies have already become accustomed to living with violence. This acceptance of violence has been another deleterious consequence of the development of the illegal industry.

The persistence of criminal activities stimulates a cycle of violence which induces violence in nearby regions. Acknowledging this is key for Colombia and its neighbours, since the sort of violence common in many regions of Colombia tends to multiply crime in other zones, culminating in a "domino effect" at external and internal levels that is reflected in the fear of neighbouring countries' governments.

6.4 ► *Control*

The formulation of "solutions" requires starting with a correct diagnosis of the causes underlying the growth of the illegal drugs trade. It is thus necessary to understand the different problems of individual countries, to

identify the possible areas for reform and the institutional shifts required to move beyond current, common policies.

The illegal industry has strengthened rural political movements in the three countries, though this effect has been strongest in Bolivia, followed by Peru, and then Colombia. Today the governments of the three countries face great challenges in reaching agreements with the rural and indigenous sectors. The lack of mutual respect and understanding, and distrust are some of the obstacles that must be overcome. Illegal plantings have given peasants and Indian communities a power they never had before. For this reason, eradication of illegal plantings requires the generation of equitable spaces of negotiation for these countries' diverse social groups in which elites have had very strong control over political and economic power.

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Policy is the priority

While it still promotes international, comparative and policy-relevant research on contemporary social transformations, MOST is now emphasizing the policy and social research interface as its major raison d'être. Tackling the sustainability of social transformations is the programme's main task, which implies action at normative, analytical and strategic/political levels. It must concentrate on research of direct use to policy makers and groups involved in advocacy.

MOST's main emphasis is thus on establishing and interconnecting international policy networks with renowned social science researchers to facilitate the use of social science research in policy. This means bringing together basic research with those entrusted with policy formulation in governments, a variety of institutions, NGOs, civil society, the private sector and in UNESCO itself.

The MOST programme measures the impact of research on policy, conducts policy-relevant case studies, provides expertise in development initiatives and shares information on how to design research-anchored policy.

Tools for policy-making

The Policy Papers, dedicated to social transformations and based on policy-relevant research results of work carried out by MOST and by other sections of the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS), are intended for policy makers, advocacy groups, business and media.

SHS is seeking new ways of distributing knowledge to target groups, such as ministers of social development, ombudspersons, advocacy groups, UNESCO National Commissions and local authorities. It has prepared a new website for online knowledge management and meta-networking for decision-making and strategy. This knowledge repository will use innovative and refined search tools to facilitate access and intelligibility of complex research data for all potential users.