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The Internally Displaced People of Colombia:

*Resisting Development Induced Displacement
in the Quimbo*

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Abstract – in English

Colombia is currently the country in the world with the largest displaced population. This dissertation will focus on a certain type of displacement which has yet to receive appropriate attention; displacement caused by development programs, or the so called development-induced displacement. It investigates how a small group of displaced people are affected during the actual process of displacement using an actor oriented perspective. This is the understanding of the individual not only as a victim but, more importantly, as an active agent, in which the individual has the capacity to actively process social experience inventing new ways to cope according to the circumstances. The methodology encompasses field observations on site at "El Quimbo" and a qualitative approach in which ten displaced persons are interviewed using a semi-structural schedule. Amongst the findings this study shows how the people of the Quimbo, through joining a movement resisting the hydroelectric development project, change their position from being victims to instead becoming active agents working for social change. Parallels are drawn to displaced communities around the world where displaced people are seen as active agents in finding new livelihood strategies, new identities, creating social organisations as well as a new meaning to life. Through using the actor oriented approach in a situation of resistance this study can be singled out as an example of how these ideas can come to be used in social research regarding IDPs and their experiences, creating greater understanding of the process but also filling a gap in the literature concerning this matter.

Abstrakt – på svenska

Colombia är numera det land i världen med den största populationen av flyktingar inom landets gränser. Denna uppsats kommer att fokusera på en speciell typ av internt flyktingskap som fortfarande inte uppmärksammas nog inom dagens forskning, nämligen förflyttning av folk på grund av utvecklingsprogram, eller också så kallat DID (Development Induced Displacement). Genom att använda sig av ett aktörsorienterat perspektiv undersöks hur en liten grupp människor påverkats under den pågående och påtvingade flyktingprocessen. Det aktörsorienterade perspektivet handlar om förståelsen av individen inte bara som ett offer utan som en aktiv agent där hon har kapaciteten att aktivt bearbeta sociala upplevelser och hitta nya vägar för att klara av svårigheterna utifrån det hon ställs inför. Metodologin involverar fältundersökning på plats i "El Quimbo" där ett kvalitativt tillvägagångssätt legat som utgångspunkt i de semistrukturerade intervjuerna av 10 interna flyktingar. Bland undersökningsresultaten uppkommer det hur människorna i "El Quimbo", genom att ansluta sig till denna motståndsgrupp mot ett stort vattenkraftsbygge som håller på att förstöra floden Magdalena, förändrar sin egen position från att vara offer till att bli aktiva agenter som arbetar för en social förändring och ljusare framtid. Paralleller kan här göras till andra förflyttade samhällen och folk världen över där man funnit att människor finner nya identiteter, nya försörjningsstrategier, skapar sociala organisationer och likaså en ny mening i livet. Genom att använda det aktörsorienterade förhållningssättet i undersökningen av en motståndsgrupp kan denna studie utpekas som ett exempel på hur dessa idéer kan användas i social forskning runt interna flyktingar och deras erfarenheter, fördjupa förståelsen av dess process, samtidigt som den breddar forskningen inom detta område.

Abstracto - en Castellano

Colombia es actualmente el país del mundo con mayor población desplazada. Esta tesis se centra en un tipo específico de desplazamiento que todavía no ha recibido la atención adecuada; el desplazamiento causado por los programas de desarrollo. Investiga cómo un grupo pequeño de personas desplazadas se ven afectados durante el proceso de desplazamiento real utilizando una perspectiva orientada al actor. Esta se basa en la comprensión del individuo no sólo como una víctima, pero más importante, como un agente activo, donde el individuo tiene la capacidad de procesar activamente la experiencia social inventando nuevas maneras de enfrentarse las circunstancias. La metodología comprende las observaciones de campo en El Quimbo y un enfoque cualitativo en el que diez personas desplazadas son entrevistados en una manera semi - estructural. Entre los resultados de este estudio se muestra cómo la gente del Quimbo, a través de unirse a un movimiento de resistencia contra el proyecto hidroeléctrico del Quimbo, cambian su posición de ser víctimas convirtiéndose en agentes activos que trabajan por un cambio social. Eso es conforme a otros estudios de comunidades desplazadas en el mundo donde los desplazados se ven como agentes activos en la búsqueda de nuevas estrategias de subsistir en la vida, el encuentro de nuevas identidades, la creación de ONGs sociales, así como realizar un nuevo significado de la vida. Utilizando la perspectiva orientada hacia el actor en una situación de resistencia, este estudio sirve como ejemplo de cómo utilizar estas ideas en investigaciones sociales sobre los desplazados y sus experiencias. Creara una mayor comprensión del proceso desde el punto de vista de los actores y complementa la ausencia que existe en la literatura con respecto a este asunto.

Keywords

Internally displaced people, development induced displacement, El Quimbo, actor oriented perspective, agency, social actors, Colombia, Latin America.

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Foreword

Colombia is a country characterised by two such distinct realities that it is hard to believe they coexist in the same territory. The people living those contradicting realities often seem to fail to acknowledge or even recognize each other. On the one hand we have the developing, sophisticated Colombia characterised by consumerism and strong economic growth where the people are well educated and living organised lives in cities and villages similar to any other developed nation or culture. On the other hand we have a country portrayed as the King of Coca, where a number of illegally armed groups are fighting for territory, multinational companies are invited to exploit the treasures of the land and the people are suffering from poverty and violence or forced to flee for their survival. These people are the displaced; those millions forced to abandon their homes, their land, their social security and their family network, to avoid what is causing them to suffer human rights abuse and in order to stay out of conflicts between warring parties who forcibly recruit their young ones to fight wars they will never understand.

In the literature regarding displacement in Colombia we find a generalised picture where the internal conflict remains the main focus and where the history of the guerrillas and paramilitaries is recited over and over again. But when looking deeper into the causes of displacement we find a much more complex picture. This suggests that the current unjust system has its roots in the post-colonial political mind-set where the elites continue to maintain their power using displacement as a weapon of war. Instead of looking at the conflict as the major cause of internal displacement this dissertation has a more narrow scope. It will look at how a number of families in The Quimbo currently living under the threat of becoming displaced have formed a resistance group moving back into the zone and working against the process of being removed due to a multinational company's constructions authorised by the government.

In The Quimbo people are now being taught about their legal rights by the organisations working to try and protect them from having to leave their lifelong projects of cultivating and living off their land in a peaceful way. Their struggles and their way to resist a mega-project which would destroy acres of land inundated by the construction of a giant dam, is a struggle worth telling. This is an investigation into what happens to the people living under the threat of displacement and how some become actors of change taking their destiny into their own hands. But also a story of courage and hope in a place where resilient people are refusing to become victims of their own government's unjust agenda in the picturesque scenery of what I have found to be the most spectacular country in the whole world: Colombia.

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who inspired this whole research project and helped me to get the interview questions right when I could hardly explain what it was I wanted. Thank you ACAS and ASOQUIMBO and the University Surcolombiana. Thank you abuelo Nicel and abuelita Betty Aguirre Prada for supporting us through difficult moments and being the all-embracing heart of the family. Big thanks to my mother in law Martha Esperanza Aguirre Prada for being the best organiser, taking my girls to preschool everyday on the moped, caring for all and everyone in our large family. Also a great thank you to my father in law Alvaro Rodriguez and Tio Mateo for letting me stay with you in Bogotá to transcribe the recorded material for some long but fantastic few days. Gracias Fabián. Thank you Luisa Garcia for guiding me around the theoretical bit, Emma Svanberg Jankelewitz and Jesse Griffiths for proofreading (some of) my English and all my other friends who have supported me through this whole process sharing my lunchtime. Thank you mum and dad for giving me great comments. Great thanks to Ing-Marie Johansson for being so flexible and supportive despite my last-minute approach. And the biggest Thank You, and all my love to Moisés for being my constant mentor in life and talking me through one sleepless night.

Acronyms

AUC	United Self Defence Forces of Colombia (paramilitary)
ASOQUIMBO	Association of the Affected of the Quimbo Hydroelectric Project
CID	Conflict Induced Displacement
CODHES	Observatory on Human Rights and Displacement
DID	Development Induced Displacement
ELN	National Liberation Army (guerrilla)
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (guerrilla)
GP	Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
ICOLD	International Commission on Large Dams
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced People
PCR	Peace and Conflict Research, Department of, Uppsala University
RNDP	National Network of Democracy and Peace
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WBED	World Banks Environment Department
WCD	World Commission on Dams

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Objectives and Research Questions

One of the fundamental aims of the present dissertation is to illustrate the situation of internal displacement and to promote awareness of some of the reasons behind forced displacement in Colombia, currently home to the largest internally displaced population (IDMC, 2013b). The specific aim is to give a voice to the people of the Quimbo involved in the process of displacement at this very moment. This dissertation will focus on a certain type of displacement in Colombia which has yet to receive appropriate attention; displacement caused by development programs by the state, or so called development-induced displacement (DID) (Cernea, 1999; 2000; 2006). Within the vast research area of internally displaced people (IDP) displacement due to armed conflict has long been studied, although it is a well-known fact that the causes of internal displacement usually are very complex and often interlinked with other causes such as environmental change, natural disasters or development projects (Brun, 2005). When looking at earlier research into the field there are a few main debates on which most research has focused, according to Brun's (2005) research guide on internal displacement. For example: the categorizing of IDPs; consequences of categorization; comparing the group to refugees or other vulnerable groups; looking at the dynamics of displacement; how IDPs are dealt with or solutions to CID/DID; and an actor oriented perspective on internal displacement.

Within the actor oriented perspective on displacement there are studies done on the social consequences for different groups of displaced people, rebuilding lives and livelihoods and also around the relationships between people and places (Brun, 2005). In recent literature researchers have been trying to put the internally displaced themselves at the front of the discussion in order to understand how they live and cope under the circumstances (Brun, 2005). Instead of the more common policy-oriented discussion of the legal aspects of internal displacement this dissertation aims to fill a gap in the literature and make visible the situation for a certain group of IDPs looking beyond the mere background to displacement and the condition experienced at a national level. Instead it intends to investigate how a small group of displaced people are affected during the actual process of displacement using the actor oriented perspective (Long & Long, 1992, Long, 2001). This is the understanding of the individual not only as a victim but, more importantly, as an active agent, in which the individual has the capacity to actively process social experience inventing new ways to cope according to the circumstances. There are studies showing how IDPs are more accurately characterised as creative agents or actors of change rather than passive victims (Shanmugaratnam, Lund & Stølen, 2003). Although displacement causes marginalisation empirical evidence shows us that it can also inspire new survival strategies (Brun & Lund 2005; Lund 2003; Skonhoft 1998).

The current research will be based on the situation in the Quimbo, a place situated around the river Magdalena in the department of Huila, where the government of Colombia has invited a transnational company to construct a large hydroelectric project displacing the people living and working in the area (Asoquimbo, 2013). The case study will look at how a group of people involved in the Association of the Affected of the Quimbo Hydroelectric Project (ASOQUIMBO) experience their situation as IDPs and how the position of becoming

displaced affect their way of acting. A particular group of displaced will be in focus; the people who have chosen to resettle in the area as a way of resistance, becoming liberators of the land. The research will be focusing on the IDPs experience, their reactions to it and how they look at the future of the Quimbo. The objective will additionally be to look at how the IDPs identify themselves as displaced and how they have experienced reactions from the society in which they live.

The main questions of this dissertation are the following:

- ❖ *What makes some displaced people become actors of change?*
- ❖ *Does being an active agent for social change influence people affected by displacement in terms of how they think about their present situation and their future?*
- ❖ *How do the people of the Quimbo movement identify themselves and how do they experience the reactions from the society in which they live?*

In order to answer the above questions, this dissertation will analyse similarities and differences in responses and the way there might be common features in the way this is expressed. Analyses will also be carried out to find out whether the presence of agency might alter the way the group of perceive themselves.

1.2 Definition of Internally Displaced People

Internal displacement as a world occurring phenomenon is not new but after becoming prominent on the international agenda in the 1990s after the end of the Cold War, the question of who should be covered by the definition is still under debate (Brun, 2005). The definition coined by the former UN Secretary-General's Representative on Internally Displaced People, Francis Deng, is however the most commonly applied definition and also the one used in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GP). According to the GP internally displaced persons are defined as:

...persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border (UNOCHA, 2004:1).

Two important elements of displacement are hereby highlighted as criteria for internal displacement:

- (1) the coercive or otherwise involuntary character of movement, whatever the reason, and
- (2) the fact that such movement takes place within national borders. (Kälin, 2005:17)

The first criteria of the movement being of involuntary character for whatever reason

confirms that IDPs are not only those displaced due to conflicts (conflict induced displacement, CID) but also includes those forced to relocate or evacuate because of environmental or man-made disaster, thus including:

(...) instances of involuntary resettlement in the context of development projects such as dams, roads, airports, industrial or tourist complexes, and other infrastructure projects. (Kälin, 2005:17)

The second highlighted element is used to differentiate between refugees and IDPs where the latter group remain within the borders of their country still under the jurisdiction of their own government and therefore are not entitled to international protection or certain rights usually obtainable for refugees (Hathaway 1991, Vincent 2000). However, being relocated within the borders does not necessarily mean that IDPs therefore would not be in need of special protection as their own governments, despite their responsibility, might be unwilling or unable to protect them and may in many cases even be the cause of displacement itself (Brun, 2005). Lack of assistance and unwillingness from the government side to take responsibility is a problem common to IDPs suffering the consequences of development projects.

The above definition will be used in this dissertation as it provides a broad classification, is the most widely used and as it acknowledges development induced displacement as an important subgroup of IDPs. Internally displaced people will be referred to as IDPs or displaced throughout this study.

1.3 Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation will begin by exploring the history of Colombia, specifically the history of displacement as rooted in the colonial past, the current situation of conflict and the governmental response to displacement. The difference between conflict induced and development induced displacement will be in focus, leading us to the on-going situation in the Quimbo. The in-depth interview with professor Miller Dussán from the South Colombian University will be the core story of this section and his words will lead us into the field which is under research – the development induced displacement due to the Quimbo dam. The following chapter will outline the theoretical framework based on social constructivist thinking and specifically the actor oriented approach.

The methodological approach will then be explained and after a first introductory paragraph regarding the personal experience of getting into the Quimbo, research methods will be outlined as well as details concerning field work and specific ethical considerations. Qualitative interviewing and participant observation as the choice of method are then justified and practical issues concerning these areas in combination with the current research will be looked at. The role of the researcher will be discussed and the sample will then be introduced as well as the methods of analysis. Content analysis is also used to some extent in the analysing part, to look at certain words and metaphors emerging during the analysis.

The following chapter is the analysis of data in which analysis and results will be merged, parts of the semi-structured interview material will be displayed for the reader in order to make it possible to follow the analysis. The actor oriented perspective will be integrated in this part in order to carry out analysis. The final chapter will summarise and discuss the findings of the analysis and also outline other issues raised during the investigation regarding possible research areas for the future.

2. Background

2.1 Brief history of Displacement in Colombia

Displacement of people, internal and/or external will take place as long as armed conflicts, internal strife, systematic violation of human rights, natural disasters etc. continue to plague the societies and countries of different regions of the world. (Chowdhury 2000:214)

Displacement is not a new phenomenon. As long as we have existed on earth populations have been forced to move due to various reasons, from natural changes or disasters to conflicts between tribes fighting for new territory. In Colombian history it is a well-known fact that indigenous people were forced off their lands or forcibly recruited as slaves or soldiers as far back as the beginning of colonial days. The first Spanish people arrived in the early 16th century and for the next few hundred years, indigenous villages disappeared, others were forced to hide in the mountains isolated from other communities, while others accepted the domination of the colonization and entered a process of cultural assimilation (Bushnell, 1993; 1994). Much like most countries in Latin America, Colombia has a similar history of gulfs between social classes where wealth and landownership have long been concentrated on a minority formed mainly by the descendants of the conquistadors; the elite. When independence from Spain was won in 1819 the self-selected elite took advantage of a post-colonial weakened state and created a social system based mainly on land possession. This paved the way for an exploitative relationship between *hacienda* owners (large landowners) and the peasants which in turn triggered widespread rural violence which has continued to be persistent throughout the history (i.e. Kay, 2001).

These elites then formed the Liberal and Conservative parties in the late 1840's which since then have dominated most of public life and the state structures (IDMC, 2006). Around 25 civil wars and over 60 regional wars have raged in the country since the beginning of the republic in 1889 causing a great movement of populations (Aysa, et al., 2006). In the late 19th century confrontations between the political parties escalated into "La Guerra de Los Mil Días" (The Thousand Days War, 1898-1902) in which almost 60,000 combatants and between 100-180,000 civilians died in the massacres and persecutions between those affiliated to the two political parties (Villegas y Yunis, 1978). During the following 30 years Colombia started taking its first steps in the direction of capitalist development guided by the US economic inversion and political influences but still relying heavily on old fashioned colonial values (Aysa, et al., 2006). Violent measures were used by the elites to repress social and political movements as the emphasis on territorial possession and the prestige attributed to it continued to be strong. This resulted in population movements where large groups of people were forced from the central highlands out to the peripheries (Livingstone, 2003). The former slaves brought in from Africa during the colonial days, to make up for the loss of indigenous slaves that died from common European diseases, were also pushed towards the pacific coast and have been socially unprivileged since then living in poverty. During the modernisation and industrialisation continuous conflicts generated a never ending flow of predominantly forced migration. This can be seen as the precursor to the current internal displacement. The historical process of displacement, according to research as well as the testimony of the victims themselves, shows us how unequal land distribution causes conflict with forced

displacement as a direct outcome (i.e. Livingstone, 2003; CCJ, 2006; Ordóñez Maldonado et al., 2011).

Though it may well be impossible to establish when the first internal displacement occurred in Colombia, the current great wave can be traced back as far as to the 1950's as a consequence to the period of massive political violence known as "La Violencia" (The Violence, 1948-1958) (i.e. Livingstone, 2003). Triggered by the assassination of the promising new leader and presidential candidate *Jorge Eliécer Gaitan* on the 9th of April 1948, a civil war erupted shaking the country by intense fighting between the local conservative party attempting to exclude the liberals from state power (Livingstone, 2003). Other actors included socialists, peasant organizations, and the private paramilitary armies of large landowners (UCDP, 2013). The Violence ended when the Conservatives and the Liberals reached a power-sharing agreement forming "La Frente Nacional" (The National Front) in 1957, excluding all other parties which was a provision mainly to target the communists. By then an estimated 200,000 people had been killed and hundreds of thousands, if not millions more had become forcibly evicted from their territories resulting in an increased concentration of ownership of agrarian property (IDMC, 2006; CCJ, 2006).

This disruption of violence either generated or influenced many of the armed groups who are still active to different extents today, such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) as well as paramilitary forces like the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) (Braun, 2009). These new groups of actors in the Colombian conflict emerged in the 1980's as large land owners got involved in drug dealing trading coca leaves and producing cocaine for export. As the guerrillas started targeting the landowners, including the drug lords, through kidnappings and extortion they responded by creating paramilitary groups involving landowners and the Colombian army to combat the leftist guerrillas (Vidal-Lopez, 2012). The cocaine production was something which started off as an important means to finance the paramilitaries but later grew to be economically crucial even to the guerrilla groups and is something that complicated the conflict even further (IDMC 2006; Sanín Gutierrez 2006; Tickner 2007; UCDP 2007; UN 2004). Since the middle of last century displacement has never ceased. Current recording of the total displaced population starts in 1985 when the Observatory on Human Rights and Displacement (Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento or CODHES) begin their cumulative counting. In 1995 the public policy officially recognised displacement as a national problem and the government started their counting of IDPs ten years after CODHES (Meertens, 2010).

2.2 Current Conflict and Government's Responses

The Colombian conflict is now reckoned to be the oldest civil war in the Western hemisphere with still on-going continuous activity for the past 50 years (UCDP, 2013). The present dynamics of the conflict are hard to understand even when taking the history into account. To some extent it is possible to say that the two main reasons for the current situation in Colombia are, firstly, a long history of using violence as a way of social and political conflict resolution. Secondly, the multiplicity of actors, the fuelling of conflicts due to the trafficking of drugs, lost ideologies and the use of war strategies based on terror instead of search for social support have led the conflict to degrade in terms of international humanitarian law. This has led to a serious territorial fragmentation of the country and today almost all regions and communities are becoming internally divided. Many are those subjected to direct violence employed by frequently shifting local power holders. The countless wars that have been fought in the past can all be characterized by their own particular complexity, or as William Ospina (2001), one of the most featured Colombian columnists and authors has described it,

they all seem to correspond to a particular treasure; the gold, the pearls, the emeralds, the rubber, the coffee, the marijuana and the coca. This still seem to be true when it comes to the current conflict, and the treasures continue to be interchangeable.

A parallel process of peace and war has been chronic in the Colombian conflict in recent years and especially since 2005 when the government started an action of demobilising one of the armed actors (the paramilitary United Self-defence Groups of Colombia, also known as the AUC) under the new Justice and Peace Law, whilst war against other armed groups continued at full force (Meertens, 2010). The demobilising proved to be incomplete and many armed groups was found to re-emerge or form new types of illegal groups. Then in 2012 there were signs of a new willingness to end violence with the beginning of peace negotiations between guerrilla leaders and the Colombian government taking place in both La Havana and Oslo. However, the outcome of demobilising paramilitary and guerrilla groups is a very complex matter as parts of the illegally armed groups and drug cartels continues to regenerate themselves into low profile criminal gangs fuelling the conflict once again (Walch, 2012). This outcome has been compared to the situation known for example in Mexico where illegally armed groups have become a fast-growing problem, and this type of criminality has proved to be harder to deal with than an organised guerrilla movement (Walch, 2012). During the last ten years displacement has been spreading from rural areas into urban areas as people are trying to flee from criminal gangs fighting each other or forcing the young ones to get involved. The illegal gangs are mostly made up of demobilised recidivists from former illegally armed groups, Mafia members or drug traffickers, young delinquents or those forced to join (Murcia, 2011).

The disputes over local control between the guerrillas and the paramilitaries have been analysed to be motivated by the need for social control and the conquest of popular support (Gonzalez, Bolivar & Vasquez, 2003), which is a recognised theme in the Colombian history of violence. In a collection of the people's experiences of forced displacement (IDP Voices, 2013) the victims tells us a story where territorial disputes and political structures combined with the quest for desired resources have all been at the root of their displacement. They also illustrate a regimen by which some cultures and social relationships are subordinated including the native Colombians indigenous or indigenous mixes, peasant farmers (*campesinos*) and black Afro-Colombian cultures, and where power continues to be maintained through terror and intimidation: threats and violence, assassination, massacres and territorial expulsion (IDP Voices, 2013). The fact that Afro-Colombians and indigenous people are over represented comprising one-quarter of the total IDPs (Borton, Buchanan-Smith & Otto, 2005), confirms this inequality in human rights.

Concerning the government's response to the growing internally displaced population, Colombia has long been the country with the most advanced legislations to attend to this population when compared to other countries with severe internal displacement (i.e. Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda) (UNHCR, 2000). The legislation on internal displacement was developed from 1994 after a meeting between Francis Deng, the representative of the UN Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons and the Colombian government together with a large group of NGOs. This contributed to the development of Law 387, one of the most progressive legal frameworks on how to deal with internal displacement (Fadnes & Horst, 2008). Despite this it has remained poorly implemented which is something that led to a passing of 2010 "Victim's Law" in the end of 2011 (IDMC, 2013). This law has ensured that budgets have been allocated to fund reparations and restitution of property and to provide remedies to victims of the on-going internal armed conflict although the bureaucratic process is slow and tends to be very selective when it comes to helping those applying for aid. The question of who is to be counted as displaced or not - and for what reason - continues to be a complicated matter.

Donny Meertens, Lecturer at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana and the National University of Colombia in Bogotá highlights some important points in the political process concerning war and peace in his article on forced displacement and women's security (Meertens, 2010). The first debate he calls the *war on discourse* in how the Constitutional Court ignored the former president Alvaro Uribe's order to erase the word *armed conflict* from diplomatic language and replace it with *terrorism* or *violence by illegal armed groups* (the first aiming at the guerrillas and the latter being a more general term). As the Constitutional Court refused to do so, its position on the matter became an example of what Meertens (2010) calls a "dissent within the state machinery", the Court taking sides with the organisations within the civil society and ruling against the President of Colombia. This shows how the state can act with oppositions and struggles within itself, leading to greater confusion around the on-going situation of war. A second debate is the definition of "victims" and who has the right to reparation. As the government wants to make clear all reimbursement is done out of *solidarity* and not out of *responsibility*, reimbursement of the victims depend on the government and as they see themselves as not responsible, any war crimes committed by the state agents (military and the police) will very rarely be taken into account unless a juridical process can prove the opposite (Meertens, 2010). This implies that those who are victims of crimes committed by the guerrillas for example, have the right to reparation whilst those victims of state actors do not. Many displaced people therefore are not reimbursed or entitled to aid despite being a victim in all other ways according to the law.

In effect, many IDPs are still denied some of their basic rights, and put in vulnerable situations living in poverty or continuously being exposed to the threat of displacement. Nina Birkeland (2003) argues that displacement has multiple antecedents and that conflict and war are insufficient as reasons to explain current patterns of internal displacement. Forced migration is also often caused by the growing effects of development projects, which can be seen as an integral yet distinct part of the larger global crisis of internal displacement (Cernea, 2006).

2.3 Development Induced Displacement

Internal displacement due to *internal conflicts* affects over 26.4 million people worldwide according to the last count in 2011 by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2013a). Although displacement can be seen as a global problem, Colombia's situation is acute as it has now become the country in the world with the largest internally displaced population recorded in one country. According to statistics there are a total of at least 3.9 million IDPs as registered by the government, and according to the reliable non-governmental observer CODHES, the total was estimated as high as 5.5 million by December 2011 (IDMC, 2013b). The discrepancy between the total numbers of IDPs can be explained by several factors including: differences in when the counting started; if the counting is based on the amount of displaced at the origin when fleeing; or when (and if) registered as newcomers to a different region (Churruca & Meertens, 2010, p.45). Moreover, the fact that the governments figure does not include intra-urban displacement nor people displaced for certain reasons - for example crop fumigations (as a weapon in the war on drugs) which has become an environmental hazard causing famine - also suggests the number of IDPs may be even higher (CODHES, 2011, in IDMC, 2013b). Although the vast majority of international research concentrates on displacement due to conflicts, causes of internal displacement are highly complex and the displacement of populations due to natural disasters, environmental change, and development projects are often simultaneous and interlinked to armed conflicts causing the people to flee (Birkeland 2003, Cernea and McDowell 2000, Haug 2003, Lund 2003, Muggah 2003).

Focusing on development induced displacement (DID) there are no existing records on the total number of people affected worldwide nor are there any institutions or publications dedicated to count DID either at global or national levels (Stanley, 2004). For an indication of magnitude the World Bank's Environment Department (WBED) has the most reliable count and is the source most often used by scholars, policy makers and activists (Stanley, 2004). The World Bank has estimated that up to 200 million people worldwide were displaced due to development projects between the years of 1980-2000, a number that is accelerating as since then 15 million people are displaced every year due to dam constructions, urban development and infrastructure programs (Kälin, 2005). Although this number is shockingly high it still fails to encompass many more as it refers only to those physically removed from a site and not the many more living nearby or downstream from projects. If counting this wider conception of DIDs, including all those adversely affected economically and socio-culturally by projects to the extent that displacement will occur out of necessity, displacement would reach far higher than the WBED's count and make the total of IDPs globally increase considerably (Stanley, 2004).

The impacts of development due to dam constructions is said to be "the single most serious counter-developmental social consequence of water resource development" (Cernea, 1990:1) and according to the World Bank's senior environment advisor Robert Goodland (1994) involuntary resettlement has become the most serious issue of hydroelectric projects in today's world. The fact that it is not improving makes it a serious threat to the people and also a strain on incorporating host populations and those populations surrounding resettlement sites. When comparing Latin America to the rest of the world, overall DID is not as high as in Asia and in 1996 WBED counted 13 projects with about 180,000 people enumerated as displaced (Stanley, 2004). In Guatemala's Chixoy Dam Project 2,500 Maya Achi Indians were resettled and the project became famous for the impunity with which the resettlement was carried out when 369 were massacred on the ground that they belonged to the "guerrilla". In Colombia today Emgesa has a count of 12 dams already constructed and functioning (see www.emgesa.com.co) not counting The Quimbo, but the total number of displaced due to these dams are not counted in any record known to the author. It is however impossible to not imagine similar scenarios to that of Guatemala, as the way of calling unwanted demonstrators, freedom fighters and environmental protectors "guerrillas" is a common way to extract unwanted persons from areas desired for economical profit. The leader of the resistance group in the Quimbo, Professor Miller Dussán explains in a deep interview how he has already been accused of belonging to the "guerrillas" after having worked for free in his spare time for many years to defend the legal rights of the people living in the affected area, something he explains is a quite common strategy of war in Colombia (Dussán, 2013).

The largest contributor to development induced displacement, when looking at different types of development projects, tend to be dam constructions, mainly due to the enormous scale and the accelerating speed at which dams have been built since the 1950's (Stanley, 2004). The research concerning the economic, environmental and social impacts of large dams is vast and except for the *direct displacement* and resettlement there is a long list of impacts leading to *indirect displacement* (McCully, 2001; WCD, 2000). Some of these impacts include: inundation of valuable farmland and habitats for animals; endangerment of freshwater habitats leading to extinction of wetland and riverine life forms; capturing of sediment by dam leading to soil degradation and erosion downstream; reservoir-induced seismicity (earthquakes); spreading of diseases by insects (i.e. malaria, dengue); environmental destruction and human death as a result of dam failure or collapse (McCully, 2001).

The consequence of resettlement when it comes to DID is largely dependent on how it is planned, negotiated and then carried out. In modern history of dam-building the experience

of resettlement strategies and programmes have ranged from positive to grim (Stanle, 2004). Families, young and old have been asked to leave or many times forcefully removed from their homes by armed forces or the local police, and in some instances people are known to have been massacred. On the whole most cases fall in between those two extremes on the scale, although it is easier to find negative examples than positive ones (Stanley, 2004). The experience of those displaced by development projects tend to be very similar when compared to that of conflict induced IDPs and the risks of impoverishment can be as severe. They lose their land, homes, livelihoods, their own social network, which forces them to face marginalisation, increased morbidity and loss of sociocultural resilience (i.e. Cernea, 1999; Cernea, 2000, Cernea and Guggenheim, 1993; Scudder 1997, in WCD, 2000). At the same time there are some differences. Development is viewed by many to be something positive (unlike conflicts) resulting in those being displaced by it ending up feeling “sacrificed” for the greater good, a situation marginalising these people even further. Another difference is that a displaced person due to a development project very seldom can return to their homes whereas many who have had to flee because of on-going conflicts or natural disasters may have this option (Kälin, 2005). It is also important to acknowledge how development projects where resettlement and relocation are not being managed in an effective way can lead to new conflicts and further displacement as people will feel their civil, economic, political and social rights are being violated by the government (Kälin, 2005).

2.4 The Quimbo Project

The preparations for the Quimbo Dam was initiated 2008 and officially opened on February 25th 2011 by the president Juan Manuel Santos despite the protests from the communities living in the department of Huila, south western-central Colombia. The company that lies behind the Quimbo Project is EMGESA (Emgesa S.A. ESP), a Colombian electric power company marketing energy in the Non-Regulated Market owned by an Endesa GROUP Company and controlled by the ENEL Italian Power Company (www.emgesa.com.co). The ownership and controlling by Spanish and Italian companies makes this company, Emgesa-Endesa-Enel or Emgesa for short, a transnational power company even though its head office is situated in Bogotá, the capital of Colombia. The hydroelectric power project The Quimbo, that will end up being a 151 metre high and 632 metre long concrete-faced rock dam, is situated on the river Magdalena approximately 69 kilometres south of the city Neiva and is planned to be completed over a four year period in 2015 (UNFCC, 2010). This dam is classified as a large dam according to the International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) as it is higher than 15 metres and has a crest length of over 500 metres (IUCN, 1997). However, El Quimbo also fits the term “major dam projects” according to the International Journal on Hydro power & Dams, fulfilling one of their criteria of reaching higher than 150 metres, a category of which there are only some more than 300 dams worldwide (IUCN, 1997). This makes the Quimbo project one of the largest infrastructure projects in Colombia but also a project that will come to destroy large parts of the region's most fertile and valuable land leaving hundreds of families displaced and with no source of income due to their livelihoods being destroyed.

The diversion of the river Magdalena, the largest river in Colombia, was started on the 3rd of March 2013 despite major protests from the locals, including *campesinos* (farm workers), fishermen, indigenous and students. On visiting the area during my field investigations a month later, fishing had dropped remarkably affecting thousands of people living off the trade.

2.4.1 In-depth Interview with Professor Miller Dussán

A personal interview with Professor Miller Dussán, ASOQUIMBO Investigator and Professor of the South Colombian University, was conducted to fully understand the process and results of the Quimbo project. This interview revealed that the dam will flood 8,586 hectares of land, resulting in a series of terrestrial, riparian and aquatic impacts affecting the ecosystem and biodiversity, destroying a large area involving the surrounding countryside. As one example of environmental changes the dams' water mirror when reflecting the rays of the sun, will come to change the temperature affecting all the coffee plantations on the hill sides as well as a large number of surrounding farms based on a variety of crops or cattle. The environmental studies that should have been made and taken into account before embarking on such a large project were never done as the impacts would be too great for the transnational company to reimburse. The professor wants to make clear of how this will affect the village, but also as a chain-reaction the department as a whole:

There is another typical phenomenon of displacement. Ends up that if this is my territory, the production activity has a concatenation. The countryside is concatenated with the city. If I produce milk here on my land, I have a livestock of milk, and the one who distributes the milk lives in the city. He receives and distributes the milk. But as the milk production ceased the distributor was made redundant. This is another way of displacing the activity. So new types of displacement are being created, not only evicting people from homes but destroying the whole chain of productivity. (Dussán, 2013: lines 179-186)

Looking at the impacts on the environment and societies around large dams constructed around the world, it becomes clear that these findings are common. According to the World Commission of Dams (WCD) Knowledge Base between 40 and 80 million people worldwide are displaced from their homes and millions living downstream from dams being reliant on fisheries and natural floodplain farming suffer serious harm to their livelihoods (WCD, 2000). The mayor problem of being displaced due to large dam constructions is the fact that a large number are not being recognised as such and therefore not compensated for their loss nor included in any resettlement programs (WCD, 2000). Furthermore the WCD (2000) shows how the compensation is rarely adequate to the value of the lost land and even for those enumerated as displaced the social and economic side of resettlement is left out as focus usually lies on the physical relocation. In The Quimbo the list of affected which are entitled to compensation or resettlement includes far less people than are actually suffering the damages of the dam. Professor and researcher Miller Dussán explains:

And of course, today we have the Emgesa who have recognised that all those affected are more or less 3000 people. We made a study, which was verified by the General State Comptrollership, and we are ending up handing in 11,000 more! Eleven and three would make 14,000. These are not recognised by the company. (...) Moreover because the very same company is the one who decides who is affected or not. (Dussán, 2013: lines 199-203)

The professor asked the General State Comptrollership to do the same study again to prove how the study carried out by the multinational company Emgesa was using a methodology that they knew would distort the results.

Then what we did was, we asked the General State Comptrollership; go make a new study, to show that the affected not only are these - but many more! The Comptrollership then came and not only did they do the study but also demonstrated how the study done

by the Emgesa was in fact deceitful. They had done it very poorly, precisely to include the least number of people and pay the minimum. (---) That is to say, using a methodology to diminish the enumerated to pay less compensation. (---) And using an instrument the peasant could not understand. It was 78 questions for an illiterate! (Dussán, 2013: lines 476-492)

The professor then continues with an example of how the multinational had counted the fishermen affected downstream using a methodology enumerating only those fishermen who happened to be selling fish at the fish-market but not counting the total of 917 families relying on fisheries who did not sell fish at that particular time. Studies on resettlement and re-compensation for the displaced due to large dams worldwide also show that the assessment on the impacts on downstream livelihoods were not adequately taken into account during the planning of dams and that there is a clear relationship between the magnitude of displaced and the ability to restore or rehabilitate people's livelihoods in a sufficient manner (WCD, 2000). Also, the more displaced people due to a dam, the less likely it is their livelihoods can be restored. According to The World Conservation Union and the World Bank Group (IUCN, 1997) the adverse social impacts of large dams are hardly ever fully taken into account in decision-making and planning leading to a severe loss of cultural heritage and natural resources. But at the same time they also argue that when accounting for the direct benefits provided by a dam such as the electricity, municipal or industrial water supply, some indirect economic benefits are also forgotten. Thinking the electricity might be a need for the community - this being one of the reasons of why this project must continue according to Emgesa's homepage on The Quimbo Project (www.proyectoelquimboemgesa.com.co) - a question was put forward to the Professor of whether the electricity would be used in the area:

No, no, no. The thing is we have a surplus of energy production. At this moment Colombia has a consumption of more or less 4500-4600 Mega Watts. You see? But we also have a surplus of 4600 MW, which is to say; of a 100% of what is produced at this moment we consume around 50%. But the aspiration of the government with this project is to advance this level to 13000 MW. Precisely for exportation. (...) So there's the question: what kind of National Public Utility is that? This is not for national public use, it's electricity for exportation. To cordially favour the transnational companies but equally the interests of the economic guilds of the political sectors who's controlling the state. This is pure business. (...) That's what it is, a fundamentally capitalist business. It has nothing to do with the necessities of the population. (Dussán, 2013: lines 52-62)

What the Professor talks about as the *national public utility* is what the government of Colombia is putting forward as a reason of why the project has to be done for the best of the country, that it is a project which will benefit the country at large. If The Quimbo would benefit the region in any ways is hard to say at this point and the benefits should then have to be greater than the negative impacts to be able to be justify displacement and unemployment of more or less 14000 people. When it comes to constructing this type of mega-project it is hard to understand how it can be economically profitable when there are other ways of producing electricity less harmful to nature and society, which is one of the questions put forward to the Professor.

To invest in this way is less expensive than investing in other ways. That's what they say. For the investor, the owner of the project. But it is demonstrated in studies on an international level, that the most expensive system for generating energy is precisely the use of hydro-electrics. For one obvious reason. Because the investors are not calculating the environmental, social and cultural impacts those projects will cause. I'll give you a concrete example, in the case of Colombia. The General Comptrollership of the Nation

which is an organ in charge of protecting the national heritage and the communities, recently let us know that the social and environmental damage caused in a year and a half that the construction work now carries, is reaching 200 million dollars, and the project costs 837 million dollars. Which means that in in this time the construction works have destroyed a quarter of what is being invested which is superior to what the company is to pay mandatorily to compensate for social and environmental losses. Any decent country would have already thrown them out. They would have told them; you have already destroyed it all. (Dussán, 2013: lines 100-113)

Another point hard to understand is the fact that these types of mega projects are prohibited in Europe and also in the country controlling Emgesa.

In Italy – the owner of the Quimbo is the ENEL from Italy – you can't construct a micro project generating more than 20 MW. And here we are talking about 400 MW. So, first of all, in this point of view one could argue, if you can't realise these projects in those countries then how come they can be realised in these countries? That's the first problem. (Dussán, 2013: lines 77-81)

To construct these types of mega-projects in countries where the international policies and recommendations for planning and commissioning of large dams are not followed seems to be a way for these companies to increase their profits in a most unethical way. According to studies reviewing large dam constructions worldwide only 26% were implemented to comply with the World Banks policies in 1996 (IUCN, 1997). The involuntary resettlement and the lack of adequate compensation for those affected by large dams continue to be the most serious issues when it comes to hydro-electric power (i.e. Scudder, 1997, in IUCN, 1997). In Colombia there is another problem where there is a big gap between social classes and landownership is still concentrated on a minority of traditionally wealthy people. This makes compensation tricky as the large number of *campesinos* and *jornaleros* (day labourer) working and many times living on bigger farms will go without compensation whilst the *hacienda*-owner might make a profit selling off his land to the company, not even noticing a difference as he will continue to live in his big house in the city. The ones owning, living and working on smaller farms are the ones who cannot be properly compensated as their land is their life.

Well, of course, there is a phenomenon which is a stereotypical case with displacement. If I have 8586 hectares here (which will be inundated, author's remark), it is obedient that all those people there need to be displaced, to make the mega-project. Then some terms will be established, for example the persons that have the most number of hectares – because here there is an enormous concentration of land – those are a few landowners. (...) They sell, and then the company buys the majority of the land. But the majority of the people living in this area are smallholders; small landowners of approximately 300 families. They are in majority, and these 300 families have small properties of 1-2 or 5 hectares, 6 hectares, 10 hectares, yeah? If these people sell the problem is where will they go? Because they live there (unlike most hacienda-owners, author's remark), the land to them is their lifeworks. They have lived there all their life. And then they will say to these people, look, there's no problem, we'll displace you from here and give you new land over here. (...) First of all it's not the same when you live in a historical place where this land is... it's called the Valleys of inter-Andes, lying between the Andes but at the same time by the river. They are meadows. Being next to the river they are very valuable, as they have direct access to water (...) they are the best type of land. In the moment that they said that we are going to remove you, well, there was no land available. There's no land available, at least not of that type of quality. (---) The licence says that if land is replaced it should be of similar or higher quality. It's not possible to improve conditions

for someone living on the most fertile land. As there was no land available (of similar or better quality), then what does the company do? They say the only option is to buy them out. (...) But many campesinos have not received the money and that is a problem in the current conflict. (*Dussán, 2013: lines 124-149*)

The Quimbo is not the first hydroelectric power plant constructed by Emgesa in Colombia and amongst the other 12 a well-known large dam in the department of Huila is the Betania Hydroelectric Power Plant (generating 540 MW). Having been to visit this dam on a day-trip it was impossible to not ask about what happened then, and where there any studies conducted back then?

Yes, but something similar happened then as well. Because for example in Betania – this is horrendous – in the case of the hydroelectric project in Betania they said they would flood 6500 hectares. More or less. But it was confirmed that as a lot of people would come to be displaced, the rich ones well, they would sell, but the *jornaleros*, the people dedicated to raising the cattle, working the land, had to leave. They said that all the damaged caused here will be replaced in another place with 10000 hectares. Well, exchanging the 6500 for 10000 hectares and with these we can make sure that the *jornaleros* and the other people could come and become proprietaries. Well, small landowners, within the 10000 hectares. Thirty years later they haven't compensated a millimetre. No. Nothing. (*Dussán, 2013: lines 230-237*)

Having already been through this process about thirty years ago the people of Huila cannot trust in the promises of compensation, restitution of land nor in the vague promises of work opportunities generated by the future reservoir. But the Professor is clear in what he wants to accomplish and despite being prosecuted to “promote illegal strikes that endanger state security” he works day and night under the threat of assassination to make people understand what is going on and what rights and laws they have on their side and how to tackle the problem in a peaceful way. He is the one person, backed up by other social NGO's, leading the social movement happening in The Quimbo, trying to make a difference for the future:

(...) we know that if we overthrow this project it's winning. Why? First of all because the irreversible environmental and social destruction will not continue. Secondly, because the company has to pay for the damage they have caused. To this whole community. And thirdly, because the land sold off by the rich people, will be used to make a reserve, an Agro-Nutritional Peasant Reserve with land that will be distributed amongst the poor. We have already started! (*Dussán, 2013: lines 553-558*)

3 Theoretical framework

Here the theoretical framework will be explained to reveal the foundation and assumptions that has formed the basis for this research project. Social constructionism lies at the base as a theory looking at reality as a construction between the interaction of people depending on culture and context. Further, to address the people in the Quimbo's process of resisting displacement, the analysis will use the actor-oriented approach as a main theory to show how the specific actors deal with the problematic situation they encounter. Certain concepts deriving from this theory will be used to represent some of the factors influencing the actions of the people living in the Quimbo and to look closer at the identifications expressed by the individual actors.

3.1 Social constructivist perspective

The social constructionist theories invites us to look critically at the world around us and challenge conventional knowledge based on an objective and unbiased view of the world. Gergen (1973), and other social constructionists after him, contend that there are as many realities as there are cultures, contexts, and ways of communicating. According to Vivien Burr (2003) a social constructivist perspective implicates that knowledge is a construction existing between people and the way the world is to be understood is within its historical and cultural concept. Knowledge is furthermore something which is fabricated through our daily interactions in the course of social life and that language is of great importance as the categories and concepts providing a meaning for us derive from the language we use. Language can also be seen as a social action and “when people talk to each other, the world gets constructed” (Burr, 2003:8). Unlike traditional psychology and sociology where hypothesising around personality traits, attitudes and motivations are common, or where people are pathologised or boxed into “types”, social constructionists believe those are all outcomes of the social processes, the dynamics of social interaction. Social constructive theories emphasises that knowledge is not something we have or do not have, it is something we create together (Burr, 2003). This makes its focus more towards the processes instead of the structures, a point of view that is especially interesting when looking at people becoming actors and how they identify or categorize themselves in their own context.

When it comes to social constructionism and research, Burr (2003) points out some theoretical assumption underlying the approach that are of particular interest for this research project. *Objectivity* for a start would be regarded as impossible as no researcher can step out from their own way of looking at and understanding the world, and much like standpoint theory (Smith, 1987), this is something that should rather be acknowledged by the researcher as it can help in the interpretation of the final results. To be aware of ones involvement in the research process means understanding that the final result is a sort of co-production between the researcher and the informants (Burr, 2003). The empirical findings and the “facts” that come out of research as such is not what is against social constructivist thinking, but the way they are seen as universal truths, instead of being interpreted as one way to understand a phenomenon rather than a truth (Gergen, 1999, 2001). Another point to be made is the power relation between the researcher and her “subjects”, a term consciously not used in this work as it indicates a hierarchical relationship; the researcher being the holder of knowledge whilst the subject is used in a passive way to respond to experimental conditions making them lose their features of humanity (Howitt, 1991, in Burr, 2003). Instead social constructivists should try to create a democratic research relationship for example letting the words of the participants talk for themselves or making it clear that the interpretations made are based on certain beliefs. *Reflexivity* is a term that social constructivists have used in a number of ways, this basically meaning “directing back on itself”, and some researchers use reflexivity to analyse their own analysis, whilst others explicitly point out personal and political values and perspectives that have informed their research (Burr, 2003). Reflexivity can be used at the very core of the whole research, but can also be used through mentioning some of the background and values of the researcher that could be of importance for the reader to know, the final being the chosen method in this dissertation.

Reliability and *validity* are common research terms not appropriate in research based on constructivist theories as the notion of a study being repeatable or showing a “truth” cannot be applied (Gergen, 1973). Instead constructivist researcher have talked about “usefulness” or “fruitfulness” of the research or “soundness” and “trustworthiness” when it comes to analysis (Burr, 2003). Wood and Kroger (2000, in Burr 2003) suggest that one way of making sure that

the informants orientation is reflected when analysing the data is to pay close attention to the language they use, how they identify or categorise themselves and which interactional problems seem to be important to them in the interview situation.

The choice to use social constructionism as a basic theory and way to look at the current phenomenon was based on the assumption that the people in the Quimbo, through their culture, language and their own special context have a certain way to tell their story, and the researcher conducting the study will be coloured by her own specific background, values and culturally formed understanding of the same. It has been used as a way to guide the researcher through the field keeping an open mind to the processes, the changing concepts and as a reminder to look closer at the spoken language used by the contestants. The negative consequences to using this approach include the above stated difficulties in using reliability and validity as proof of how the study could be repeated or how well the results correspond to reality.

3.2 Actor oriented approach

This approach as developed by Sociologist Norman Long (2001), is seen as a counterpoint to structural analysis in developmental sociology; a specific field within sociology where the causes, dynamics, and consequences of social, cultural, political and economic change are being studied. The actor oriented approach has many similarities to social constructivist thinking in the way that it “recognises the central role played by human action and consciousness” (Long, 2001:13). Norman Long has been widely recognised for his work as he has problematized a number of issues previously thought to be fairly straightforward. He pointed out the social actors in development processes, criticized linear and system thinking, as well as noticing how an intervention, used for example in poverty reduction purposes, is an arena of struggles between several actors or active agents (Hebinck, 2001). However, to use this approach as a tool in analysing data is not as straightforward as one would wish despite it being a perspective with many useful cornerstones suitable for this study. Long (2001, p. xii) even empathises that “it has never been my intention to promote actor oriented analysis as a fully elaborated theoretical model or tool-kit of methods and techniques” and has pointed out that it is a perspective under process, which like everything else will change as it is developed (Hebinck, 2001). It is still a potent approach in terms of how it facilitates the understanding of social situations not necessarily just looking at development in rural settings, but also in a movement for social change.

This thesis will use this approach in a selective way utilising a few of what Long (2001) calls the cornerstones of the theory, but also in the way that it implies the possibility of a continuous creation, adaptation and transformation of social and cultural practices. One way of using the actor oriented approach is through looking at the different responses to similar structural circumstances in which the conditions appear to be relatively homogeneous, and through this one may, according to Norman Long (2001), find differential patterns which can be assumed to be the joint creation of the actors. He sees the approach as an issue deriving from the constructionist perspective as it entails the “remaking of society through the on-going self-transforming actions and perceptions of a diverse and interlocked world of actors” (Long, 2001:73). The idea entails the notion of development within a social field happening in different forms depending on how the specific actors will handle and confront the situation whatever the structural circumstances may be.

The actor oriented approach entails a number of key concepts of which the ones chosen for this study will be explained below. These concepts are used elsewhere in a variety of ways but will here be explained using Long’s (2001) description. *Agency* is something persons or networks have, which constitutes of the actions and interpretations they will make

based on knowledge, capability and social relationships (Long, 2001). However, this is not equivalent with the capacity to make decisions as it does not entail having certain persuasive powers or a strong charisma (Achieng, 2003). Agency according to Long (2001), is composed of a complex mix of cultural, material and social elements, and depending on how agency is attributed it can shape the actors' perception of what is achievable. It depends crucially upon the network of actors who get involved in a project and can also be understood as the generation and use of a network of social relations following a certain political or social scheme (Latour, 1986, in Long, 2001). Those who have the agency are called *social actors*, and they are the individuals, groups or networks who possess the knowledge and capability to assess the problems in the environment and to come up with ways of how to respond to those appropriately (Long, 2001). They can appear in various forms from meaning the individual social actor to social actors in form of informal groups, organisations or interpersonal networks. This does not necessarily mean that the individuals within a social movement or organisation are all acting in unison and can sometimes be better explained in terms of a "coalition of actors" (Long, 2001). *Lifeworld* is a concept which embraces the actions, interactions and meanings, it is the social world almost taken for granted by those living in it, and is found within specific socio-geographical spaces. It can also be identified within the life stories told by the social actors (Long, 2001).

Identifications is something that can be studied to gain insight into people's socio-political and cultural commitments and is how people attribute self-definitions to themselves and to others around them (Long, 2001) Some definitions might be more fixed whilst others are highly situational. To take identification into account in a research project helps the researcher for example to see individual differences and that collective action does not necessarily mean a collective identity. To understand the concept of identity from a social constructivist perspective, social interactions and identity negotiations can exist between individuals and groups at different levels, for example the groups relation to structures in society or specific relations between individuals within groups (Nyberg, 2006). How the interactions are expressed or formed is important in terms of how people make sense of, and understand, their identities and also for how these identities are expressed in different contexts (Nyberg, 2006). Social identity can be understood as an on-going process where self-definition of the individual is under constant negotiation by the individual but also by others in the surrounding. According to the author of "Social Identity", Richard Jenkins, identity is:

(...) our understanding of whom we are and who other people are, and, reciprocally, other people's understanding of themselves and of others (which includes us). It is a very practical matter, synthesising relationships of similarity and difference. The outcome of agreement and disagreement and at least in principle always negotiable, identification is not fixed. (Jenkins, 2008:18)

He furthermore implies that it is not possible to live a meaningful life without taking identification into account (Jenkins, 2008). Identification can be defined as "the systematic establishment and signification, between individuals, between collectives and between individuals and collectives, of relationships of similarity and difference" (Jenkins, 2008:18). People have certain repertoires for identification purposes and if they did not have these it would not be possible to relate to each other in a meaningful or consequent way. There is also a collective identity when it comes to identifying oneself as part of a group. Identification towards a new group happens in an environment or a setting when meeting people one may relate to. At this moment the individual might relate to the others in a positive way when there is an affiliation, feeling of belonging and feeling of sharing the same conducts and values. The reaction can also be negative if she dissociates with that environment and to what the individuals within it represents. The personal experience of belonging to a specific social

group can vary and this has been described by Lange and Westin (1981) as two different concepts of identification – one cognitive and one emotional. The cognitive concept is about being aware of belonging to a certain group whilst the emotional one is to what extent the individual identify with that group. A person might know she is part of a famous punk band and seen as a radical anarchist and might act accordingly, but emotionally identification is low as she secretly believes in God, prefers country music and really would like to grow up to be a catholic priest. A person can relate to a group or a category through identifying with it, rejecting it, but also be indifferent to it.

However, one critique against social identity theory is that it has a too strong of a focus on one identity/group identity at the time. Zavallonis (1971) multiple social identities can serve as an example of a theory explaining how people can experience how they belong to several social categories simultaneously, where there´s a whole set of identifications based on for instance sex, nationality, religion, family-roles etc. creating a cluster of identity around each person. This makes the group identification a lot more complex as it has to relate to multiple clusters of identity at the same time, which is also something quite difficult to map down.

4 Methodological approach

In this chapter methodological choices made during the course of the study will be explained and related to existing literature within the field of social science. The intention is to show the concrete methods used to collect data and also the challenges, in terms of ethical and other issues encountered during fieldwork. First a short introduction of some practical issues of the fieldwork will be presented as it otherwise might be hard to grasp the whole setting. This part will be told from a personal perspective unlike the rest of the study which has an impersonal viewpoint, as it is based on the field notes done during my field observations.

4.1 Getting into the Quimbo

To get to the Quimbo proved to be harder than I had first had imagined and despite it being a place only three hours away from my Colombian home, it turned out that because of safety reasons the final time and date for departure was changed with very short notice three times in the space of two days creating a lot of confusion. At that moment I thought of it as quite natural according to Colombian culture but when looking back it is hard to know if perhaps the Professor had been under threat or if the road to Quimbo had been considered unsafe due to conflicts between warring parties, which often happens. After finally having been told that a car would be leaving from the nearest town the next morning by 5am - they would leave without me if I could not make it - I realised no local transport would be leaving that early on a Sunday morning. So by 4am I was standing on the road in pitch darkness to get a hitch and luckily a milkman stopped to pick me up and took me to Neiva making me arrive 5am on the dot. In true Colombian fashion we left the place an hour later than the set out time, and then finally got to the camp after a few hours' drive stopping for an obligatory caldo (soup) for breakfast. With me I had the leader of the movement; Professor Dussán who was driving the car at the same time as speaking non-stop about the situation in the Quimbo; a representative from the NGO ACAS; and a professional documentary film maker and journalist from the capital, as eager as myself to gather as much information on the trip as possible. As I had

been told we would spend the day at the camp and return in the evening I was prepared to get into interviewing as soon as we got there, something that proved to be impossible.

Most the people of the movement, which consisted of more or less a hundred individuals, had gathered at La Guipa to meet the small assembly of people that arrived early in the morning. It was men and women but also elderly and children. The main reason for all of them being there was to listen to the Professor and to have a communal meeting. After a whole morning of meetings and speeches the Professor got a phone call on which he had to leave immediately together with the representative from ACAS. The film maker and I looked at each other realising at that moment that we would have to stay the night and another day if wanting to get our work done. As the large group dispersed getting around their daily businesses after the mornings meeting, I was invited to get to know the liberated land and the leaders of the movement but also knew I had to find my time to interview those who were willing to participate in my study. Not knowing where to sleep or what would happen I got down to do my work in the hot sunny afternoon and would take some breaks now and then to discuss my impressions and thoughts with the young journalist. The people in La Guipa and La Virginia were busy working out how to divide the land, organising the farming and starting production again on these two huge farms that had been sold off and abandoned about a year earlier. To get the cultivation going a lot of tools were necessary and working land which has been left untouched for some time is not an easy task. They brought me out to see a former tobacco cultivation which seemed like a ghost farm, enormous buildings standing there empty waiting to be brought back into life. Back at La Guipa, the farmhouse had one large room and two smaller rooms where people slept on the floors, a bigger open area served as a meeting space and films were put on through connecting a projector to a lap top for the young people in the evening to watch films or documentaries both as entertaining and to learn about other movements around the world. Food was cooked over an open fire outdoors and two toilets and a very basic shower served the whole group. Many slept out in their hammocks under a roof on the patio and the rest slept side by side on mattresses on the floors of the farmhouse. And I was treated like family, given food and offered a place to sleep as naturally as if had I come to join the movement for good.

4.1.1 Research method

The choice of method always depends on the purpose of the study, and when looking at how individuals or groups viewed their experiences and the world in which they live, qualitative methods are better suited as the main interest lies in the descriptions, explanations and interpretations of the phenomenon (Ahrne, 2011). Qualitative methods can also be used to its advantage in an exploratory way, when the question at issue is less known about (Malterud, 2009) and when the aim is to understand the social reality of individuals, groups and cultures. In this study there was a certain element of exploratory process as the theory and the main questions were not decided upon until the research group had been allocated as being the displaced in the Quimbo and the focus was set on development induced displacement. After then deciding which main questions to focus on, writing them to match the actor oriented approach, the structural interview questions evolved. In qualitative studies the sample can consist of fewer participants, but in return the investigation can go deeper which means “less is more” (McCracken, 1988). Based on this it was decided that more or less ten interviews were needed to make a good data sample.

As the topic to be explored in the current study is how the individuals within the resistance group in the Quimbo experiences being displaced by a development project, a qualitative method was chosen as an appropriate research method as it would involve several

semi-structured interviews (Larsen, 2009). This study was also using a qualitative method as it has an interpretive approach to social reality and in the description of the lived experience of human beings and is commonly used in research concerning social processes, meanings of experiences, social change and conflict. The approach was of an inductive nature as the questions were open for changes to a certain point depending on what comes up (the same question could be asked again in a slightly different way if the answer did not correspond to the question) and no predetermined hypothesis was tested (i.e. Halvorsen, 2003). Strategies of immersing into the setting was also used involving observation, questioning and listening techniques which helps focusing on the process as well as generating descriptions of culture (Hammerslay & Atkinson, 1995). Whilst being in the resistance camp a lot of what was observed and experienced through the researchers eyes was written down in spontaneous field notes which were later turned into a descriptive text (see above), on how it was to get into the Quimbo. Conducting research on a rather unexplored and undocumented field in a setting where human rights are being violated and insecurity amongst the informants is high, a method involving personal interviews was considered as the most appropriate as it helps to reveal new insights and perspectives on the issue as well as it creates a high level of confidence.

4.2 Field Work

The fieldwork was carried out in the Department of Huila, in the surroundings of the department's capital Neiva, between February-April 2013. Research was made into the different types of displacement in the area, of which most tended to be due to the conflict. Meetings were set up with an non-governmental organisation called Asociación Cultural y Ambientalista del Sur (ACAS), who works with assisting the displaced communities as well as "contributing through attending to the necessities, problems and interests of organisational, participatory and productive character within the communities and organisation in the region of south Colombia" (<http://www.rndp.org.co/nodo-centro>). It is part of a fairly young national Network of Schools of Democracy and Peace (RNDP), promoting peace-culture, conflict transforming and psychosocial accompanying, a movement which spontaneously started to form in the middle of 2007 and then rapidly spread across the country in 2008. ACAS in the department of Huila has a social, cultural and environmental focus working together with several other actors in the area, and it was during an informal meeting with the director of this NGO that information on what was happening in the Quimbo was brought forward in an interesting way, resulting in a series of important contacts for this study. After having come in contact with a librarian who later proved to be important helping me to find Miller Dussán, Professor at the University of South Colombia and researcher of ASOQUIMBO, the focus was set on a specific group of IDPs resisting the dam building in the Quimbo. This choice was based on wanting to conduct research in an area less known to the public choosing development induced displacement as an alternative to the vast research focusing on conflict-induced displacement. The fieldwork includes method triangulation consisting of in-depth and semi-structural interviews, participant observation and the use of documents for background information which is a common way to increase validity when designing a study (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000). According to Fangen (2005) the use of triangulation also improves the credibility of the informant's statements and was necessary in order to fully understand the situation the interviewees were in. If not using participation observation, spending time in the resistance camp and living their reality, many nuances would have been lost and never understood. Another important fact in being able to conduct this study was earlier years spent studying and living in Colombia, learning about the culture and political situation as well as

how to speak the language fluently. These all became important tools for the purpose of the research. Having worked as a psychology assistant in a rehabilitation camp for ex-child soldiers also proved to be important as that facilitated the understanding of how to move between different perspectives when interviewing young people from the countryside not that used to neither the city nor the academic world.

4.3 Ethical considerations

The ethical responsibilities to be considered by the researcher are based on the principles around the common free will to participate, integrity, confidentiality and anonymity (Bryman, 2004; Kvale 1996). All participants were insured to be informed of the overall purpose and informed consent was ensured before each interview not in a written form but recorded in order to avoid any cases of illiteracy amongst the participants. The information about the object of the study was brief as otherwise this can come to influence the behaviour of the informants and the material gathered by the researcher (Thagaard, 2003). All participants were asked if they understood the purpose of the study, if they understood participation was at their free will and that they may withdraw at any time choose to not answer all questions. They were also asked if they agreed to have the interview recorded and anonymous quotations used in a dissertation or article coming out of the research. Discussing the ethical aspect with the supervisor prior to conducting this study, the ages of the youth was decided to be between 15-18 years of age and not younger, as this would need authorization by the participant's parents according to Swedish law. That would have been difficult to organise as some of the youths encountered as displaced during the field trip had lost contact with their families. Accordant to Swedish recommendations regarding ethical principles (see Vetenskapsrådet, 2002) the eight rules were followed accurately but the final recommendations of letting the informants take part of the material after the dissertation is completed, will be harder to fulfil due to the language barrier as the study will not be translated into Spanish. It will however be shared with the leaders of the organisations involved (ASOQUIMBO and ACAS) making translation possible for those English speaking members of the communities. There are considerations regarding writing an article in Spanish based on the current study as that could be easier to share with the community. Further ethical considerations will be discussed throughout this chapter.

4.4 Qualitative interviews

A good way of gathering information about a person's point of view, experiences and self-understanding can be done using qualitative interviews (Thagaard, 2003). It is particularly suitable when studying people's understanding of the meaning of their world (Kvale, 1996), making this a natural choice of method. An initial in-depth interview with Professor Miller Dussán turned out to be essential for the background material. To get hold of this busy man was something that ended up being a stroke of luck as he was no longer in office having taken a sabbatical year to work on social issues and research projects outside the university setting. Despite this it turned out that on the exact day as the author of this study went knocking on his door and was told about his sabbatical leave, the Professor happened to be nearby and had been spotted by someone who quickly gave some instructions on his whereabouts and appearance so that he could be identified amongst a crowd of people. He considered the current research proposal, demanded a written background to it and so on, and then agreed to participate in an in-depth interview on the issue of development induced displacement and the situation in the Quimbo. Looking back, he became the "gatekeeper" (i.e. Buchanan, Boddy &

McCalman, 1988; Bryman, 2004) needed to get access to the field for doing both participant observations and conduct the interviews used in this study.

When conducting individual semi-structured interviews the researcher has an interview schedule, but can vary the order of the questions and/or follow up with further questions according to the informant's responses (Bryman, 2004). However, in the moment of interviewing, follow up questions were only asked if feeling that the answer did not correspond to the question, as at times informants would end up telling a story never getting back to answering the question. Throughout the interviewing there was a high sense of following the same order of the questions to facilitate a structured method of analysis. The researcher also maintained a "low profile"; not intervening or disturbing the contestants through showing sudden facial expressions of for example surprise. Constantly being aware of and following the research method as strictly as possible, helped to maintain the design throughout the interviewing phase of this study.

All of the interviews of the displaced community took place in the resistance camp in the Quimbo situated next to the river Magdalena approximately two hours' drive south from the city Neiva, outside a little village called La Jagua. The two *fincas* (farms) "La Guipa" and "La Virginia" now liberated by the movement were abandoned after having been bought by the multinational company Emgesa. As production ceased, the *campesinos* who had worked on these farms were displaced and made unemployed with no other source of income. Three of the interviews took place outdoors in an old chicken shed next to the river Magdalena at the *finca* "La Virginia", whilst almost all of the remaining interviews were conducted in a private room (one of the two smaller bedrooms) in the farmhouse at "La Guipa". The final interview was carried out in the old pig pen as the little room was in use at that moment. The interview settings in these cases were suggested by the researcher as there was a limited amount of places in which the interview could take place avoiding distractions from the others, but offered in a way that the participant could accept or reject the idea. Changing the environment and the use of different settings in the interview situations might not be ideal but was what could be offered at the moment and accepted by both the interviewee and the researcher. The connection between the two *fincas* were established on a daily basis as it was possible to walk or ride a motorbike between the two and it did not seem like the groups were set but rather self-selected on the day, depending on the farm work that needed to be done at the different sites at different times. Most of the informants saw the interview as an opportunity to tell their story and a strategy of denouncing the incidents they had been exposed to and only a few of the younger ones started off by being shy and looking as if they were unsure if they answered correctly before getting warm in their clothes. It was further noticed during the analysis that the responses were becoming much clearer with straighter messages the further into the interview the contestants would get and the final area of questions showed a whole set of important new views on the situation hard to grasp from the initial questions. If doing a follow-up study the focus of investigation could be based on the results in the final section of the results as many new ideas were brought forward in this part (see result and analysis). At the end of each interview the participant were given a small gift in form of a notebook and coloured pencils meant as a gift of symbolic value. The setting for the in-depth interview with Professor Miller Dussán ended up being an outdoor café for student as the meeting was set at the local university and, perhaps due to the situation of meeting a (female?) student-researcher, he insisted on buying the coffees.

An ethical consideration concerning dialogues in qualitative interviewing is that a dialogue might give the impression of an equal relationship and hide the structures of power (Kvale, 2006). When considering this, the way that the interview setting was chosen by Professor Dussán for the in-depth interview and his way on insisting to buy the coffees can show how a distinct power-relationship was established in that situation compared to when

collecting the actual data material on the field. When interviewing the displaced the position of power became more equal, or possibly more hidden, as spending time at the camp meant living together with the group and becoming one of them. As Kvale (2006) points out, recognising power dynamics in interviews is necessary to make sure the research is both as ethical and objective as possible. Objectivity, although it is something considered as unachievable from a social constructionists point of view (Burr, 2003), is still important to consider even if the reasons are based on the soundness or trustworthiness of a research-act. Another ethical consideration is when the informant becomes emotional during the interview process which happened at three different occasions. Some questions might hurt to speak about and this was taken under consideration by the researcher who would take the time necessary for the informant to recompose by turning off the recorder as long as necessary. It is important to not fall into the trap of turning into the role of a “helper” or a therapist, which should not be the role of a researcher (Kvale, 2006). In all three of these cases a low profile was kept throughout the interview and on completing recording, the informant were given space to talk more personal if they felt they had the need.

4.5 Participation Observation

Participant observation is described by Bryman (2004) as taking place when a researcher immerses herself in a group for an extended period, observing behaviour, listening to what is said in conversations and asking questions. Some researchers have found the necessity to make a distinction between the two extremes of this method (i.e. Bernard, 1995) where sole observing is when the researcher is disconnected to the event to make sure interaction which might affect the outcome is avoided (for example observing from behind a glass or through media), whilst the other extreme of total participation can be described as *going native* (Devault & Devault, 2002). Devault & Devault (2002) explains how this implicates that other experiences can be obtained which cannot be experienced only through studying or interviewing people, a technique well known within the anthropological research field. In clear participation there is no analysis whilst in a clear observation there is no participation. In this study participant observation is utilised using the whole spectra where the researcher will move within those extremes. Observation in this study is based on Fangen’s (2005) description of how a *partly participating observer* should not be on the side of interaction, but take the role the other participants give her if she agrees on the particular role. As a main rule the researcher should participate, but avoid actively changing the interaction. Observation was furthermore open as the informants were aware of a scientist participating and observing in the camp (Larsen, 2009). An example of when mainly observing and participating was at a minimum could be when taking the back seat in the audience listening to the speeches made by the leader whilst silently observing the crowd taking field notes. However, the mere presence of a researcher in a room full of land liberators makes sole observation impossible as being present at the gathering makes this a participatory role too.

In the current study observation through participation was to a lesser extent also carried out at meetings, political demonstrations, presentations/speeches and activities related to the on-going local election campaign. One observation made outside the movement in a village in another part of the department el Huila far away from the Quimbo, was how the local politicians took an official stand to oppose the hydroelectric project. This was possibly done in order to gain more votes, but more importantly it showed how news about the strength of the movement had spread and how awareness was growing regarding the situation of the Quimbo all over the department. Meetings were organised with NGOs (ASOQUIMBO and ACAS), and informal meetings and visits at local universities and libraries were also carried out in which observation and information gathering helped to create a good base to

understand the situation in the department in general, but also in terms of facilitating locating relevant people, interpreting the data and finding written literature on the subject. This is accordant to Thagaard's (2003) believes of how observing while participating creates a good quality basis to the understanding of the social context. Fangen (2005) also points out that this is a method where the researcher participates not only as a scientist but also as a human being. Skjervheim (1996, in Fangen, 2005) emphasizes that the method requires the researcher to engage with the human beings she studies and to act as a subject in a conversation instead of standing outside and being a stranger. Looking back it would have been hard not to do so. The advantage of using this method is that the researcher obtains first-hand information and comes closer to people's reality beyond situations arranged by the researcher, which strengthens the researcher's understanding (Fangen, 2005). When it came to understanding the way they would divide the land, get production going and live off the land with one larger cooperative and communal part and other individual plots on the side, it all sounded great but hard (in the researchers ears) to realise. Being a participating observatory help to create a solid understanding of what the people of the Quimbo was experiencing during this process which is something that is intended to be portrayed in this dissertation in a trustworthy way.

The relationship between the researcher and the informant, when it comes to closeness and sensitivity, is important for the material the researcher will end up with (Thagaard, 2003). Sharing the groups experience at the camp meant sharing their food, understanding the difficulties they were going through when trying to divide the many responsibilities amongst themselves, but also helping to organise activities for the children in the evening as well as sharing their worries and sleeplessness at night when the military patrolled the area. This made closeness a fact and sensitivity increased living their reality, an experience that would not have been the same if the interviews would have taken place elsewhere. However, the researcher should be aware of her standpoint, an idea conceived by the sociologist and feminist Dorothy Smith (1987) who has defined knowledge as "affected by where one stands (one's subject position) in society" arguing that we can only see the world around us "through one lens and that is our standpoint" and what we know of the world and of the "other" is conditional on that location. The same is true for everyone around us and affects the way in which the researcher is perceived by the informants. Ethnicity, class, sex, culture, and other traits emerging from the social standpoint of the researcher all have a relevance, of which some sides will be magnified whilst other are made less noticeable (Pease, 2010). Being a middle class Northern European female Master student and having a social standpoint far from a Colombian *campesino* could affect the way interaction would occur, but perhaps thanks to this group's experience with researchers, journalists and documentary film-makers from other cities or countries and the fact that one member of the community was brought up abroad now having returned to the village, made these traits unimportant or not uncommon when it came to interacting with the author of this project. There was a general feeling of uncomplicated interaction and everyone was treated equally and with respect. Similarities were often brought up in conversation, such as being a mother, a nurse, married, and having been brought up on the countryside. However, as a researcher these similarities were brought forward and displayed to a higher extent making the differences less noticeable for the purpose of the study but also as a common act of melting into ones new environment, something that is hard to avoid if having lived within different types of cultures around the world during several years.

From the other point of perspective it is interesting how the author's background, having been brought up on a farm in the north of Sweden, made certain facts about a farmers life very real and it was not difficult to imagine the enormous effort that would have to be put into cultivating the once abandoned land to make production work again. As an example of how the group would chose to involve the researcher into certain very detailed issues was

when during a meeting the leaders would ask for a personal opinion on how to best divide the land and if it seemed reasonable to do it the way they were planning. According to Fangen's (2005) earlier description a certain role was then offered to the partly participating observer. On agreeing on participating (although surprised) observing moved towards a more participating role. Almost in a "going native"-position which seemed very natural at that time. Generally it seems as the longer time you spend with the people you study the more interactions occur and the role of an active participant not only observing grows on you or/and is given to you through acceptance from the observed group.

Fangen (2005) points out that as a researcher in participant observation it can be expected to get involved in the actions of the people you study, but being present as both a researcher and a human being might alter or influence the situation. When the group asked for opinions on how to best divide the land, it seemed natural to go with their proposals and showing them a positive reaction and believing in their own capability of making it work might strengthen their feeling of what is achievable, their agency. Being present at La Guipa could also have altered the situation in a positive way through the means of sharing the struggles with the people, showing solidarity and highlighting the fact that someone from the other side of the world is aware of their situation. One participant even expressed this as one of his dreams coming true, meeting a foreigner who wanted to listen to his experience and feeling that he matters. An ethical aspect is that of how the researcher implicitly accepts the common understanding of an issue, including the dangers, when participating in certain activities (Fangen, 2005). The conscious choice of doing fieldwork in a resistance camp that could be raided by the Colombian military at any time was to some extent risky but even so it is still difficult, if not impossible, for an outsider - living that reality voluntarily for only 48 hours - to fully understand how it is to actually be forcefully displaced or how it is to live under a constant pressure due to lack of security over a larger period of time.

The ethical considerations within the field of qualitative research concerning participant observation has to be taken into account as some argue that it is a method inevitably unethical by being deceitful (Punch, 1994). It might not be clear to the participants that the researcher is observing and will use information of certain events in ways to prove or analyse the situation. When observation is concealed people might feel they are being misled (Larsen, 2009). Therefore it is of great importance to be open around the fact that observation is carried out and in this study notes were taken openly at meetings and more informal gatherings in order to show that participation was done in form of a researcher. In the displaced community Professor Dussán took a moment for introduction to make sure everyone understood participation and observation by a researcher would take place.

4.6 Role of the researcher

The honesty, knowledge and integrity of the researcher are all crucial factors (Kvale, 1996), and getting close to the participants as a human being has to be juggled with the scientific responsibility of being a researcher where finding, controlling and verifying the data has to be done in the best possible way. As the researcher subsequently will write about the informant, the close relationship between researcher and informant is based on a fundamental asymmetry (Thagaard, 2003). As Nielsen (1996) puts it; the researcher is a kind of spy. As a researcher will come to interpret and analyse the interviews as well as other information gathered, power relations could be seen as asymmetric. This is also the case when considering that most participants had no former knowledge of the implication of being a student, doing research or common procedures in fieldwork. But criticising Kvale's (1996) attention to the asymmetrical power relationship in interviews, it is important to point out the contra-power of the group choosing to become participants in a specific study. In the case of the Quimbo it lies

in their interest to make their voices heard and for knowledge about their cause to be spread which is how power can turn in their favour. The human rights violations in the Quimbo is something this group would want the world to know about as there are hopes that it could lead the way for changes in the Colombian rights system, which would in the long run put a halt to future violations of similar types.

According to Kvale (1996), the researcher may have different types of relationships to her informants such as reformer, exploiter, advocate and friend. One challenge related to the researcher-respondent relationship is gender and a lot of the research in this area focuses on when the researcher happens to be female and the respondent male (Thagaard, 2003). Female researchers may experience the difference in gender being pointed out in a way that strengthens the masculinity of the respondent, creating an uncomfortable situation. The issues of gender experienced in this study were few and only at one point one young participant expressed his gratefulness to having the honour to get a moment alone telling his story to a female (blond) researcher who would also record his words. This was not uncomfortable and thought of more as a teenager's way to express his surprise of what was happening, but could of course have been uncomfortable if the age differences would have been the other way around. There can also be an advantage of being a foreign female researcher as it makes it easier for men in certain cultures to "be allowed" to work around gender related cultural rules, i.e. treating a female from a different culture not at all similar to theirs almost as having a third gender. In Colombian culture however, despite it being (in-) famous for its macho-culture being a Latin American country, women are not treated as a lower class citizen in the general population, at least not within the fields in which the author has done participating observations. There are many well educated women around in high positions of power, and as a researcher it was never awkward to be a woman. As a researcher it is further important to be aware of the feeling that might appear described by Coffey (1999:27) as the "fear of not fitting in or not being accepted". A certain assimilation process will usually occur when entering a new field as a researcher, but the so called fear of not being accepted never came, perhaps because of the people of the Quimbo being very polite and eager to invite more people to get to know about their struggles. It is also possible that thanks to knowing the culture, the language, the mentality and having lived over long periods of times working and studying in the country, as well as being married to a country-man for six years, made access easier in this particular case. The emotional risks for researchers in the social field have also been highlighted in the literature, and some argue that the researcher should maintain a professional detachment (Hubbard, Backett-Milburn & Kemmer, 2001) whilst others would argue that there is no such thing as a "professional detachment" (Bloor, Fincham & Sampson, 2007). Instead of feeling detached, the author of this paper attempted to understand the social world of being displaced through putting herself in the middle of it, joining the camp not knowing where to sleep that very night. In this way Coffey (1999) points out, the researcher can become the key instrument herself in coming to understand the true situation. Emotionally the risk was diminished by the high level of networking in the community, everyone "sitting in the same boat" and a high level of emotional support experienced between the members in a truly positive way.

Fangen (2005) stresses the importance of finding a position between participation and analytical distance which is not at either extreme. Reflection over the values and the standards in the environment studied is vital in order to find a good balance between seeing the world in the participants' point of view according to their living situations and at the same time be able to critically assess their opinions. This is something that was impossible to not be aware of and is possibly something that comes very naturally to some more than others. As a researcher this balance was fluctuating during the course of the study and just as Becker (1967, in Bryman, 2004) would argue, it is hard to do social research that is unaffected by our personal

sympathies, and difficult not to take sides, when conducting research in the context of unequal hierarchical relationships in society. Although some disagree meaning that it is not necessary to sympathise with a group just because their point of view is taken seriously (i.e. Gouldner, 1968 in Bryman, 2004). It was difficult to maintain neutrality in the case of the Quimbo and not take sides, but even so it is possible to maintain an analytical distance. What can be important to avoid in terms of the role of the researcher is cognitive bias or with other words, the tendency to apply and interpret the information supporting the researchers own view or opinion and avoiding to seek information and interpretations contrary to the researchers presumptions and beliefs (Bryman, 2004). Fangen (2005) argues that generally most sociologists conducting research within the social field are politically interested in the sense that their research tend to take sides with the oppressed or pointing out inequities in society. Kvale (1996) goes as far as to suggesting the aim of all social research should not only be to develop scientific knowledge, but further try to improve the situation of the people studied, whilst others disagree, empathizing that there is no consensus among social researchers on this matter (Fangen, 2005). However, if conducting this research could in some way lead to improving the situation in The Quimbo, or at least be a means of highlighting the existence of these types of violations against human rights which continue to occur around the world at a growing rate, that would be a welcomed secular achievement.

An ethical challenge could be when a social researcher starts emphasizing emotionally with the informants to a higher extent than would be ideal, as mentioned above. Some would argue that social science should not be objective or neutral to social phenomena and that instead of striving for neutrality at all costs it can be better to clarify one's position and then critically reflect upon it (Habermas, 1984, in Fangen, (2005). Mies (1993, in Bryman, 2004) introduces the concept of *conscious partiality*, arguing that value-neutral research is undesired. Although this study does not focus on the political dilemma, the attitude of the researcher in this study is clearly not neutral and will be discussed below.

When being opposed to both human violations and destruction of environmentally very rich areas on the planet, it is hard to justify a giant development project that according to collected results worldwide is proved to cause serious harm to the people, animal and plants in the area (i.e. WCD, 2000). On the other hand, as it is clear that the amount of energy produced by the dam and its economic benefits might benefit some, it could come to contribute in strengthening the national economy which (in a perfect world) would come to benefit the people in ways decided by the nation. However, the need for electricity is not urgent in the area and it is hard to believe the cost of domestic electricity would decrease due to this project, which is something that could have come to match the needs of the people. Colombian history also shows us that distribution of wealth is extremely unequal and together with poverty these are two important components of the social and armed conflicts. What we are left with is exploitation of land and the cost paid by the poor through losing their livelihoods and their land, and perhaps another reason to continue the social conflict that has been on-going for over half a decade. Even though Fangen (2005) argues the importance of not taking side in a conflict, the situation has been looked at from the point of view of the participants interviewed as it is difficult to realise a study of all sides. Conscious partiality is therefore the author's choice.

4.7 The sample

The first interview conducted in this research project is the in-depth interview with Professor Miller Dussán. It was made in order to collect a great body of knowledge about the situation in the Quimbo and basic information concerning their work and ideas. This interview is what is used as a knowledge base in the background chapter 2.4.1 *In-depth interview with Professor Miller Dussán*. Nevertheless it could however be considered as a result coming out of this investigation even though it was chosen to be presented in the background. This interview

was not included in the sample on which analysis was based. This first interview took over an hour to conduct and several days to transcribe but became one important source to understand the movement as a whole. When it comes to the sample selected based on the semi-structural individual interviews, this choice of sample was dependent on the specific area of interest; the displaced people and members of ASOQUIMBO peace movement. The final selection of informants was made on site spending a weekend in the resistance camp in the Quimbo. This can also be called a selective sample, and choosing a common theme - being displaced due to the development project in the Quimbo and actively resisting it - this sample can also be seen as *a theme defined universe* (Fangen, 2005).

To get a good variation of gender and age within this group of similar characteristics (Johannesen & Tufte, 2003, in Larsen, 2009), the decision was made to divide them into three groups; women, men and youth. This was a conscious choice in order to obtain what is called a *category based sample*, and entails defining certain categories that should be represented in the total sample and find informants within all of these under-categories (Thagaard, 2003). It turned out to be harder than imagined to find female youths to interview who would be between the ages of 15-18 years; most young females were busy working during the weekends out of school in the nearest town, or in the village babysitting etc. The young females present turned out to be just below the decided minimum age range of 15 which was unsuitable. A negative consequence of this is the lack of a young female voice in this material, which is a situational occurrence. The male informants also ended up being quite a homogeneous group when looking at the ages compared to the female group, but it was also reflected at a later stage when looking at the results, that age had little to do with the outcome. The final sample consisted of three women, three men and four youth making a total of 10 informants between 16-62 years of age, presented in the tables below:

Table 1: Female contestants

Women	Age	Situation
<i>Sara</i>	62	<i>Farmworker since the age of 7. Family of husband & 6 children, has grandchildren and great grandchildren, all affected. The house will be flooded. Very active in strikes and demonstrations.</i>
<i>Gisella</i>	29	<i>Farmworker, worked 5 years in the zone. Family of husband and three children. Seen as a leader.</i>
<i>Maria</i>	48	<i>Farmworker. First displaced because of violence (between guerrilla and paramilitaries) in 2004. Family disintegrated, brother killed, husband and children at other location also displaced looking for work. Seen as a leader.</i>

Table 2: Male contestants

Men	Age	Situation
<i>Mathias</i>	20	<i>Student & farmworker, worked 5 years in the zone to pay university fees. Family of 6 people. Moved to the Quimbo with his family in order to work on the farms. Cannot continue his studies.</i>
<i>Juan</i>	26	<i>Nurse & farmworker, became a nurse 3 years back. Family of 5 people, living in the affected zone. Has worked on the farms "all his life".</i>
<i>Jonathan</i>	25	<i>Farmworker, worked 11 years in the zone. Family of 3 people, his siblings have moved to live at other locations, looking for work.</i>

Table 3: Youth contestants

Youth	Age	Situation
<i>Fernando</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>Farmworker, worked since little in the zone. Has a family, who lives in the affected zone, they are still refusing to sell their land.</i>
<i>Mateo</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Farmworker, living in the zone since the age of 3. Family of 6 people. They moved to the Quimbo to look for work and “to live in a calm village”.</i>
<i>Andrés</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>Farmworker, worked 3 years in the zone. Family of 6 people, came to the Quimbo 6 years ago when they had no food. The last 3 years they have had no work at the farms.</i>
<i>Mauricio</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>Farmworker, worked 2 years in the zone. Lost contact with his family when displaced from another location because of poverty. Does not know if his father is alive.</i>

At first the intention had been to further interview a second group of displaced people who had left the area and not decided to join the resistance. This was in order to do a comparative study. This turned out to be too complicated and dangerous as many had left to live in various areas in the mountains where armed actors are present and tracking them down could have meant a hazard putting the author of this project at risk. After ten semi-structural interviews it is difficult to know if the saturation point was reached, meaning that more informants would not be able to give additional understanding to the phenomenon (Thagaard, 2003). The lack of a few female youth participants, and the homogeneous male group when looking at age, makes the variation of gender and age slightly weakened. The importance of gender/age in this sample is however not known or tested and therefore, as the intention was to interview more or less 10 informants, reaching this was decided to just enough for the type of study conducted.

When presenting the sample it becomes clear that the deep interview of the Professor Dussán has been left out in the tables. This is a conscious choice as his interview would not have fitted the description of the first part of the theme defined sample, as he was not displaced himself. Also, as the professor became a *gatekeeper*, a person with the authority to open or block the access to the research field (Buchanan, Boddy & McCalman, 1988) and contributed to essential information through sharing his own scientific investigations he ended up influencing some of the methodological choices made during the research process. A gatekeeper, according to Bryman (2004) may seek to influence how the investigation takes place depending on what they will gain or lose. In this case some methodological choices were discussed with the professor and he functioned as a form of “brainstorm-coach” to juggle different ideas concerning the choice of sample. To some extent he became a *key informant* who could introduce the right activities or people. This is a person who according to Thagaard (2003) is someone the researcher develops a personal relationship with providing good insight on the issues and could also become a partner of discussion. Bryman (2004) warns about the researcher forming overly strong ties with a key informant which could lead to copying of his or her interpretation concerning the phenomenon. Keeping this in mind, personal meetings with the Professor took place at three occasions and interpretations made by the professor were tested on other actors in the field to find out if they could be confirmed. As an example the Professor had articulated what the resistance movement wanted to achieve in their process of resistance, and if not being able to stop the dam construction there were other ways in which the community wanted to be compensated. These matters were later confirmed asking the leaders of the movement about their wishes and hopes for the future.

4.8 Reliability & Validity/Usefulness & Trustworthiness

Reliability and validity are common research terms which are said to not be that suitable to use in research based on social constructivist theories (i.e. Burr, 2003), as earlier explained in the theory chapter. As the term reliability means "repeatability" or "consistency", a measure is reliable if it shows the same result over and over again, and validity is the extent to which a concept, conclusion or measurement is well-founded and corresponds accurately to the real world. Even though a similar study might find a similar result where a resistance group expresses the same type of experiences of development induced displacement, the view on knowledge and reality would also have to be based on the belief that a true explanation of the world first of all can be found. If instead, like Gergen (1973) suggests, there are as many realities as there are cultures, contexts and ways of communicating, it is inapplicable to think that a study like this will be repeatable or classified as high in validity as it would depend on so many factors. The process of the movement, the outside forces encountered who are not supporting the movement and their types of contra actions (i.e. the multinational company as well as the government of Colombia in this instance), the people active as social actors at that particular time and the type of respondents that would like to take part in a similar study and so forth. Another factor to consider is the researcher and her personal standpoint which could be hard to recreate. However, it is possible to talk in other terms better suited to research based on constructivist thinking; for example "usefulness" of the research and "trustworthiness" of the analysis (Burr, 2003). The usefulness of a study could be high when for example inspiring to further research into the area or comparative studies in similar settings. The way that a study like this can come to promote awareness around minorities experience of certain events, or highlighting human rights violations, is also useful. Looking into to the language and how people identify or categorise themselves might help when trying to reflect the participants orientation in a trustworthy way (Burr, 2003) and is something which this study intends to do.

4.9 Methods of Analysis

To facilitate an overview of the collected material the recorded interviews were transcribed from spoken Spanish into text and this is usually seen as the beginning of analysis (Kvale, 1996). The whole transcription took a few weeks and was done whilst still in the country as the interviews were still fresh in mind. It can be easier to understand a recorded material being in the specific cultural environment and speaking the relevant language every day. According to Kvale (1996), text represents de-contextualised conversations and abstractions; it is an interpretive construction and not an original reality, something that can be of importance to remember during transcription. After the interviews were transcribed it became evident that certain metaphors and terms seemed to be repeated through the different sets of texts upon which a content analysis was used as a complementary tool. This is a tool that can be used in order to quantify the occurrence of certain phenomena in texts and is useful when trying to find patterns of expressions or metaphors in texts (Bergström & Boréus, 2005). According to Krippendorff (1980) the most obvious sources for data appropriate in content analysis is written text in which the meaning is conventionally attributed. This involves for example books/documents or verbal discourse, which made it a convenient tool for this occasion. Nearly anything can be measured or counted in texts and the meaning of expressions, words, and ideas is usually what is sought to be analysed in the field of social sciences (Bergström & Boréus, 2005). It can also be used to look for less explicit meanings and hidden agendas in the material, and the method can easily be used alongside other types of analysis on the same

material (Bergström & Boréus, 2005).

The actor analysis was divided into three parts based on the three main questions to be explored in this thesis, mainly to help the author to maintain a certain structure during analysis. The findings were looked upon using the concepts of *agency* and *identifications* (Long, 2001) whereas the terms *social actors* and *lifeworlds* were used in order to describe the participants and their worlds. Practically this was done through a methodical search within the meanings within the material which could be related to the cornerstones used of the actor oriented approach. This will become more obvious in the result and analysis section below. Then by using Krippendorffs (1980) guidelines of unitizing, sampling and coding the material, this implied that a unitizing scheme was first set up containing the types of words that the researcher was looking for; the so called recording units. A sample was then drawn from the data which in this case entailed all the 11 individual interviews conducted in the Quimbo. Thereafter the coding was done which is the step in which the recording units will be categorised and classified (Krippendorff, 1980). The final step to the content analysis is when drawing inferences i.e. looking at how the variable accounts of coded data relates to the phenomenon the researcher is studying. The content analysis was done around the terms of identity and also other patterns of metaphors that came up in the texts. The use of this method helped to guide the researcher to see certain patterns in the texts which would have been hard to pinpoint if not working through the material in a strategically way. Throughout the chapter on results and analysis certain important words have been highlighted through using italics as they were repeated by several contestants. The intention was to find out whether those words were used by the majority or only by a smaller part of the contestants. As the sample is small the exact percentage was not counted but presented through discussing if there was a majority or if for example only one person used a certain expression, metaphor or word. The results of the content analysis were merged into the results and analysis found below.

As the author of this study has a high level of Spanish, having studied Psychology at one of the most prestigious universities of Bogotá, translation into English was done directly on the sample drawn from the data and double checked by the contact person in Colombia. In this way loss of nuances in the process from collection of data to the interpretation, analysis and dissemination of findings, may have occurred. It is unmistakable true that some expressions were found hard to translate into English ones. Language can come to present a challenge when conducting research abroad, and in this research it was of great help to have my supervisor in Colombia to explain some words and sentences in the transcribed material and made he always made a great effort to ensure good translations. A negative consequence of using translated citations is generally that the final result will lack some of the authentic flavour that the Colombian Spanish has to offer, however, the whole interview with Professor Dussán can be found in the appendix for those (knowing Spanish) interested to learn more.

5 Results & Analysis

This chapter will go through the findings looking to answer the three main questions of this thesis:

1. *What makes some displaced people become actors of change?*
2. *Does being an active agent for social change influence people affected by displacement in terms of how they think about their present situation and their future?*
3. *How do the people of the Quimbo identify themselves and how do they experience the reactions from the society in which they live?*

Differences and similarities found in the collected data sample will be analysed and common features will be discussed. Further the presence of agency will be looked at to see if being an active agent alters the way the group perceive themselves in terms of identifications. The interpretation made is one way to look at the phenomenon and cannot be seen as a universal truth (Gergen, 1999, 2001). To avoid a sense of hierarchical relationship between the researcher and the participants a conscious choice of letting the words of the people talk for themselves was made in this chapter through cutting in translated citations of the interviews (Burr, 2003). In this way the reader can take part in the analysis in a more personal way and also “get to know” the participants a little bit more. All contestants have fictitious names but their real age, and these are constant in the analysis making it possible to follow the voices of the contestants throughout this chapter.

5.1 Actors of change

To find out if there are any similarities or homogeneity in the reactions making this particular group of people becoming actors of change, seven semi-structured interview questions were used in the interview setting surrounding this subject (see Appendix I). All the people of the Quimbo movement are referred to as actors as they are the ones who possess the knowledge and capability to assess the problems in the environment as well as coming up with innovative ways of how to appropriately respond to those (Long, 2001). When looking into the question whether the participants understood that they would become displaced due to the dam project there are three types of answers; the ones who did not know, the ones who had it all very clear and those who were uncertain of what would happen.

No. No because they talked to us about an economic development, an advanced development, but they never told us about the problems that would come with the construction of the dam. (Gisella, 29 years old.)

Yes, of course. It was so hard for me as well as for many workmates, it made us feel such desperation because we practically depend on these people (*los patrones* - the landowners). Thrown out like you throw something out in street, isn't it? Because.. This land is part of our lives, because we respect each other here, we keep up together. Without this land we're out in the street. (Mauricio, 18 years old.)

Well, in some ways yes.. Because knowing what they would do in such a large terrain, one can imagine that yeah, that part will come to belong to the company. It will no longer belong to us. (Mathias, 20 years old.)

Even though there is a mixture of answers depending on the type of information acquired prior to displacement and personal experiences and thoughts around what would happen if the dam is to be constructed, almost a third of the contestants did not realize at an early stage that displacement would be an indirect outcome of the mega-project. The reactions when displacement became a real threat varied from indifference (in one, the youngest participant) to the rest feeling very upset, worried and sad.

I was certain that if they would make the dam we'll end up being displaced, that was one thing for sure. That we'd end up being displaced. (...) I said; Oh my god, what are we going to do? Will we end up dying from hunger because there's no place to work? My children, my grandchildren... That was my reaction. (...) There in front of where I live, I said to the *doña* (missus) that; We are going to be displaced! (Sara, 62 years old.)

Very sad.. If I am already coming displaced from one place to another, to look for a new horizon, to look for work. Likewise they continue to displace us and they leave us unemployed once again, they take our land where we are working, where we are living. They don't give us support to survive. (Maria, 48 years old and displaced for a second time.)

Taking the decision to resist the mega-project was one way of rejecting the idea of displacement:

No, because if they remove me from here to another place, then yes (I would become displaced). But up until this point we're living with the hope that this cannot be done, and up to now I am feeling fine. (Jonathan, 25 years old.)

On the question whether they at some point accepted that they would become displaced, all contestants answered that they had refused to accept it, and in two instances that it had been accepted as an obligation; "I accepted it because, what else could I do?" (Sara, 62 years old) and "By obligation. We were forced to." (Maria, 48 years old). Here it is possible to recognise how the central role is being played by human action and consciousness, which is coherent with a social constructivist thinking and a fundamental pillar in the actor oriented approach (Long, 2001). The two women in the group who said they had accepted displacement as a fact, still reacted against it joining the resistance in a way to try and change the outcome. This was the common reaction throughout the whole group. The reasons of why displacement was rejected were found to show few differential patterns. Some point out the environmental damages that would occur, others are focusing more on the social changes or cultural/traditional losses that would affect their families and them personally.

(...) because they are through a forced displacement obligating me and my family to maintain ourselves in another way then we have traditionally done for so many years; living off the earth. (...) We are the experts of the land (...). (Juan, 26 years old)

Because of all the impacts that the project will bring; the environmental impact, the socio-economic impact, all of it. Everything has led to the next thing and all of the farm-workers have been affected in some way, all the people with cultivations, with other words, all of it. Nothing that comes out of this project has been good. I am against it all. (Gisella, 29 years old)

To have different reasons on why to join a resistance movement could, if some are there for the "wrong reason", weaken a group of social actors. Nevertheless, this was not found in the sample under analysis. But, at the abandoned tobacco farm there was a lonely person living at the back who had made some early moves to join the larger group. This had not been fully accepted as his appearance (dirty and with clothes ripped into pieces) and sudden outbursts of insanity had made the others to keep some distance. However, he was still treated with respect and left to go about his own business as people had realised he was a broken person with a broken past. Despite at first having a slight intention to perhaps get an interview with this young man, the author decided not to after a moment of conversation. Maybe because of his instable impression but mostly by realising the questions in the current repertoire were totally wrong when it came to his case, and that a very different interview then would have to take place which perhaps neither of us would have gained from.

Another parallel to how a group can be weakened can be drawn to a similar movement of a resistance group in Honda north of the Quimbo that ended up being disintegrated. This happened after some people, paid by the Emgesa to infiltrate themselves into the group,

managed to corrupt all the leaders through bribes (Dussán, 2013). As the Quimbo group were informed of what had happened and also knew how the other group had suffered the consequences of the transnational company's blackmailing, the sense of a high moral became even more important to the Quimbo members. This shows how brittle a social movement can be as it depends on every member's commitment and their personal way to handle situations that may come up. Taking bribes can be an easy way out or could be seen as a necessity in high poverty. Development, or change, within a social field will happen in different forms depending on how the actors will respond to the situation whatever the structural situation may be (Long, 2001).

The way in which the social actors interact might come to influence those around them and inspire more people to act for a change. The contestants were asked on this matter and here the responses turned out to vary from one extreme to the other. Except for the one negative response; "To tell you the truth no, no because I don't think the people pay a lot of attention to what I think, or something like that.." (Mathias, 20 years old), the majority did feel they had influenced others in one way or another:

Yes of course! We are a lot of people who believe that in the moment of making this reservoir will be fatal for this area. All the people around us. Not only one or two people are suffering the consequences of this, why? Because in this moment there could have been employment for those people. You need to think in terms of the short and long term. If there was only one person, but no, I have to think of my children, my grandchildren. In my name and in my blood this country is reproduced, yeah? Scream out loud and that the voice will be heard at an international level. That this is a beautiful country, very pretty, we are surrounded by the nature, the trees, the different types of nature. And hopefully this message will be heard in other parts of the world (...) that this is paradise, these are the lungs of the world. (Juan, 26 years old)

Yes, the people in Jagua, the community, yes. (Mateo, 16 years old)

Yes of course. There are people who dismiss this thing we are doing, (...) They say: No, you're stupid you're an idiot, you don't know anything. That, this is a joke, much easier to put a plane in reverse than making them stop the dam. As they already bought it, paid people off, (...) but the money will run out. You think this is the only thing in life? They say: no, you're an idiot, so stupid. Then I say yes, I don't know how to read, but I am not that stupid. I do *think*. One think of oneself, of our children and of our grandchildren. Those little things are growing up, where will they be working? (Sara, 62 years old, in the resistance together with her children and grandchildren)

They feel they can influence others, even if it is at a fairly close level – their work colleagues, the community/village nearby, their own children or grandchildren. Here it is also possible to notice how the group feel that the more people standing up for their cause means they are doing something right, they are getting the message across to the community and this in itself is proof of their impact on others:

Yes missus, because we are many, we are not only one person. The whole community, the whole of Huila are suffering from this. (Maria, 48)

Looking at the personal reasons for deciding to fight for this cause was done through finding out what they had lost, or would come to lose, with the Quimbo dam being built.

Yes of course, I lose a tradition, I lose my childhood, a way of thinking, a way of acting. (...) our parents have given us certain values that they in their turn were once given, yeah?

Then, why is it, we are forced to create something we don't want? (...) (Juan, 26)

The house, the land, the river.. Everything, no? (Mateo, 16)

The job. (...) Here we lived peacefully... Now there's nothing left. (Andrés, 18)

I've lost parts of my family, I've lost time, I've lost dreams (...) Sometimes the saddest thing is when you lose your whole situation, and the dreams. But sometimes the illusion of having something; oh good, I have my piece of land, I have my job.. destroys the hope and wishes that one day it would be possible to do something different. I think of my family, my mother, well my father, my brother.. But that dream went up in smoke. (---) They took the land from us, the production came to an end, it is a place where you can cultivate, were you can do something special. But not being with the family.. I thank god for giving me life, giving me the opportunity to be me, in all what I believe. (...) It makes me so sad that I fall asleep alone, I wake up alone... (starts crying). (Mauricio, 18)

The whole family disintegrated. Because we could not continue together anyhow, some over there, others over here, it's.. That is hard.. (she starts crying). We already lost all, now we don't have anything. That's why we are here, to see if we can recuperate our land, what's ours, what belongs to us. (Maria, 48)

For some displacement meant losing the type of life they were leading and had lead for generations, others felt they were losing part of the nature, places, whilst some had gone through more traumatic events losing parts of the family or the family as a whole. Mauricio told me he came a long way looking for work all alone after having left his family behind. He is uncertain of whether his father is still alive and he does not want to put more burdens on his mother so he would call her sometimes and say everything is fine "even if I only had one glass of water". After having worked 2 years in the area he is displaced again, and even though he does not say so it is possible to read between the lines that he has already experienced a lot of poverty.

On what makes some people become actors of change of change, there is not one specific answer. Rather a general message of how when they started to understand the real consequences of the Quimbo project - in terms of environmental damages, unemployment and negative impacts on the socio economic situation - there seemed to be no other option than reacting against it. Through creating a resistance, refusing the money offered by the multinational, the displaced of the Quimbo changed their position from being victims into becoming social actors. This is consistent with other studies showing how IDPs are more accurately characterised as creative agents or actors of change rather than passive victims (Shanmugaratnam, Lund & Stølen, 2003). A significant amount of informants strongly felt they had the power to inspire others and experienced the growth of the movement itself in a positive way. The feeling of being able to influence others can also be seen as their notion of what they can come to create or achieve a feeling of agency (Long, 2001). The reactions on becoming displaced were in the majority of the answers negative ones where sadness, worries and becoming very upset were the most common ones, and one way to deal with these negative feelings was to come up with new survival strategies. This is something that has been found in other studies of IDPs, evidence pointing at how displaced are inventing new ways of surviving when experiencing marginalisation (Brun & Lund 2005; Lund 2003; Skonhoft 1998).

5.2 Resistance, Being a Social Actor and Agency

The second area to explore is whether resistance and being an active agent changes the way one thinks on the present situation and the future. Five questions regarding their feelings of being able to make a change, feelings about life here and now as well as the future were asked as part of the interview (see Appendix II).

I am saying that.. Well I couldn't change anything on my own, or maybe I could, but let's say that together united as a group of people it's certain that one can do something different. (Mathias, 20)

Well, of course we can change a lot of how people think, that what they are doing is not good. Of course we can change people's minds so they will get to know that this really is something bad. I know that it is good having the river there, and the project, yes they came, but it is not our wish that they should do their project here. (Jonathan, 25)

Well, not I on my own, it could be done with the help of everyone around, if the people would understand they would find out what's really going on. And like that, with one little drop, drop by drop, it will fill up, one have to fight united to reach the goal. (Gisella, 29)

Yes. We can change it. If we are together, if we are united, if we think of the future of our children. (Maria, 48)

Even though the question was “Do *you* think you can change the process of the Quimbo?” the majority of the answers in the group has a communal thinking of “if only we stand together united we can make a difference”, which is noted in the way the contestants prefer to use *we* instead of talking about themselves. The words *united* or *union*, are used in over a third of the answers whilst five contestants touch upon the importance of making the rest of the people understand, becoming conscious of what is going on. Two of the youngest contestants use the word *fighting*, which can be analysed as dependent on their age and romanticizing the situation. It can also be due to the fact that the young people are the ones who will take turns in the camp at night to stand at the entrance of the farm La Guipa to be able to quickly warn the others if being invaded by the police or the military. The sense of conflict might therefore be closer to the youth in the camp and they are also taking a brave role to protect the rest of the group. Asking the group how this makes them feel there is a total consensus as everyone reflects upon the positive feelings related to being part of the group:

How do I feel? To be honest I feel good. To tell you, the more people against this process the sooner we could change something for the better, for us and for the environment. (Mathias 20)

Well it makes me feel proud, I'm helping the earth. I'm feeling like.. A human being thinking of the earth. There are also human beings thinking of money, yeah? (Jonathan, 25)

Here in this moment it makes me feel, despite all, it makes me feel useful. I'm useful here, because I'm offering my support, not in money but through my word, perhaps even my little knowledge, my advice. My affection, my respect. That for me is a lot, too much, those things that don't have a price, how can I tell you, the only thing that don't have a price is the love of the people, the respect of the people. That's bigger than you can ever imagine. And now that I'm here I can support this... I'm useful. I'm feeling fine, I'm

liked here, sharing with the people. (Mauricio, 18)

I'm feeling good. I feel a force, a union, that we are all one. And that makes me feel good. In this moment being here. We met here on this farm, La Guipa. We are being strengthened. The people have understood and known the pain that is being created, we are being strengthened and we are many. And many more are to come, because they will feel what we have already been through all of us. That's the displacement. By the government. (Maria, 48)

The agency of the Quimbo network were strong, the actions and interpretations that they made are founded on knowledge derived through meetings, speeches and informative events organised by them/ASOQUIMBO and ACAS, all important members of the broader network.

When asking what they thought would happen to the Quimbo now, there were three different types of answers where some were uncertain, some hopeful that it could be stopped and others thought it was something irreversible. But in almost half of the responses hope was expressed in one way or the other.

The Quimbo I think, the Quimbo will be done. Why? Because the process is quite advanced. What is it I want in this moment? That we will be heard in the whole world. At a national level and internationally. But I want them to understand.. The Quimbo, it could be that it is irreversible, but the village, the community, at an indigenous, farm-workers level; they should be left satisfied, they should be given land to be able to continue having the same role as they've had for all those years. (Interviewer: *Do you think the resistance can change more things?*) Of course! Of course, that's why we have to keep our hands together, united, we'll be strong and we'll let out a scream so they'll hear us from far away, yeah? (Juan, 26)

On the question on whether the contestants thought differently about the future now, the majority, consisting of two thirds, felt that the future had become more unstable and not as they had previously imagined.

No well the future of the past was better than the present future. It was better than the one now. Because, well, I'll tell you, before one could go to one place or another when you wanted to find a job (---). Now you don't see any of that, it was a better future that of before, compared to now. (Sara, 62)

Well, as they lie to us and don't explain how it is in reality but instead as if it was all good things, but in the long run it's.. All lies. Because they told us they had compensated the affected people, but no, there are many more affected. Those who don't work directly on the reservoir site but at the surrounding farms that they bought in order to compensate the people displaced from within the zone, which is displacing a whole lot more people. (...) In the environmental handbook it's stated that they should buy land, how do you say, that is not cultivated, where there's no production, but the Quimbo is buying farms in production, to fill them up with resettled people. Then the people living and working on those farms become displaced instead. (---) In my case, I'm from the farm El Palacio, where they produced tobacco, maize, rice (...) What happened? Then Emgesa bought them out, to resettle people there from another place. There will be no more cultivation, no work, they are displacing the people from the farms they've bought. That's how they are causing double displacement. (Gisella, 29)

However, almost one third of the informants did look more positive on the future now in a way that they felt they could be part of making a difference, to change the future. Of the three contestants looking positively on the future, two of them happen to be the ones displaced

from before due to conflict and/or poverty. Perhaps positive thinking is a conscious choice out of necessity for their own piece of mind as they would not dare to imagine something worse happening now, and that they therefore put all their faith into resisting the Quimbo project and hoping for a better future. Even though most of the informants are uncertain of what will happen with the Quimbo now, the hopes are high and there is a strong belief that if they are many resisting the project they can come to change the outcome. Agency is strong amongst the contestants and their perception of what they can come to achieve through this movement is focused on a few direct goals regarding the land they need to make the Agro-Nutritional Peasant Reserve come true. When asking about what they think will happen to *them*, there are different answers, and as some talk about their personal long-term goals in life or Mauricio who wants to start a foundation for homeless children, a place where children can receive food, shelter and education; the women focus more on the here and now:

In my case, I'm here in the middle of the struggle. Using my forces to make it (the project) fall. Hopefully the government will think of us, giving us some land to work with. That's what we are asking for. We are not asking for money. Because money is an illusion. Those who were given money are now left with nothing looking for some place to work. What we need is some land to be able to produce food. That's what we are asking from the state, and that they accomplish with the promises they've made. At one point the government said they'd give us that amount of hectares for the unemployed, and that Emgesa would shift in another part. But not the one nor the other, they haven't fulfilled their promises. That's what we have gone through, that is why we have had to invade these empty farms to start production because otherwise we'll starve of hunger (...). The state treats us like that, like.. put to one side. People are suffering the lack of necessities, suffering all kinds of things. Five years more or less, this process have taken us, they keep on negotiating and are in constant dialogues but never to *our* favour. They keep on lying to us and they never fulfil their promises. (Gisella 29)

I think a lot of beautiful things will happen to me, because now with this community and this power that we have we are going to move forward. Because we are united, the hour has come to get united because now we can't take it anymore. We have to scream out loud. For them to help us. For them to listen to us. We have to come together for them to start listening to us because unfortunately one person or one family, they won't listen to. Neither the government nor anyone else cares about us. We are just objects.. I don't know, for them we are just objects. (Maria, 48)

To summarize and to answer the question, one of the findings was how the group as a whole experienced how being in the resistance was positive in terms of how they looked at their present situation. The majority felt they could make a difference, if not on their own definitely together as a group, and were strengthened by being part of the movement. Their thoughts about the future were more scattered, but hope was expressed by more than half. Even if the project might go ahead, they believed in a change for the people and that they could succeed in making the abandoned farms into a peasant's reserve for the people. The responses to what would happen to them personally were less coloured by the present situation of having become displaced and somehow seemed to depend more on their own personal standpoint, where they came from and what life they had led so far, except for the women who looked more at the very close future of the movement. Similar to how IDPs are described as agents rather than subjects or helpless victims the people of the Quimbo are in a process of remaking themselves when coming under the threat of displacement. In the book "In the Maze of Displacement: Conflict, Migration and Change" edited by Shanmugaratnam and colleagues (2003) there is a distinct description of how displaced people are active agents in finding new livelihood strategies, new identities, finding or creating social organisations as well as a new

meaning to life. Not unlike the situation previously studied in Angola, Guatemala, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Mozambique (Shanmugaratnam et.al, 2003), the Colombian displacement have similar features. When listening to the stories of the people of the Quimbo it becomes clear that they are very much active agents and creators of their own future.

5.3 Exploring identification; Being a Warrior of the Earth

In the third and final part of the interview (see Appendix III) the intention was to explore identification; how the contestants looked upon displaced people, themselves and how they felt that others reacted to their present situation. On the question what is a displaced person, all informants had similar answers:

It's a person they've removed from his territory, removing a person in a bad way. Hitting him to make him go away. (Mateo, 16)

To me a displaced person is, not having a place to live. Someone who at one point has had a home y because of a company or something like that, they've thrown him out of there, putting him on the street making him become a beggar. That's what a displaced person is to me. (Mauricio, 18)

There's different types of displacement, yeah? It can be voluntary, it can be involuntary, forced, armed. It's like a tree with many branches, but this displacement I've always said it's not an armed one, for what I know, but it's a displacement dressed as a clown. Like two or three person dressing up like as if they have lots of money, putting their ties on, thinking that with that type of power they can just ask people to please move out. It's the most humiliating displacement there can be. (Juan, 26)

Here only two informants used the words *la guerrilla* and *the violence* amongst the different causes they could think of, the majority focusing on development induced displacement and displacement due to the government. Is this a sign of how they are not aware of other causes to displacement or how they have formed a deeper understanding of the matter? On the question how they identify themselves and if they saw themselves as a displaced person the majority said yes, but they also saw themselves as something more, as if the displacement was not the important part:

In this moment.. Well I am a displaced person but in this moment I feel strengthened. Because I'm united to my other friends who have lived in displacement. And we all need work, we all need land. At this moment I'm feeling strengthened as I can see a union. In the whole of Huila, we need this, to get together united. To make sure other countries won't come and displace us, take what's ours. The ones who should displace themselves are them, leaving our territory because this belongs to us. This is a part of Huila and it belongs to us. (Maria, 48)

One contestant was uncertain if he should see himself as a displaced yet as he still had a place where he could live (in the community) and another contestant, despite having been displaced from before still hesitated on calling himself displaced saying "I think so.." (Mauricio, 18). One contestant did not use the word displaced at first but identified himself as a learner, a fighter, someone who believed "in the union and the power, and that in every struggle you can see the results in the long term" (Juan, 26), but when asked directly if he saw himself as a displaced he responded "Oh of course! Since the day they started with the construction of the project.". The words *affected*, *made redundant* and *victim* were other words that were used in almost a third of the interviews. According to Long (2001) identifications can be used to gain insight into the social actors type of commitment when it comes to their socio-political

standpoint but also cultural allegiances. This can help the researcher to discover individual differences within the collective identity. Despite differences in responses and hesitation amongst some to call themselves displaced, the collective identity of being part of the movement seemed strong whilst the personal feeling of being displaced or not varied.

To find out whether the contestants had experienced discrimination by others around them for having become displaced the contestants were asked about the reactions from the society. One contestant did say that he had felt discriminated or rejected at some point but all the others felt that the reactions from the society had been positive and that people were with them on the cause. Three responded that there were two kinds of reactions – the ones who were with them and those thinking they were foolish for not accepting the money they had been offered.

They have reacted, well - they support us. They support us in what we are doing (---)
(Gisella 29)

Some, I think some agree (with we are doing), and there's others thinking one is ignorant or foolish. Foolish for not receiving the money and for not wanting the change. They want one to do the same as they did. (Fernando, 18)

Sara gave an example of how it can go when young people decide to take the money offered instead of fighting against the project:

There's a nephew of mine who they enumerated and offered 28 million (Colombian pesos, equivalent to more or less £9,000, author's remark) (...) He bought a nice car, nicely painted and with a good engine and all. He got drunk and got lost far away, up in Guajemarocco (...) Three, four days drinking, and the money was finished, and there he is now with no money left to pay the rent. And the car is smashed up. (...) People go crazy with that amount of money. And he didn't make use of it, he didn't buy a house. Now, the missus, the three children, where will they go to? (Sara, 62)

The following question was how the contestants wished that the society would have reacted, and here they all contested in a similar way:

Well, to be honest, I would have liked that we'd all reacted, let's say – there's a company coming to take this land, first of all, not selling. Because there's a lot of people who did sell. Sold their land and all that, sold it to the company, or let's say they let themselves be bought. It's like as if they let themselves be bought. Only for the sake of money. And I would've liked them not to sell. That those removed from their homes would have stayed put, yeah? Even though it was hard, because they came with their guards, or they came and forced them out with violence. (Mathias, 20)

From the start, with one word: No. NO. An enormous one. (Juan, 26)

That we would have all been standing there united, stopping them. That would've been so cool. (Jonathan, 25)

I would've liked the whole society, to stand united. That we would have gotten together more to get stronger and that we would've defended our territory more, (defending) what is ours. (Maria, 48)

The final question of the interview was if they now thought differently about displaced people than before and in the majority of the responses, even though some said they thought differently and others not, it was something they were now *feeling*.

Oh, honestly, well... Sadness. Not for them but for the country. How can this country permit a development project like that, which, which.. in other countries they can't build, for all the environmental damages that they will cause? And yes they damage a lot. (...) For almost 50 years it's been prohibited in Italy! (...) But no not really, I don't think differently about the displaced now, but now seeing it, feeling it personally, it has become something more difficult. (...) Now having to live it it's it's.. Very difficult. Very difficult. (Mathias, 20)

Yes of course, I've heard that word *displaced* since the age of 8, at least. The immense violence that we have lived through in this country. In this country we have endured whatever number of battles. For the same reason. If not this group, it's the other, and in this moment there's a group coming from abroad to inculcate us, and.. We have suffered so much for the treasures of our country. (Juan, 26)

Surprisingly perhaps, at least to the author who would have thought that all contestants would think differently about the displaced now having "become one", but still many contestants used an impersonal perspective and instead many referred to the displaced as *them* or referring to them in a third person, and here it is hard to know if this group through becoming part of ASOQUIMBO - a comparatively small peace movement against a giant multinational company - put themselves aside not really identifying themselves with the group *displaced* but experiencing it as a situational identity compared to a fixed one (Long, 2001).

One of the contestants expressed how he, through joining the resistance, had changed his mind regarding what he thought was a displaced person:

Now I think that.. I never really thought about what a displaced is, yeah? And now I feel that yes, they are the warriors of the whole earth. We are like warriors, of the earth, you see? Like the warriors, those who also end up in the cities not saying a word, so that nothing will happen to them, they are also warriors. (Jonathan, 25)

In this way he changes the word *displaced* into someone fighting for the good, someone who resists war and environmental damages, a freedom fighter.

When answering the question on how the people of the Quimbo identify themselves and how do they experience the reactions from the society in which they live, this tends to be the area where most surprises emerged. Having expected the informants to identify themselves as displaced and victims of the government's political agenda, they instead saw displacement as a situational fact, as in "well, yes, I'm displaced but I'm doing something to fight against it!" The emotional concept of identifying themselves as displaced was weak whilst the identification as belonging to the movement resisting the dam, continued to be strong amongst all participants (Lange & Westin, 1981). The identification towards being a displaced person was expressed as a situational condition (Long, 2001), which they all believed could be changed. This can also be explain in terms of how a cognitive concept of being a displaced was present but the emotional concept of being a "worrier of the earth", a "liberator of the land" and a force working against the construction of a dam was stronger than the cognitive one (Lange & Westin, 1981). Another surprise was how being displaced was expected to be looked down on by society, that this group would feel marginalized in the eyes of the surrounding villages. But again, no, only one person had felt discrimination as a displaced person and most likely not whilst in the movement but perhaps before joining it, as he had come a long way and had experienced poverty on the way. The majority of the people felt they had the support of the people in the surrounding areas and the only negative experience was how some people had thought they were stupid for not taking the money instead, something they had brushed off as being ignorant. The highest wish of the people of

the Quimbo was how they had wanted everyone to react, to stand up united against the hydroelectric project, and for everyone to realize that, actually, taking the money is what is stupid. What is a hand full of money when you no longer have got your land?

6 Discussion

This chapter will start to sum up and discuss the above results and further look at the usefulness when it comes to dealing with displaced populations. Here we will point out some areas of interests which were touched upon in this study that could be considered for future research.

The results show how the people threatened by the multinational company are changing their position from being helplessly displaced to become active agents working for a sustainable social change. This has also been found in former studies on other displaced populations showing how displaced chose not to be passive victims (Shanmugaratnam, Lund & Stølen, 2003). The negative reactions to displacement and the Quimbo development project was what inspired them to start a resistance towards it. The structural circumstances with relatively homogeneous conditions have created different responses in the group but are still leading to a joint creation of action (Long, 2001). Even though “the interlocked world of actors” is diverse the outcome is a communal action, joining them together and leading towards a common goal. The specific actors within the movement have their own way to handle and confront the situation, their own way to look at the situation depending on their personal standpoint but they are all living within the same lifeworld (Long, 2001). This entails the social world that can be taken for granted by those who live within it, and we all live within our own lifeworld. It embraces the actions and meanings within a certain social arena, which in this case is the peace movement ASOQUIMBO. It is identified in the stories told by the social actors and is what we can apprehend through the words of the people living and acting in the Quimbo.

The agency constitutes of the capability and the social relationships within the group and is a complex mix of cultural, social and material elements shaping the actor’s perception of what can be achieved (Long, 2001). In this instance agency can also be understood as the generation and use of networks in the way that the resistance group of the Quimbo is working closely together with other NGO’s and is connected to the villages around trying to inform people of the true consequences of the mega-project. Their agency also consist of the social relations between themselves, the people and the Professor; these being social networks following a clear “social scheme” (Latour, 1986, in Long, 2001). The scheme could also become political transforming into a left-wing social movement, but using politics in this instance is a too sensitive matter as there is a long history of violence towards the left and/or communist sides of politics - hence the hunted guerrillas - making the people very cautious promoting their movement as a peace-movement, not trying to politicize it in any direction. This makes it harder to condemn although the movement has already been mentioned in the peace talks in Havana and Oslo, where parallels to the on-going conflict have been drawn (Dussán, 2013). In the last local election the movement supported a blank vote strategy which had a very powerful outcome in the department of Huila, making the candidates during their manifestations prior to the elections “out of fear” publicly stating they were opposed to the Quimbo dam, to gain more votes (Dussán, 2013; authors’ personal observations). This shows the impact of the movement, despite its seemingly small number of members they are making a difference on a local and departmental level influencing the country as a whole.

The “blank votes” (*voto en blanco*) is a phenomenon that is spreading through the country after having been stated as an example in the Huila. People have now seen how it is possible to vote blank when there are no parties to vote for in elections, parties whom are working for a change for the people, and when reaching a majority, unwanted politicians are pushed out as they will not be able to run for elections again the following period. In this way the people can slowly in a democratic way let the leaders of the country know in what direction they want to go. They are hoping it will be accepted and not crushed through calling it a guerrilla-strategy. The people of the Quimbo are further very clear on their non-involvement with the guerrillas, and Professor Dussán explained how he has at several occasions been offered to work with the guerrillas, to get their support and their protection in La Guipa, something that has been kindly declined on his part. The complexity of trying to create and maintain a peace-movement in a country ridden by a civil war based on the clashes between an uncertain number of illegally armed actors makes it a dangerous matter and a hard balancing act from the movement’s side.

The people of the Quimbo showed how being part of the movement made them think more positively on their present situation and to some extent also their future. Social empowerment through joining the cause is something that has not been under investigation in the current research but when looking at the results this is a theory that could have been complementary to the chosen actor oriented approach. One could then look at the processes of how the people of the Quimbo are developing self-confidence, a sense of autonomy and how they are acting collectively as well as individually to change social relationships and the institutions excluding this group keeping them in poverty, which is how for example Blomkvist (2003) has defined social empowerment. In his research on this issue he has found how people’s empowerment depend on their individual and collective assets; such as voice, representation, identity and organisation, which are terms which were also present in the current results. It could even be possible to think of a “group’s assets” as their type of agency. The findings pointed at how this group of contestants believed in a change and that they could make the dream of a peasant’s reserve come true.

When being asked about what other causes there are displacing people when exploring identity, it was surprising to hear most informants talk about the *government*, *development projects* and *money* being the major causes to displacement and not *the conflict*, *the war* or *illegally armed forces* as one might think would be the most commonly known causes. This could demonstrate how little information about the on-going internal conflict that is known to the real people of the Colombian countryside, or maybe how the lifeworld of these people is their reference to what might happen to others (Long, 2001). The strange thing here is that one might think this is ignorant or depend on a low level of education and so forth, but could it perhaps be the result of a political scheme, privatization of the media and decades of propaganda keeping people from knowing what is really happening in their own country every day? Or is it the fact that in the end these people see past the conflict, the war and have come to blame the government as the one they consider has the final responsibility when it comes to displacement? This would be another area for further research using a different design of method.

It became clear that when asking if they saw themselves as displaced most of those who would use the word did it for the purpose of showing how they were a victim or just stating a fact, some were more hesitant and some did not see themselves as displaced at all. Being displaced can be understood as identification under negotiation at different levels, both between the group as a whole and the larger social structures present in the Colombian system, but also in the specific relations between the individuals within the group (Nyberg, 2006). The context - of for example being interviewed in a study - can also interfere with how the group of displaced look at themselves as displaced or not, and what they think is being expected

when interacting with a researcher and how this identity is being expressed (Nyberg, 2006). According to Jenkins (2008) it is a very practical matter, the identity of being displaced may be seen as a synthesising relationship of similarity and difference, it is something that is always negotiable, something not fixed. When these individuals became part of the ASOQUIMBO movement against the Quimbo hydroelectric project, they must have all related to it in a positive way as they felt they shared the same thoughts and values. The personal experience of belonging to this group could however vary and if taking Lange and Westins (1981) two different concepts of identification into account, the cognitive and the emotional, it becomes clear that a different type of study would have had to be conducted to find the differences here within every individual in the movement. But certain tendencies are clear. For example they all showed a stronger emotional identification towards being part of the group ASOQUIMBO than being branded as displaced. Taking a multiple social identity theory into account it is evident that the identification concept becomes more complex (i.e. Zavalloni, 1971). Identification is also dependent on whether the contestant is a female or male; mother, grandfather or son; from the village or from further away; displaced from before or not feeling displaced until (physically) “they remove me from here to another place” (Jonathan, 25). The identity of the movement was taken to a whole new level when one contestant used the metaphor of *we are being the warriors of the earth* and even though this is an individual’s own process of how identification is being negotiated into something bigger, it is important to remember how this individual level relates to the group as a whole which connects to, and can come to effect, larger institutions within the Colombian system in the long run.

This is how a new identity has sprung from choosing to join the cause, and how finding the right people to create a social organisation with as well as being empowered by other NGO’s, have given this group of people a new meaning to life. This is also expressed as the findings in earlier studies (i.e. Shanmugaratnam et.al., 2003). There are many positive outcomes found in this group under investigation, and many parallels to be drawn to other groups of IDPs worldwide. For example displaced people have been found to become enriched and empowered when having to migrate; they learn new things, they are educating themselves of their rights, the environmental damages that are occurring and how environmental changes due to development project is part of the complex causes of displacement (Shanmugaratnam et.al., 2003). But the positive outcomes of joining a movement of resistance can easily turn into a negative one if social change does not take place and when land is lost forever.

Having summarized and discussed the findings, the usefulness of the research will now be focused upon. The above findings may break with a common notion prevalent in for example policy-making circles of how displacement is an emergency situation needed to be dealt with through appropriate interventions from above in order for the people to return to “normalcy” of life. Not saying that DID is not an emergency situation, as all types of displacement should be considered to be, nor that interventions offered by NGOs or the company together with the government are always inadequate. Instead this study points out the importance of seeing displaced as active agents and actors of change who have agency and constructively are moving forward in their process of having become displaced. But even so, if the people of the Quimbo have come up with a great solution to an awful problem caused by the government, will this solution even be considered by those who possess the power? These actors of change are coming together, educating themselves and growing stronger as a movement and as individuals within this resistance. They are coming up with great plans for the future and even if their original land will be lost they have already thought of a second option. As they have taken the measure to move in to live and work on those farms bought and abandoned by the multinationals, they would want to stay there now and to

continue their new life projects. But will anyone listen? The land which has now been liberated was said to have been bought in order for the company to resettle those living on the farms that will go lost because of the reservoir. Will this resettlement plan actually be carried out or is it going to happen once again as with the construction of Betania? The questions are many and even if people are inventing new survival strategies, how many times must they do this and still end up as displaced once again - if not because of development, maybe next time because of violence and conflicts between the armed actors.

The findings of seeing the displaced of the Quimbo as agents for change only works if someone listens. It could be used in several ways, even by the multinational in the planning of resettlement or the strategies for restoring livelihoods for those affected. It could also be of importance for example when it comes to working for, and together with, displaced groups. The actor oriented approach could be used as a means to find out whether there is agency and how people are inventing new solutions to create new livelihoods, before coming up with solutions that may not fit into their lifeworlds. To see agency and identification as two ways to understand how a displaced community have the power to move forward and how their identity is under constant negotiation and recreated during that process is a finding which would gain from further research into this area. To use the actor oriented approach has proved to be useful, despite the lack of a more concrete set of analysis methods and is also an approach which could easily gain when combined with for example social empowerment theories. Through using it on people in a movement for social change shows how the basic theory is flexible enough to be used in different settings across different cultures.

When considering earlier research within the actor oriented approach this study contributes to the understanding of the issue as well as it focuses on a group not known by the author to have been under investigation before within this concept. The people of the Quimbo have remade their identity becoming *warriors of the earth* and *liberators of land*. Through using these metaphors they are demonstrating their understanding of how an important part of the real causes of displacement are played by the complexity and unfairness when it comes to land distribution and the commercial interests of the government. That those are the major causes behind development induced displacement in Colombia.

Relating back to one of the fundamental aims of the present dissertation, which was to illustrate the situation of internal displacement and to promote awareness of some of the reasons behind forced displacement in Colombia, hopes are high that at this point that goal has been reached or at least that the above have inspired to further thoughts and curiosity into the matter. As of giving a voice to the people of the Quimbo involved in the process of displacement at this very moment, it is an aspiration that the reader have now heard their message and come to feel closer to these people, sharing part of their reality, or as Long (2001) might have said: understanding a bit more of what is their *lifeworld*.

Epilogue

And what happened then? Did the people of the Quimbo manage to get their voice heard in the loud buzz of the surrounding voices of the millions of Colombians living in poverty, fighting in the mountains, living displaced on the corner of the street or suffering other consequences of exploitation, violence and political threats? After I left Colombia in May 2013 my hopes were high and whilst following the people in the Quimbo through a blog written by one of the participants living out at La Guipa, it made me even more hopeful regarding the Quimbo's future:

It has already been four months since the Association of Affected Peoples of the Quimbo Hydroelectric Project (ASOQUIMBO) began liberating the lands which are not destined to be inundated by the impending reservoir, but that are nonetheless properties of the company responsible for the mega-project, Emgesa-Endesa-Enel. These liberations started with farms in the Municipality of Altamira and spread quickly to include other farms in Garzón - such as the Santiago and Palacios farms. There are peasant families affected by the Quimbo Hydroelectric Project who are working and cultivating these lands, growing crops such as corn, plantains, yucca, beans, squash, and herding cattle. "Even though we have had our challenges, we the people affected by the Quimbo Dam have liberated these lands belonging to the transnational company as part of the struggle for the Agro-Nutritional Peasant Reserve that we need for our territory," explained Mauricio Cabrera, a member of ASOQUIMBO from La Jagua in the Department of Huila.

(Jonatan Luna 2013-09-10 on <http://polinizaciones.blogspot.se/>)

They had managed to get the crops growing; they were succeeding in making the land into a Peasant Reserve! They were liberating more land, more farms and growing as a movement.

But only within the space of a few days hope turned into sorrow; on the morning of the 24th of September 2013 (and just days before writing the final words in this dissertation) police squads dressed like "robo-cops" in riot gear, moved in to get rid of the people of the Quimbo. The unannounced forced removal action started at La Virginia and La Guipa, where I had been living during my investigation. Many of the people living and working on the farms were beaten and injured:

The removals started in the farms of La Virginia, Utica, Guipa, Guacas and the Olivos in the Municipality of Altamira with the detention of Alexander Naranjo and other locals being beaten and shot with "non-lethal" projectiles including an ASOQUIMBO member who uses a wheelchair. The illegal forced removals have continued into this week with the farms Palacio and Santiago in the Municipality of Garzón and starting October 1st in Honda in the Municipality of Gigante. Over a hundred local residents have been living and working these lands for over five months since the liberation of these lands illegally bought by the construction company Emgeas-Endesa-Enel. (---) As the removals continue the police are also using heavy machinery to destroy the crops that local residents have been growing for their subsistence.

(Jonatan Luna 2013-09-30 on <http://polinizaciones.blogspot.se/>)

Despite their legal rights the people were forced to flee. Even though they had involved the Colombian Ministry of Environment who issued an Administrative Act 012 requiring Emgesa to allow the local inhabitants - the people of the Quimbo - to be able to stay and continue to cultivate the land. The Act 012 also stated that the company building the dam should make sure that the local economic activity for the affected farmworkers in the zone should be restored, which is yet another thing the company failed to accomplish. Instead nothing could be done. The Representative from the President's Program of Human Rights, who is supposed to protect the rights of the community affected by the Quimbo Hydroelectric Project, stated she was unable to do anything to intervene and then suddenly stopped answering the phone...

Again, the dreams of these people trying to fight for a just world and only doing what they can to survive whilst finding new ways of making the world work in which they live, are crushed into little pieces under the big shiny shoe of a system symbolised as the rich man wanting to make some more money sacrificing the poor with no mercy.

The people of the Quimbo however, I know for sure, will continue to stand up for their rights and their struggles are not for nothing as they move on to inspire the greater community through their hard work and never ending faith in humanity.

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Appendix I

Interview Questions: English

To answer the question:

What makes some displaced people become active actors of change?

1. When you first heard about the construction of the dam in the Quimbo, was it clear to you that you would become displaced?
2. How did you react to that?
3. Was there a point when you accepted that you would become displaced, or opposite; refused to accept it?
4. What was the reason of accepting (or rejecting) the idea of displacement?
5. Do you think your way of reacting to becoming displaced made a difference?
6. Do you think that reaction had an influence on other people? How?
7. What did/would you lose on becoming displaced (again)?

Appendix II

Interview Questions: English

To answer the question:

Does being an active agent for social change influence people affected by displacement in terms of how they think about their present situation and their future?

1. Do you feel you can change the process of the Quimbo?
2. How does that make you feel about your present situation, your life here and now?
3. Do you think differently about your future now compared to before the displacement?
4. What do you think will happen to the Quimbo now?
5. What will happen to you?

Appendix III

Interview Questions: English

To answer the question:

How do the people of the Quimbo movement identify themselves and how do they experience the reactions from the society in which they live?

1. What is a displaced person to you?
2. Which other causes are there of forced displacement?
3. How do you identify yourself in terms of the situation you are living in?
4. Do you see yourself as a displaced person?
5. How do you feel the society have reacted on your present situation?
6. How would you have liked the society to react?
7. Do you think differently about people who have been displaced today compared to before?

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (to be conducted orally)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study, which will take place in the Department of Huila, Colombia between February-April 2013.

My name is Erika Rodriguez Lindgren and I'm conducting a qualitative research study on development induced displacement in Colombia focusing on the process of displacement of the people affected by to the construction of the hydroelectric dam in the Quimbo. The research is part of my Master's Program in Social Work at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden.

The purpose of this study is to gain insight to the process of displacement for the people living in the Quimbo. The benefits of the research will be:

- To promote awareness about development induced displacement in Colombia
- To better understand how people react to becoming displaced by development projects
- To identify how the affected perceive themselves and are perceived by society

Participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve an interview of approximately 40 minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by advising the researcher. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed and translated into English for analysis.

All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Insights gathered by you and other participants will only be used for the purpose of this study. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, however, with your permission anonymous quotations may be used which means that your name and other identifying information will be changed. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study as you will remain anonymous. If you have any questions about the study you are free to ask them now. [.....]

I will now ask you a few questions which will be recorded in order to confirm that you are informed about the purpose of the study and to certify that you agree, at your free will, to participate in my research. Please answer the questions with "yes" or "no".

(Consent form to be audio recorded instead of signed due to the possibility of illiteracy amongst the investigated group)

Informed Consent as part of recorded interview:

Interview no. X:

- Have you understood the purpose of the study that will take place?
 - Have you understood that participation is voluntary, at your free will, and that you at any time may withdraw your consent and not continue with the interview if you do not wish to do so?
 - Do you understand you might choose to not answer any question if you do not wish to do so?
 - Do you agree to have your interview audio recorded to facilitate transcription and translation?
 - Do you agree to the use of anonymous quotations in any thesis or publication that comes of this research?
 - Have you had the opportunity to ask any questions related to the study?
 - Are you ready to start the interview now?
-

Informed Consent Form for participant of in-depth interviews.

This informed consent form is for community members of a certain status involved in defending the people affected by the project of El Quimbo and who I am inviting to participate in a research with the working title: "Los Desplazados del Quimbo - The internally displaced people of Colombia: A case study of development induced displacement by the river Magdalena in the department of Huila".

Principle Investigator:

Erika Rodriguez Lindgren, Master of Social Work, University of Göteborg, Sweden.

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

- *Information Sheet (to share information about the study with you)*
- *Certificate of Consent (for signature if you choose to participate)*

Part I: Information Sheet

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study, which will take place in the Department of Huila, Colombia between February-April 2013. My name is Erika Rodriguez Lindgren and I'm conducting a qualitative research study on development induced displacement in Colombia focusing on the process of displacement of the people affected by to the construction of the hydroelectric dam in the Quimbo. The research is part of my Master's Program in Social Work at the University of Göteborg in Sweden. This consent form will give you information and I will invite you to be part of this research.

Purpose of the research

Displacement is an increasing problem around the world and Colombia has now become the country in the world with the largest displaced population. However, not only are people displaced by armed conflict but also by the state itself when inviting multinational companies to construct large development projects. The purpose of this study is to gain insight to the process of displacement for the people living in the Quimbo and to listen to their personal stories of displacement.

The benefits of the research will be:

- *To promote awareness about development induced displacement in Colombia*
- *To better understand how people react to becoming displaced by development projects*
- *To identify the type of displacement and how the affected perceive themselves and feel perceived by the society.*

Type of Research Intervention

This research will involve your participation in an open in-depth interview that will take in between 40 minutes to an hour in a mutually agreed upon location.

Participant Selection

You are being invited to take part in this research because I feel that your personal or/and professional experience can contribute much to my understanding and knowledge of the process of displacement in El Quimbo.

- Question to elucidate understanding: Do you know why I am asking you to take part in this study? Do you know what the study is about?

Appendix V, page 2/3

Voluntary Participation & Right to Withdraw

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by advising the researcher. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed and translated into English for analysis.

- Question to elucidate understanding: Do you know that you do not have to take part in this research study, if you do not wish to? Do I have your permission to audio record our interview? Do you have any questions?

Confidentiality and risks

All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Insights gathered by you and other participants will only be used for the purpose of this study. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, unless you do wish so. However, with your permission quotations may be used which means using your name if you wish so, or otherwise anonymously which means your name and other identifying information will be changed. As a researcher it is important to me to know how you want to be addressed in the final thesis – anonymously, using your profession but a fictive name **or** with your full profession and name. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

- Question to elucidate understanding: Do you want to be named in the thesis in the case of using quotations from this interview or do you prefer to remain anonymous? If you wish to remain anonymous, can your professional title be used instead?

Sharing the Results

The thesis that will be the result of this research project will be written in English and presented at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden. If you wish to take part of the final product you may receive the thesis as a document sent through e-mail and the research findings might come to be shared more broadly through other publications.

- Question to elucidate understanding: Do you wish to take part of the final research document as written in English sent to you over e-mail? If so, provide your e-mail address below your signature. Do you understand that the research might come to be shared more broadly through other publications?

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact me directly: Erika Rodriguez Lindgren, e-mail: eralin@hotmail.com.

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by my supervisor Professor Ing-Marie Johansson, at the University of Göteborg, and complies with the basic rules of ethics regarding the common free will to participate, integrity, confidentiality and the right to remain anonymous, as well as the participants right to know the purpose of the study. If you wish to find out more you can also contact my supervisor directly on e-mail: ing-marie.johansson@socwork.gu.se. Address: Department of Social Work, University of Göteborg, Box 720, 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden.

Part II: Certificate of Consent

I have been invited to participate in this research about development induced displacement in the area of El Quimbo, in the department of Huila, Colombia.

I have been given information of the purpose of the study and understand that participation is voluntary. I also know that I may withdraw my consent at any time and not continue with the interview if I do not wish to do so without any consequences.

I understand that I can choose to not answer any particular question if I do not wish to do so, and agree to have the interview audio recorded to facilitate transcription and translation. I agree to the use of quotations from my interview to be used in any thesis or publication that comes of this research.

Please tick the way you would prefer to be addressed if quotation of your interview appear in the thesis:

- Anonymously (researcher will use a fictive name but will use your profession)*
- With your full name and profession.*

I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to the study and I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Printed name of participant

Signature of participant

Date

Statement by the researcher taking consent:

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that the individual has understood the information before deciding to participate in this study. I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Printed name of researcher

Signature of researcher

Date