

THEMATIC SERIES
UnSettlement: Urban displacement in the 21st century

This thematic series explores the scale, nature and dynamics of internal displacement in towns and cities across the world



'FROM AID TO EMPOWERMENT'

Addressing urban displacement in
Colombia's informal settlements

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was written by Pablo Cortés Ferrández as part of his PhD thesis in the University of Deusto, finance by the Research Training Grants Programme of the university and as a part of the Preparedness and Resilience to address Urban Vulnerability (PRUV) project. It would not have been possible without the support of Christelle Cazabat, Álvaro Sardiza, Bina Desai, the community of Altos de la Florida in Soacha, Colombia, the Colombian government's Victim's Unit (UARIV), the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Deusto University in Bilbao and University College Dublin. We would also like to thank our partners at the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), Asociación Codo a Codo, Corporación Kairós and the Ombudsman of Colombia.

Editor: Jeremy Lennard

Design and layout: Gregory van der Donk

Cover image: A child plays in Altos de la Florida, an informal settlement in Soacha on the outskirts of Bogotá, where the research for this study was conducted. Pablo Cortés Ferrández, September 2019

Published: November 2020

'FROM AID TO EMPOWERMENT'

Addressing urban displacement in
Colombia's informal settlements

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary	5
Introduction	6
Methodology	7
Urban displacement in Colombia: the case of Soacha	8
IDPs' vulnerability	9
Urban violence and intra-urban displacement	11
Displacement impacts	12
Rethinking humanitarian action to address urban displacement	13
Humanitarian intervention in Altos de la Florida	13
Recurring challenges in informal settlements	13
The resilience approach	14
Results in Altos de la Florida	15
Conclusion	17
Notes.	18



Grffiti on the Soacha-Bogotá highway reads 'Respect for Suacha'. Photograph: Pablo Cortés Ferrández, 2017

SUMMARY

IDMC embarked on a research programme in February 2018 to investigate the scale, nature and dynamics of internal displacement in towns and cities across the world.¹ This study examines the phenomenon in Colombia and analyses the humanitarian response to the needs of urban internally displaced people (IDPs) and their host communities in informal settlements. Research for the study was undertaken in Altos de la Florida, an informal settlement in Soacha on the outskirts of Bogotá, between 2016 and 2019.

KEY FINDINGS

Urban IDPs face protracted vulnerability and high levels of poverty and violence

Internal displacement has played a significant role in urbanisation in Colombia. A large 89 per cent of the historical eight million country's IDPs have been displaced from rural to urban areas by conflict and violence, and informal settlements have become a refuge of last resort for many. These densely populated areas have high levels of poverty and inequality, inadequate housing and few if any basic services. Urban violence, beyond countries' armed conflict, has also triggered new and secondary displacement from some settlements, creating a downward spiral of vulnerability and risk.

Intra-urban displacement has a significant humanitarian impact

Violence in informal settlements, caused mainly by gangs and criminal organisations, triggers displacement between urban areas, also known as intra-urban displacement. Illegal armed groups exert social and territorial control over many urban areas in Colombia, and their activities force people, including those already displaced at least once, to flee from one neighbourhood to another. People's precarious living conditions can also trigger intra-urban displacement.

Prolonged emergency assistance based on individual organisations' mandates creates aid dependency

Soacha was chosen as the research location for this report because it was the focus of significant international intervention between 2006 and 2018, particularly in Altos de la Florida. Humanitarian efforts were impeded, however, by a lack of community ownership of responses, the result of weakened social cohesion, and a lack of coordination both within the community and with local authorities. Prolonged assistance programmes also helped to create a culture of dependency. Dependency is more likely in communities whose social fabric has been weakened.

A resilience approach in safe environments makes humanitarian responses more effective and sustainable

Community resilience in Altos de la Florida has been strengthened in protective spaces. Interventions combine protection, a top-down approach intended to guarantee individuals' rights, and a bottom-up approach defined as building individual, family and community capacity through participatory processes. These focus on creating economic opportunities, strengthening social fabric and supporting at-risk groups such as children, young people, women and community leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Colombia has the second-highest number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world with 5.6 million.² A large 89 per cent of the historical eight million country's IDPs have been displaced from rural to urban areas by conflict and violence, and informal urban settlements have become a refuge of last resort for many.³

Internal displacement has played a significant role in the country's rapid urbanisation. Around a quarter of the built areas of Colombian cities are informal settlements, which are home to almost five million people.⁴ As such, urban areas have been at the forefront of the response to internal displacement.

The international humanitarian system ran two pilot projects between 2010 and 2018 in the municipality of Soacha on the southern outskirts of Bogotá and the informal settlement of Altos de la Florida in particular - the Inter-Agency Human Security project from 2010 to 2012 and the global Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) from 2012 to 2018.

The objective of the research for this report was to analyse the humanitarian response to the needs of IDPs and host communities in Soacha and Altos de la Florida and identify the successes, challenges and limitations of such interventions. The research questions were:

1. Why have informal urban settlements become IDPs' refuge of last resort?
2. How do the characteristics of informal settlements affect the vulnerability of urban IDPs and their host communities?
3. What are the challenges inherent in humanitarian responses to the needs of IDPs and host communities in informal settlements?
4. How can such responses be improved?

METHODOLOGY

A longitudinal and participatory action research (PAR) methodology was adopted between 2016 and 2019. Ninety-three in-depth interviews were conducted - 37 with Altos de la Florida residents, 37 with UN agencies and NGOs and 19 with local and state authorities - and 223 households were surveyed using mobile phones with KoBoToolbox, a suite of tools developed by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative for research in challenging environments. In addition, this research implemented a population census in Altos de la Florida.

Three social mapping exercises, a participatory activity in which reality is constructed by people from their cultural, interpersonal and political experiences, were undertaken, along with three focus groups that introduced a gender angle. The preliminary results obtained from the primary data collection were then returned to the participants to increase their participation in the empirical analysis. The results of the research were presented at an event in Soacha on 31 August 2019.

MAP 1: Research location



Social mapping with organisations that work in Altos de la Florida. Photograph: Pablo Cortés Ferrández, 2017

URBAN DISPLACEMENT IN COLOMBIA: THE CASE OF SOACHA

“I was displaced twice before I reached the city. We fled from Villavicencio to Chocó in 2005, but the Pacific coast was a very dangerous area because of the conflict. We were displaced again in 2008 and decided to come to Bogotá, but it was impossible to live there because everything was very expensive. In the end we bought a plot of land and built our own house here in 2014.”

Internally displaced woman in Altos de la Florida

Internal displacement is increasingly an urban phenomenon that constitutes a local and national development challenge.⁵ Some urban areas, such as informal settlements, are densely populated and have high levels of poverty and inequality. Their residents live in inadequate housing with few if any basic services. This is the reality for many, if not the majority of urban IDPs.⁶

The challenges and opportunities they face are determined by the character, demographic makeup, spatial layout, infrastructure, socioeconomic dynamics and governance of the areas they live in.⁷ Informal settlements are the most fragile and vulnerable urban areas, and this influences the ways in which IDPs experience displacement and the nature of the support available to them.⁸

Informal settlements are understood as urban areas with little or no state presence, where authorities are unwilling or unable to provide security, basic services or adequate living conditions for their citizens.⁹ Violence in informal settlements, caused by gangs and criminal organizations, triggers displacement within urban areas, also known as intra-urban displacement. People’s precarious living conditions can also be a trigger.

Colombia has experienced an intense period of rural-urban migration over the last two decades, the result of conflict, violence and economic decline in the country-

side.¹⁰ Put another way, internal displacement has driven the “forced urbanisation of the country”.¹¹ Urban areas are also thought of as safer.¹²

Soacha, originally Suacha from the indigenous Chibcha sua meaning “sun” and chá meaning “male”, is an independent locality on the southern outskirts of Bogotá. It is an archetype for the emergence of informal settlements and land markets which characterises most fast-growing cities that host IDPs in Colombia.¹³ It has a population of around 650,000 people, according to the Colombia’s 2018 census.¹⁴ However, the local authorities say there are more than a million.¹⁵ More than 56,000 or 8.9 per cent are IDPs. It is also home to about 36,000 registered Venezuelans.¹⁶

Regarding the victims of displacement in the context of the Colombian conflict, as of October 31st, 2020, there were a total of 5,502 IDPs included in the Registry of Victims due to events that occurred in Soacha. 1,190 were included due to intra-urban displacement events. In other words, the IDPs indicated Soacha as the expulsion place and Soacha as the receiving place.

These figures illustrate the phenomenon of displacement and its dynamics between Soacha and Bogotá:

- | 2,487 people were displaced from Soacha to Bogotá.
- | 580 people were displaced from Bogotá to Soacha.
- | 14,438 people were displaced within Bogotá.¹⁷

IDPS’ VULNERABILITY

Soacha’s poverty rate is 35.9 per cent, 6.9 percentage points above the national figure.¹⁸ Internally displaced families began settling spontaneously on a hill called El Esparto in the early 1990s, eventually giving rise to Altos de la Florida.



The view from the highest part of Altos de la Florida over Soacha and south-west Bogotá. Photograph: Pablo Cortés Ferrández, 2019

Today between 30 and 40 per cent of the community of Altos de la Florida, or around 1,400 people, are IDPs, according to the methodologies implemented by this research. Around 40 per cent of them have been living in the neighbourhood for more than six years (see figure 1). Most arrived from other informal settlements or urban areas, and most cited the lower cost of living as their main reason for moving to Altos de la Florida (see figures 2 and 3).¹⁹

This, however, masks the fact that most were originally displaced from rural areas, often more than once. They then tried unsuccessfully to settle in formal neighbourhoods of Soacha or Bogotá before arriving in Altos de la Florida.

IDPs share some of their vulnerabilities with the rest of the neighbourhood's population, of whom around 76 per cent, or 767 families, only have promissory sales agreements for their homes based on the population census implemented by this research, which do not constitute official proof of ownership.²⁰ Twenty-one per cent, or 213 families, were not aware of the type of documents they had, and 22 per cent felt their tenure was very unsafe. The authorities tried to clear Altos de la Florida in 2009, but the community and humanitarian organisations managed to prevent any evictions from taking place.

Around 73 per cent of residents live in poverty. Around 53 per cent are under 25, and 49 per cent are women.²¹ Survey respondents identified drinking water as their main concern in terms of services. Despite being only a few minutes from the capital, the neighbourhood does not have a mains water or sewage system. Households receive trucked drinking water every two weeks. Having to wait at home for the delivery also impedes their ability to work, study and take part in community processes and NGO projects.

Around 89 per cent of the respondents did not have access to education, 86 per cent were not formally employed and 53 per cent had no access to vocational training. Around 34 per cent receive welfare.

The municipal authorities do not consider Altos de la Florida part of Soacha. Only some parts of three of its five sectors have been legalised. According to the representative of one international organisation interviewed: "Altos de Florida is a vulnerable community due to the informality of the neighbourhood."

Another said: "As long as the neighbourhood is not legalised, it will not be possible to advance in terms of access to services or sustainable solutions ... Legalisation must be a fundamental dimension of any solutions strategy because without it interventions cannot be guaranteed sustainable and the state's involvement is not assured."

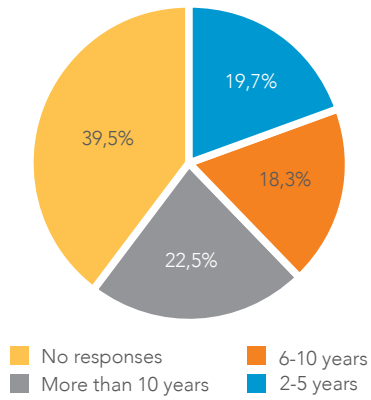


FIGURE 1: Time IDPs have been living in Altos de la Florida

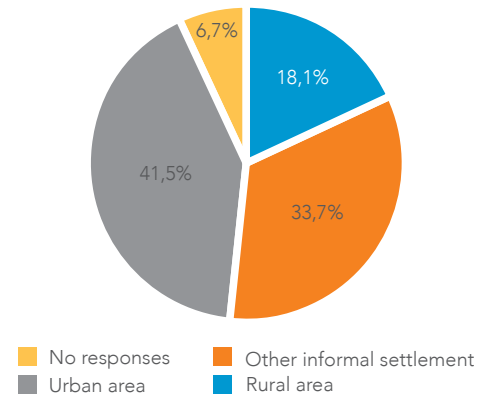


FIGURE 2: Areas IDPs arrived in Altos de la Florida from

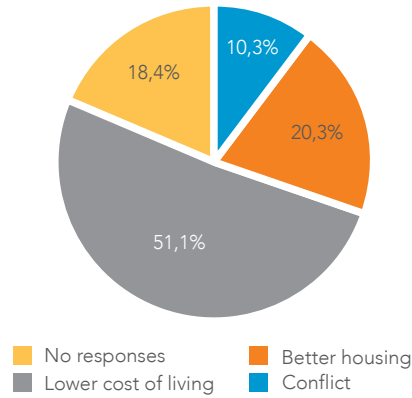


FIGURE 3: IDPs' reason for leaving their previous location



A truck delivers drinking water to Altos de la Florida. Photograph: Pablo Cortés Ferrández, 2018



An IDP from Putumayo builds his own home in Altos de la Florida. Photograph: Pablo Cortés Ferrández, 2018

“They told people there would be services here in six or eight months, but there was a lot of dispute between sectors over the water situation ... It’s essential to have services so that tension and violence do not increase.”

Internally displaced community leader in Altos de la Florida

Not only IDPs but also economic migrants and others excluded from cities such as Bogotá have found relative refuge in Altos de la Florida, which has been described as “the periphery of the periphery”.²²

URBAN VIOLENCE AND INTRA-URBAN DISPLACEMENT

Colombia’s homicide rate fell from 70 per 100,000 people in 1995 to just under 23,3 in 2020, but criminality has a clear urban component. Fifty-three per cent of homicides in 2017 were concentrated in 40 municipalities that accounted for only 3.5 per cent of the country’s population.²³ Soacha’s homicide rate actually increased, from 37 per 100,000 in 2010 to 41 in 2015. Almost 42 per cent of homicides in the department of Cundinamarca between 2010 and 2014 occurred in Soacha.²⁴

In 2017, nine per cent of the homicides in Soacha occurred in Commune 6, where Altos de la Florida is located.²⁵ Respondents said they sometimes had to leave the area at certain hours of the afternoon because of the presence of armed groups and clashes between them. They also reported cases of missing persons and killings taking place in abandoned buildings.

Threats against leaders have disrupted community cohesion and led to the departure of NGOs, limiting the presence of protection and support networks. Extortion and protection rackets are also used as a means of control, and drug taking among children and young people encourages their involvement in small-scale trafficking.

“One gang has expanded a lot since 2009, taking drug-trafficking business from other armed groups in Soacha.

They began arming children and young people to control the sector ... and they still control much of the trafficking.”

Internally displaced woman in Altos de la Florida

In addition to the visible victims of violence in Altos de la Florida there are also invisible victims, those who are displaced within urban areas, a phenomenon also known as intra-urban displacement. Illegal armed groups exert social and territorial control over many urban areas in Colombia, and their activities force people, including IDPs, to flee from one neighbourhood to another.²⁶ Within the urban dynamics of the country’s conflict intra-urban displacement is the phenomenon with greatest impact.²⁷

When it affects people who have already fled their homes at least once, it triggers secondary displacement and heightens the vulnerability of those affected (see figure 4). Many areas of expulsion are also areas of reception.²⁸

“I know people in Altos de la Florida who have left their area five times, and families who have been displaced six and seven times.”

National NGO worker in Altos de la Florida

People’s precarious living conditions and lack of economic opportunities also trigger significant intra-urban displacement. The mayor of Soacha said the unemployment rate in the municipality was higher than 25 per cent, 14.3 points above the national average.²⁹ Day labour was the main source of income among survey respondents in Altos de la Florida, followed by scavenging and informal activities.

DISPLACEMENT IMPACTS

The arrival of displaced families has put significant strain on Soacha’s already overstretched education facilities. Obtaining a place at school is difficult and many displaced children’s education has been interrupted as a result. Enrolment requirements are also an issue. One

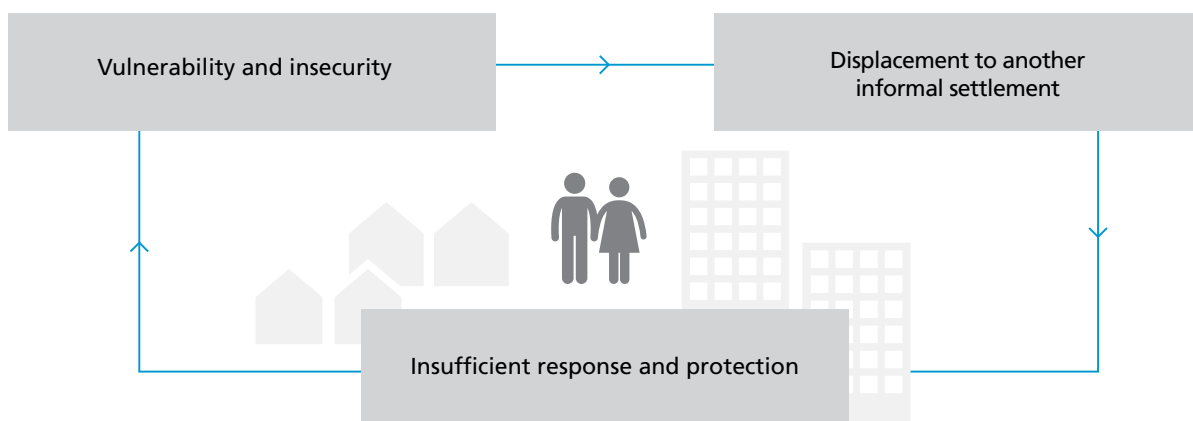


FIGURE 4: The cycle of vulnerability, insecurity and secondary displacement within cities

mother in Altos de la Florida said: “It has been very difficult for me to find a school for my two children. The little one does go to the nearest school, but the older one still does not go to school. I need my document as a displaced person”.

Others mentioned differences between rural and urban areas in terms of the curriculum, which means children from rural areas tend to have to repeat a year when they start school in the city.

Urban displacement has significant psychological impacts. One woman displaced from a rural area of

Putumayo to Bogotá, said her life had changed radically: “I have cried a lot. I still do. In Putumayo we had a small farm where we grew our food. We were and we felt free. In the city, you are confined. We have the skills we need to live in the countryside, but it’s completely different in the city. We came to Altos de la Florida from Bogotá in part to be as far from the city as possible.” The neighbourhood does not, however, have a primary healthcare facility.

BOX 1: Displaced men’s and women’s livelihoods

The impact of displacement on livelihoods varies according to gender. Women in Altos de la Florida find more work opportunities than men, most of them informal jobs in markets or as cleaners. Some younger women said they worked as street vendors and older women as laundresses or maids. Domestic workers with a permanent job are paid between \$13.5 and \$35 month.

The fact that women find work more easily than men, who are used to being the breadwinner in rural areas, increases family tensions and the risk of domestic violence. Some women, however, said they were sometimes unable work because they did not have a safe place to leave their children. Women, some of whom are single parents, also tend to have worse economic conditions than men.

Many men work in construction, where they earn between \$90 and \$210 a month. Male street vendors earn about \$78. Some survey respondents said their children also went out to work as street vendors, car washers and window cleaners, in brickyards or begging in the street.

RETHINKING HUMANITARIAN ACTION TO ADDRESS URBAN DISPLACEMENT

“Once the intervention in this community was completed, it became clear that international cooperation would not be enough to resolve the area’s problems. Such are their dimensions that comprehensive state intervention is required.”

International organisation staff in Altos de la Florida

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION IN ALTOS DE LA FLORIDA

In response to a large influx of IDPs in 2006, the UN system launched an emergency response with international organisations including World Vision and the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), national NGOs, local authorities, the government’s Victims’ Unit (UARIV) and the Ombudsman of Colombia.

That was followed between 2010 and 2012 by the Inter-Agency Human Security project, run by eight UN agencies with \$2.5 million in funding from the UN Trust Fund for Human Security.³⁰ The project focused on highly vulnerable groups and was intended to improve response mechanisms in Soacha by empowering communities to improve their living conditions, strengthening governance and increasing the municipality’s capacity to protect people’s rights.

When that project ended the Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) started in Altos de la Florida and ran until 2018. TSI was a pilot strategy led globally by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). It was implemented in Colombia, Nepal and Sudan, Nepal, and 14 per cent of its budget for Colombia went to Altos de la Florida.

The initiative focused on the transition from humanitarian assistance to IDPs’ local integration, with interventions intended to improve their living and economic conditions, protect their rights and strengthen the capacity of the municipal authorities and the community.

RECURRING CHALLENGES IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

The main challenges to emerge in responding to internal displacement in informal settlements revolve around a lack of community ownership and the absence of community work because of weakened social cohesion. The prolonged humanitarian response in Altos de la Florida was a significant contributor in this sense. “Not only are the NGOs providing assistance, but they have also converted people in a more dependent community,” said a representative from one women’s organisation in Soacha.

“Altos de la Florida has extended the humanitarian emergency too much. I have been here for 14 years. When you are younger you are always running to such a place because they are going to give you something. That has caused people not to value what they do. They do not like to strive to achieve things.”

Internally displaced youth in Altos de la Florida

Interviewees for this study also suggested that some people had not yet learned to value capacity development as part of the work that aid workers do. “Aid tends to be understood as markets and infrastructure, schools and health centres, tangible things. There is less appreciation

of the more abstract, the human, social and community interventions,” said one community leader.

The surfeit of interventions over time and the absence of control over them also led to a lack of coordination within the community, with local authorities and between humanitarian and development agencies. “Altos de la Florida is not only a neighbourhood divided by sectors but also by organisations,” said one female displaced community leader who works for a national NGO.

This has led to the duplication of activities. “We continue to sponsor an emergency response because it is not coordinated. Several organisations are working on the same line without generating change,” said a representative from one national institution involved in the response to displacement.

The external evaluation of the UN’s human security project concluded that the scale and scope of the problems and risks in informal settlements such as Altos de la Florida was such that comprehensive intervention by the state as well as humanitarian and development organisations was required to resolve them.³¹

“The community is aid dependent. People learn the language of different organisations so that they give them benefits.”

*International organisation representative
in Altos de la Florida*

THE RESILIENCE APPROACH

Five locations in Altos de la Florida have become protective spaces where community capacities have been strengthened: the headquarters of the Asociación Codo a Codo, loosely translated as the Shoulder to Shoulder Association; the Fundación Proyecto de Vida, or Life Project Foundation; the Pastoral House; a community centre and a cultural centre (see figure 5). These buildings represent safe areas for the NGOs to develop projects with the community, in neighbourhoods that are otherwise insecure.

Interventions combine protection, a top-down approach intended to guarantee individuals’ rights, and a bottom-up approach defined as building individual,

FIGURE 5: Protective spaces for strengthening community resilience in Altos de la Florida.



The headquarters of the Asociación Codo a Codo was built in 2001



The protection space at Fundación Proyecto de Vida was built in 2004



The Pastoral House was built in 2006



The community centre was built in 2006



The cultural centre was built in 2015

family and community capacity through participatory processes. These focus on creating economic opportunities, strengthening social fabric, and supporting at-risk groups such as children, young people, women and community leaders. “When you are thinking of intervening in a community of this type, you cannot talk about projects. If it isn’t a resilience process, it is very difficult to achieve results,” said one national NGO worker.

“The idea of resilience should permeate all interventions, because the participants’ objective is not to passively obtain a benefit but to acquire capacity.”

National NGO worker in Altos de la Florida

One of the main challenges urban IDPs face in their pursuit of durable solutions is the search for stable work and socioeconomic conditions. This is particularly true for those from rural areas, as evidenced in Altos de la Florida, where as a result the main interventions focus on training, employability and entrepreneurship. “Income-generating initiatives designed by the communities seek to strengthen the self-sustaining capacity of families, protect their livelihoods, ensure their food security and strengthen the social fabric,” said a representative from one international organisation.

“Employability is a difficult issue because many urban IDPs come from the countryside and from a different culture. They do not have the skills needed here.”

National NGO worker in Altos de la Florida

Both the community members and humanitarians who took part in the research for this report identified a strategy focused on building resilience and strengthening local capacities as the most effective way to address some of the challenges identified. An approach that emphasises the creation and promotion of grassroots organisations which are able to assume responsibility for projects begun by NGOs projects makes interventions more sustainable.

“Previously, projects were limited to specific workshops. The activity happened, but there was no continuity and it ended with the organisation leaving. Now we think as a group, the perception of the participant is different. They are part of the group, they have an identity and responsibility that comes with the capacities they have acquired,” said one national NGO worker.

RESULTS IN ALTOS DE LA FLORIDA

From being recipients dependent on aid, some of the IDPs in Altos de la Florida have become participants and stakeholders in the humanitarian response. “We always work with the idea of trainers of trainers, protection promoters, aid multipliers or resilience tutors, primarily the women and young people who lead grassroots organisations,” said one national NGO worker.

Today there are four such organisations in Altos de la Florida. Tejiendo Futuro, or Weaving a Future, aims to help women generate income and regain autonomy and dignity through weaving; the Asociación Codo a Codo, a national NGO, is now coordinated in the neighbourhood by local women and supports economic and education programmes; a football club run by a local youth leader promotes respect for human rights and the prevention of violence through football; and Florida Juvenil, or Young Florida, also run by a local youth leader, is a group that teaches breakdance and organises activities intended to promote human rights and prevent violence.

One of the most successful resilience initiatives has been the creation of steering committee. The committee meets every two weeks, and brings the community, humanitarian organisations and local authorities together to agree and implement a collective response. It has helped to foster a common approach by creating a shared understanding to inform planning, and a shared vision as the basis for establishing common priorities. As a strategic management and coordination body, the committee has the following goals:

1. To improve cohesion within the community and between organisations to increase the effectiveness of activities and reduce duplication

2. To improve networking and strengthen collaborative capacities to set up protection and advocacy networks with NGOs and local authorities
3. To analyse local protection risks

Working in neighbourhoods such as Altos de la Florida necessarily involves the provision of emergency assis-

tance when, for example, there is a large influx of IDPs. This should not, however, be to the extent that it encourages dependency, because this weakens the social fabric and hinders community cohesion. If the impacts of urban displacement in informal settlements are to be addressed, investment in and support for locally led integration, coordination and planning processes are required.



A meeting of the Altos de la Florida steering committee. Photograph: Pablo Cortés Ferrández, 2018

CONCLUSION

This study determines that resilience approaches help to improve humanitarian responses in informal settlements such as Altos de la Florida where urban IDPs have found refuge. It arrives at four main findings:

- | Urban IDPs and host communities in informal settlements face protracted vulnerability and high levels of poverty and violence.
- | Prolonged emergency assistance based on individual organisations' mandates creates aid dependency.
- | Dependency is more likely in communities whose social fabric has been weakened.

| A resilience approach that strengthens local capacities in safe environments makes humanitarian responses more effective and sustainable.

Such an approach requires participatory processes that focus on issues such as improving education and economic opportunities and imparting leadership skills. The scale and scope of the task in hand in informal settlements such as Altos de la Florida is such that comprehensive intervention by the state as well as humanitarian and development organisations is required to do so.

NOTES

- 1 Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), UnSettlement: Urban displacement in the 21st century, IDMC, Geneva, 2018, available at: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/20180209-idmc-intro-urban-displacement-thematic-series.pdf> (last visited 28 Sept. 2020).
- 2 Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020, IDMC, Geneva, 2020, available at: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/2020-IDMC-GRID.pdf> (last visited 30 Apr. 2020).

To calculate the final number of IDPs in Colombia, IDMC takes into account the estimate of the overcoming of vulnerability conditions made by the Colombian government based on the effective enjoyment of the rights to identification, health, education, food, housing, family reunification and income generation. Access to data on the internally displaced population allowed IDMC to recognize the progress of this population in the search for durable solutions. This is reflected in the estimate of the total number of internally displaced persons, which, as of December 31, 2019, shows that more than 1.6 million victims have overcome the vulnerability generated by displacement and that they are part of the almost 2.1 million victims who have overcome the vulnerability associated with decent housing. Available at: <https://www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/es/victimas-en-el-exterior/mas-de-un-millon-y-medio-de-victimas-de-desplazamiento-en-colombia-han> (last visited 20 Nov. 2020).
- 3 According to the figures of the Single Registry of Victims of the Colombian government's Victim's Unit, as of October 31, 2020, 8,078,127 people were included for the victimizing act of displacement under the terms established in Law 1448 of 2011 and its preceding regulations. In accordance with article 155 of Law 1448 of 2011, the victim has two years from the date of occurrence of the event to submit their application for registration, which is why it is possible that some events have not yet been declared. The data do not refer to single victims, since a person may have suffered the same victimizing event, on a different date and/or place.

Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (CNMH), Una nación desplazada. Informe nacional del desplazamiento forzado en Colombia, CNMH, 2010, 38, available at: <http://www.centrodehistoriahistorica.gov.co/descargas/informes2015/nacion-desplazada/una-nacion-desplazada.pdf> (last visited 30 Apr. 2020).

Colombian Law 1448 of 2011, also known as the Victims and Land Restitution Law, establishes that those persons who have collectively suffered damage due to events that occurred as consequences of infractions of International Humanitarian Law or of violations will be considered victims of the armed conflict. serious and manifest to the international norms of Human Rights occurred during the internal armed conflict. For its part, Law 387 of 1997 adopted measures to prevent displacement; the care, protection, consolidation and socio-economic stabilization of internally displaced persons with a broader conception of the definition of violence, beyond the armed conflict.
- 4 Torres, C. (coord.) (2009), Ciudad informal colombiana. Barrios destruidos por la gente, Universidad Nacional de Colombia. UN-HABITAT (2016), Urban Data Portal, available in http://urbandata.unhabitat.org/explore-data/?indicators=hiv_prevalence_15_to_49_year.slum_proportion_living_urban_urban_population_cities.population
- 5 Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019, IDMC, Geneva, 2019, available at: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/2019-IDMC-GRID.pdf> (last visited 15 Aug. 2020).
- 6 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Displaced in Cities: Experiencing and Responding to Urban Internal Displacement Outside Camps, Geneva, 2018, available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/4344_002_Displaced-in-Cities_web.pdf (last visited 15 Aug. 2020).

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019, IDMC, Geneva, 2019, available at: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/2019-IDMC-GRID.pdf> (last visited 15 Aug. 2020).
- 7 UNHCR, The implementation of UNHCR's Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas, Geneva, 2012, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/516d658c9.pdf> (last visited 15 Aug. 2020).
- 8 UN HABITAT, Habitat III Issue Papers. 22 – Informal settlements, New York, available at: <https://unhabitat.org/habitat-iii-issue-papers-22-informal-settlements> (last visited 15 Aug. 2020).
- 9 L. Tedesco, Violencia urbana: Un desafío al fortalecimiento institucional. El caso de América Latina, Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE), Working Paper 78(1), 2009, 1, available at: <http://www.flacso.edu.gt/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Laura-Tedesco.Violencia-urbana.pdf> (last visited 15 Aug. 2020).

L. Weber and K. Wyjad, Potential indicators of urban fragility, Human Security for an Urban Century. Local Challenges, Global Perspectives, Humansecurity-cities.org, 2011, 82-83.

J. Pontes Nogueira, From failed states to fragile cities: redefining spaces of humanitarian practice, HASOW, Discussion Paper 12, 2014, 1437-1453, available at: <https://igarape.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/From-Fragile-States-to-Fragile-Cities.pdf> (last visited 15 Aug. 2020).
- 10 S. Albuja and M. Ceballos, Urban displacement and migration in Colombia, Forced Migration Review, 34(1), 2010, 10.
- 11 A. Celaya, Los contextos urbanos. Lugares de desprotección, in C. Churruga (ed.), Colombia, ¿cómo construir la paz?, Madrid, La Catarata, 2015, 116-137.
- 12 L. Sánchez Steiner, La ciudad-refugio. Migración forzada y reconfiguración territorial urbana en Colombia. El caso de Mocoa, Barranquilla, Universidad del Norte, 2012.
- 13 S. Albuja and M. Ceballos, Urban displacement and migration in Colombia, 10.
- 14 Censo Nacional de Colombia 2018, available at <https://sitios.dane.gov.co/cnpv/#/> (last visited 18 Nov. 2020).
- 15 El Tiempo, "Soacha pide al DANE revisar las cifras del Censo Nacional 2018", Bogotá, available at: <https://www.eltiempo.com/bogota/soacha-pide-al-dane-revisar-las-cifras-del-censo-nacional-2018-319828> (last visited 18 Nov. 2020).
- 16 Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas (UARIV), Informe de la UARIV para el GRID 2020 del IDMC, UARIV, Bogotá, 2020.
- 17 According to the figures of the Single Registry of Victims of the Colombian government's Victim's Unit shared with IDMC in November 2020.
- 18 Information obtained from the quantitative methodologies implemented by this research.
- 19 CEPAL, Índice de pobreza en Colombia, 2019, available at: <https://www.cepal.org/es/temas/pobreza> (last visited 17 Sept. 2020).

- 20 This research has used the definition of vulnerability of the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 69/284. Vulnerability formed by “the conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes that increase the susceptibility of an individual, a community, assets or systems to the impacts of hazards.” Available at: <https://www.undrr.org/publication/report-open-ended-inter-governmental-expert-working-group-indicators-and-terminology#:~:text=disaster%20risk%20reduction,-The%20open%20ended%20intergovernmental%20expert%20working%20group%20on%20indicators%20and,of%20the%20Sendai%20Framework%20for> (last visited 15 Nov. 2020).
- 21 Econometría Consultores, Evaluación Externa del Programa Conjunto ACNUR-PNUD “Construyendo Soluciones Sostenibles-TSI. Estudio de caso Altos de la Florida, Soacha, Econometría S.A., Bogotá, 2016, 9.
- 22 M. Bello and C. Mosquera, Desplazados, migrantes y excluidos: actores de las dinámicas urbanas, in F. Cubides and C. Domínguez (ed.), Desplazados, migraciones internas y reestructuraciones territoriales, Bogotá, Universidad Nacional de Colombia y Ministerio del Interior, 1999, 456-474.
- 23 Redacción Judicial, Homicidios en Colombia: la tasa más baja en los últimos 42 años se dio en 2017, El Espectador, 21 Jan. 2018, available at: <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/homicidios-en-colombia-la-tasa-mas-baja-en-los-ultimos-42-anos-se-dio-en-2017-articulo-734526> (last visited 16 Aug. 2020).
- M. Lorente, J. Garzón and B. Ramírez, Así se concentra el homicidio en las ciudades, El Espectador, 21 Jan. 2018, available at: https://www.elespectador.com/sites/default/files/static_specials/46/homicidio-en-las-ciudades/index.html (last visited 16 Aug. 2020).
- Iván Duque, Colombia llega a la tasa más baja de homicidios en los últimos 46 años, El Tiempo, 2020, available at: <https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/delitos/tasa-de-homicidios-colombia-llega-a-la-mas-baja-en-los-ultimos-46-anos-513152> (last visited 18 Nov. 2020).
- 24 Forensis, Datos para la vida. Herramienta para la interpretación, intervención y prevención de lesiones de causa externa en Colombia, Bogotá, 2016, available at: <https://www.medicinalegal.gov.co/documents/20143/49526/Forensis+2016.+Datos+para+la+vida.pdf> (last visited 16 Aug. 2020).
- 25 Defensoría del Pueblo, Sistema de Alertas Temprana (SAT). Alerta Temprana 27 de junio del 2017, Bogotá, 2017.
- 26 C. Aterhortúa, Caracterización del desplazamiento forzado intraurbano. Medellín 2000-2004, Opinión Jurídica Universidad de Medellín, Medellín, 2009, available at: <https://revistas.udem.edu.co/index.php/opinion/article/view/87> (last visited 16 Aug. 2020).
- 27 Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (CODHES), Desplazamiento forzado intraurbano y soluciones duraderas. Una aproximación de los casos de Buenaventura, Tumaco y Soacha, CODHES, Bogotá, 2013, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Desplazamiento%20forzado%20intraurbano%20y%20soluciones%20duraderas.pdf> (last visited 16 Aug. 2020).
- 28 Despite the fact that intra-urban displacement represents one of the dimensions of displacement with the greatest humanitarian impact in the country, various entities and cities such as Medellín, Bogotá and Buenaventura have generated response frameworks and durable solutions. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Desplazamiento%20forzado%20intraurbano%20y%20soluciones%20duraderas.pdf> (last visited 19 Nov. 2020).
- 29 Periodismo público, Las cifras de pobreza que agobian a Soacha, Periodismo Público, Soacha, 2020, available at: <https://periodismopublico.com/las-cifras-de-pobreza-que-agobian-a-soacha> (last visited 17 Sept. 2020).
- 30 UNTFHS, Proyecto Interagencial de Seguridad Humana en el municipio de Soacha, Boletín Informativo, 2011, available at: https://www.paho.org/col/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=942-proyecto-interagencial-seguridad-humana-soacha-n1&category_slug=boletines&Itemid=688 (last visited 28 Sept. 2020). Periodismo público, Las cifras de pobreza que agobian a Soacha, Periodismo Público, Soacha, 2020, available at: <https://periodismopublico.com/las-cifras-de-pobreza-que-agobian-a-soacha> (last visited 17 Sept. 2020).
- 31 Econometría Consultores, Evaluación Externa del Programa Conjunto ACNUR-PNUD “Construyendo Soluciones Sostenibles – TSI”. Estudio de caso Altos de la Florida, Soacha, Soacha, Econometría Consultores SA, 2016.



Every day, people flee conflict and disasters and become displaced inside their own countries. IDMC provides data and analysis and supports partners to identify and implement solutions to internal displacement.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
3 rue de Varembé, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland
+41 22 552 3600 | info@idmc.ch

www.internal-displacement.org

 www.facebook.com/InternalDisplacement

 www.twitter.com/IDMC_Geneva