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*“Post-Displacement and Social capital”*

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Exploratory study of  
Programa Familias en su Tierra FEST– a Minor Field Study

Author: Camilo Téllez Robayo  
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Tutor: Olle Frödin

# *Abstract*

Author: Camilo Téllez Robayo

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Tutor: Olle Frödin, Department of Sociology/BIDS ST 13

This study is an explorative case study, realized in the department of Sucre, Colombia, of the relationship between Familias en su tierra FEST program beneficiary’s social capital and the development of a productive project that aims to foster self-reliance. For the purpose of this study Alejandro Portes work on social capital constitutes the theoretical framework of analysis. Findings suggest that there are significant structural and historical that should be taken into account in program design. Moreover, it highlights the mix blessing of social capital in the case of marginalize farmers.

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## *List of Acronyms*

CID	Conflict Induced Displacement
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias the Colombia
FEST	Famillas En Su Tierra
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MFS	Minor Field Study
ID	Internal Displacement
Red ORMET	Red de Obervatorios Regionales del Mercado de Trabajo
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNHCR	United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
INCORA	Instituto Colombiano de la Reforma Agraria
ANUC	Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos
DPS	Departamento para la Prosperidad Social
AUC	Auto-Defensas Unidas de Colombia

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# *1. Introduction*

Social capital has gained space in the development field since the 1990's. The emergence of the concept is due to the increase interest that is being paid to the social aspects of development. Therefore the need to gain a better understanding of the relationship between the social aspects of development and programs that aim to foster sustainable economic development among marginalized communities.

## **1.1 Aim**

This study is an explorative case study of the relationship between Familias en su tierra FEST program beneficiary's social capital and the development of a productive project that aims to foster self-reliance.

This study will be one of the first one's in regard of this specific program, given its novelty. It is of crucial importance to gain a better understanding of the relationship that there exist between beneficiary's social capital and programs goals, as they will influence its outcome. For a country like Colombia that is currently working in peace agreements to put an end to the internal conflict, it is of crucial importance to succeed in the *reparision* of the conflict victims and foster their wellbeing.

The data collected through the use of qualitative methods will be analyzed through the social capital theoretical framework selected for the purpose of this study. Finally the arguments will be summarized.

First the background of the FEST program and its beneficiaries would be presented in order to acquaint the reader with the issues that the beneficiaries have faced. Further on there is literary review discussing the main debates surrounding the concept of social capital, thus enabling the reader to understand the reasons than the chosen theory will be employed. The theory will be fully discussed during the next chapter. Followed by the presentation of the methodology employed for the purpose of this study. Then, it will follow the analysis of the empirical collected material through the lenses of the chosen theory.

## 2. Background

Colombia has the second largest population of Internally Displaced People in the world. Internal Displaced People (IDP) accounted as much as 2.9 million in 2009, according the official numbers; however, the numbers could be higher. This particular group is significantly vulnerable, since as much as 99% of IDP live below the poverty line, and 85% in extreme poverty. The displacement is the result of the ongoing conflict in Colombia, which has proofing historical roots linked to land inequality, political, and social exclusions, among others.

The region has a long story of land conflict between extensive landowners and small landowners. Since the 1970's, small farmer's organizations emerged and collectively acted occupying large *haciendas*, in order to gain access to land. As a result of this actions, and the farmer's organization desire to continue with the process land reform, which was auspiced by the government of the time, the governmental agency INCORA<sup>1</sup> had to mediate in order to avoid a conflict. After the mediations, armed actors allegedly financed by the large landowners, killed many of the community leaders.

In the 1980's the process of struggle for land that had been originally lead by the farmers organizations such as ANUC<sup>2</sup>, was permeated by left-wing oriented armed movements that appeared in the area. The guerrillas developed a dual relationship with the civilian population; on one hand of cooperation, and on the other of oppression. Nevertheless, due to this relationship, the farmer's organizations boomed, as new methods of organization that increased their power (SAT 2012:6), such as cooperatives, were implemented. The relationship that took place between guerrillas and farmer's rights movements lead to the stigmatization of the latter as communist organizations, which has had negative consequences for them (SAT 2012:8). In the 1990's, while the guerrilla influence in the area faded as several of the groups in the area deposed the arms, the Paramilitary armed groups, allegedly financed by large landowners and industrials in the area, gained influence.

The incursion of the paramilitary AUC in the area had a great impact in the civilian population, as they became a military target. The communities that participated in farmer's

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<sup>1</sup>The mediation was done by the now disappeared National Institute for the Land Reform, INCORA.

<sup>2</sup>Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos

movements were punished, and selective killing of communal leaders became systematic. Moreover, the attacks against the social movements in total impunity, has significantly affected the social cohesion that made possible the collective actions of the past (SAT 2012:7).

In the past ten years there are three significant processes that have changed the landscape of the region. First, the intensive campaign of democratic security of, under the presidency of Alvaro Uribe, made the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia FARC, lose almost all influence in the area. Second, the establishment of several agribusinesses in the region, which have been accompanied by massive land purchases, many of which are under investigation as they seem to have been made by illegal means. Third, the demobilization of the AUC<sup>3</sup> and its later reconfiguration into small neo-paramilitary structures, which have been linked to the expansion of the agribusiness projects (SAT 2012:12 ;UNDP 2012). As a result of the aforementioned processes, an estimated of 215.505 inhabitants have been forcedly displaced in the area between 1998 and 2009 (ILSA 2012:19).

## 2.1. Economic structure of Sucre

Sucre is one Colombia's departments with the highest levels of poverty (63.7%), and its economy has traditionally been dependent on extensive cattle farming and public sector transfers from the central government (Aguilera 2005; Red ORMET 2012: 29). Sucre's economy has failed to develop an industrial sector, thus severely affecting the employment offer in the area. The most important sector of the economy is the tertiary, which is based on low valued added activities often linked to self-employment (Red ORMET 2012:17). The decrease of the participation of the primary sector on the local economy is related to the price decline of their products, which has affected the farmers' well being.

The local government's strategy to develop the region is based on a plan that aims to foster agribusiness and tourism development (Red ORMET 2012:52). However, as the UNDP

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<sup>3</sup>During the Alvaro Uribe time in office the AUC have participated in a peace process with the government and they are not longer recognized as actors in the conflict, but remaining groups still operate commonly referred as the BACRIM (Emergent Criminal Bands).



suggests, a developmental model based on agribusiness as the main engine has proven to have serious deficiencies in Colombia, as it fails to improve the well being of most farmers, while maintaining an inequitable exclusionary model in terms of access to land and political participation (2011:24).

## 2.1. Land restitution and Programa Familias en su tierra *FEST*

The program *Familias en su tierra incentivo para retornos y reubicaciones rurales IRR*, which begun to be implemented in 2011, was conceived to create incentives for the return and rural relocation of IDP's. The aims of the program are to contribute to the socio-economical stabilization of the nation, the effective fulfillment of rights, and to *repair* the victims of the conflict. It has different components such as food security, habitat, access to peace and reparation process, social organization, and self-reliance. The program, was created within the framework of the Law 1448 of 2011, known also as the *Victim's Law*. This law provides the most ambitious effort made by the government until now, regarding victims' attention. It breaks the traditional transitional justice<sup>4</sup> programs that have taken place around the world (Summers 2012:220).

In order to qualify as a beneficiary of the program the household should, first, be recognized as internal displaced people, by the *Registro Único de población Víctimas RUV*.<sup>5</sup> Second, the household should manifest their will to be part of the program. Third, to participate in the socialization activities, and fourth, to inhabit a municipality or indigenous designated area under the program coverage. Finally, the beneficiaries cannot have any illegal crops on their land.

The program will then accompany the qualified households for 24 months. The program has 4 components and a mix of cash and in-kind conditioned transfers. The first component is a monetary conditioned transfer, every two months during a year. The conditions include the

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<sup>5</sup> Fadness & Horst (2007). Argue that since 2004 the Constitutional court sentenced that the government assistance to the IDP was unconstitutional, further on they also point out that the victims recognition as IDP's is highly political on the one hand as it does not recognize the role of certain actors, as perpetrators of displacement such as the state. On the other hand it is a very bureaucratic work which often fails to identify the victims as such.

participation on the ECA's<sup>6</sup> and other program activities. The aim of the ECA's is to improve the basic capabilities of the beneficiaries in order to create the productive idea project. For the other three components, beneficiaries will receive in-kind transfers to improve their housing, create a family vegetable garden, and finally the establishment of the productive idea, through which the program aims to enable beneficiary's self-reliance. Moreover, the FEST program aims to support the creation of public private partnerships for the commercialization of products, and credit demands (DPS 2011:6).

Due to different bureaucratic issues, the FEST program has failed to follow up its schedule for the delivery of both cash and in-kind transfers. The field study, of 8 weeks during January and February of 2013, took place during the planning of the productive idea, and according to the previously established schedule, the other three components of the program should have been implemented. However, at the time, only the cash transfers had been handed in, even though the process was delayed.

One of the main issues regarding the land tenure system in Colombia is the traditionally high level of informality, which, in addition to the event of displacement, has increased the vulnerability of the IDP's. In the area there have been massive land purchases that belonged to IDP's which are under investigation (SAT 2012:20). The Law 1448 includes elements of protection and mechanisms for the restitution of land for those who were forced to flee their land since 1991. Nevertheless, this process is the center of a complex debate, which is out of the scope of this study<sup>7</sup>

### *3. Literature Review*

In order to contextualize the theoretical framework and outline its relevance for this study, the following section will discuss the main debates about social capital. It will

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<sup>6</sup> The Victims' Law declares that it is founded on a principle of transitional justice. It defines transitional justice as "the various processes and judicial and extra-judicial mechanism associated with the aims of society to guarantee that those responsible for the violations contemplated in Article 3 (violations of human rights and international humanitarian law) are held responsible for their acts; that rights to truth, justice, and integral reparations are satisfied, that institutional reforms are made to guarantee the no-repetition for victims, and the dissolution of illegal armed structures, with the ultimate goal of national reconciliation and lasting and sustainable peace" U. art, 8 (Author's translation ) (Summers 2012:221)."

<sup>7</sup> For more details on the on going land restitution process (Summer 2011)

discuss the origin of the concept and the implications of its definition, as well as the relevance of the concept for the field of development.

### 3.1. Social capital

Given the wide use of the same policy framework in different countries during the Washington consensus, and their generalized failure to achieve sustainable economic growth, there was a rethinking of development in the 1990's that gave more attention to social aspects of development. Social capital, despite the lack of a clear definition, became the 'missing link' in development (Fine 1999:6). For partisans of the Washington consensus, the lack of proper institutional framework at the national level, which is based in the local social capital, caused the mix record of the policies that were carried out in many countries during this period (Fukuyama 2002:25).

During the late 1980's and the 1990's the concept of social capital was widely and keenly embraced in the field of development. Actors such as IGO's, national agencies, and NGO's embraced the concept alike (Fukuyama 2002:25; Fine 1999:6). The work of Robert Putnam *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital* has drawn attention from a wide public audience beyond the academic world. In his work social capital is equated with levels of civicness and trust that could be used to give a diagnosis to the U.S.A.'s social problems and provide solutions (Portes 1998:59). As a result of the different definitions that have emerged over time, and the different features that have been encompassed under the same concept, as in the case of Putnam's work which will be discussed further on, the concept of social capital have become a cure-all concept (Portes 1998:44). Moreover, the lack of clear definitions has hindered the advance of the social capital concept as an effective explanatory mechanism.

### 3.2. Social capital definitions

Among the wide body of literature on social capital, most authors point out that there are three main figures that have set the ground and influence the concept's development. They are Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam.

Robert Putnam's work on social capital is the one that has attracted the most attention, even beyond the academic world. According to Putnam's work on civic engagement in Italy, civic tradition and active citizenship at regional and national levels, has significant incidence in development performance and democracy (Putnam 1993). His work focuses on mezzo and macro units of analysis. Therefore, social capital is understood as a public good belonging to communities. Even in nations, the so-called 'stock' of social capital is inherent to the community, and it would ultimately affect its development. "Social capital here refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions" (Putnam 1995). In communities with substantial 'stocks' of social capital, working together is easier, and thus economic prosperity is an expression of the moral union in a democratic civil society.

There are significant differences between Putnam's work and the previous conceptions and attributes given to social capital. Putnam's work draws on James Coleman's notion that the benefits from social capital yield not only for individuals but also for the community (Adam & Roncevic 2003:159).

"social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characters in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure (Coleman 1998:88)."

James Coleman's study of social capital focuses not in the macro but instead in the micro and mezzo level as units of analysis. His studies of the mechanism of control that existed in primordial societies attracted significant attention as well. Those mechanisms of control that yielded benefits not only for individuals but also the community, were the consequence of the social ties that the members of a community shared. Moreover, it identified the mechanisms that fostered the creation of social capital, such as reciprocity, exchanges, group enforcement, and norms (Portes 2010:29). However in Coleman's analysis there is a lack of definition about what the social entities facilitating collective actions are, and where they emerged from (Portes & Sensenbrenner 1993:1321).

Pierre Bourdieu was mostly concerned with the benefits that an individual can attain from belonging to a network. The degree of institutionalization of the network can vary and what is relevant is the 'credentials' that the individuals draw from it. Pierre Bourdieu's treatment of

social capital is instrumental, as it suggests that individuals in some occasions build up relationships based on the benefit that they expect to attain later on (Portes 2010:29).

As mentioned before, Putnam's work has been the one that has attracted the most attention. However, there are significant drawbacks in his treatment of social capital. Putnam's work fails to make a distinction between the sources, outcomes and social capital itself, thus creating a concept in which features of social capital, such as trust, are equated with social capital as a source, an outcome, and social capital itself. Therefore, it becomes a circular argument in which there is not a clear definition of what exactly is social capital (Portes 1998:60).

## *4. Theoretical Framework*

Most current studies in social capital are influenced by the seminal work of the three grounding fathers, which has been previously presented in the literature review. Following the line of analysis of Pierre Bourdieu, this work will draw mainly upon Alejandro Portes' work on social capital (1993, 1998, 2010) in order to analyze the collected data.

Social capital: "The ability to secure benefits through membership in networks and other social structures (Portes 2010:34)."

One significant feature of Portes work is his view on social capital, only as an explanatory mechanism, therefore devoid of normative elements. His work on social capital is based on 3 socioeconomic meta-assumptions<sup>8</sup>. First, economic transactions are embedded in cultural systems and networks; second, there is not a straightforward relationship between the goals of purposive actions and its outcomes and, third, power plays a pervasive role in the economic activity (Portes 2010:27).

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<sup>8</sup>Portes argues that meta-assumptions are the lenses through which the field observes the world. However he is very cautious explaining that the meta assumptions are so far up in the level of abstraction that they do not help to explain the empirical world, for that there are explanatory mechanism (2010:1-2).

Portes' work on social capital distinguishes between the sources, consequences, and social capital itself (1998:47). Social capital, unlike other kinds of capital, emerges from people's interaction. However, the motivations to put one's resources to the reach of others are diverse. Portes identifies two types of motivations, instrumental and consummatory (1998:48). The former refers to the member's desire to participate in a different set of interactions, from which they expect to benefit either in the present, or in the future. Nevertheless, he suggests that narrowing the view only to this type social capital source, gives an undersocialized conception of economic action. The latter is related to the internalization of the norms that regulate people's behavior. Therefore, others can use it as it provides a predictable framework for economic action. Contrary to instrumental sources of social capital, a narrow focus on consummatory sources of social capital would give an oversocialized view of economic action (Portes 2010:32).

There are two kinds of sources of social capital within the consummatory type. One is value introjection, related to Coleman's work, which emerges from the internalization of values over the process of socialization. The other one is bounded solidarity, which has its origins in Marx's perspective of shared experiences. Unlike value introjection, the internalization of values does not occur since one is a child, but instead emerges by sharing the same conditions, like the proletariat who lived together and shared the same experiences, and thus began to develop a sense of solidarity with another and support for each other's initiatives (Portes 2010:32; Portes & Sensenbrenner 1993:1321).

Portes also identifies two instrumental sources of social capital. On one hand there is the group's capacity to sanction the behavior of its members, who can put their resources at the disposal of the group and will receive benefits in exchange, which might be diverse in kind such as honor and approval (Portes 1998:48). Moreover, the group as such becomes a guarantor for rewards and punishments, thus group belonging provides the necessary collateral information for the interaction of their members, which do not necessarily need to know each other to realize economic exchanges. On the other hand, there is the accumulation of obligations based on norms of reciprocity. This view diverges from the later one in the sense that personal interaction or knowledge of the other actor is required, as there is no group sanctioning that might act as collateral from one resource disposal.

The consequences of social capital vary widely, and unlike in the most common use of the term, which equates social capital with positive features such as civicness or trust, its outcomes might be negative or positive. The most reknown outcomes of social capital are social control, family support, and non-family benefits (Portes 2010:29).

Social control tends to emerge from bounded solidarity and enforceable trust in tight communities. The social control effectuated by community surveillance tends to act almost as a formal rule. Family support attracted particular attention. Some studies argued that children in single-parent families have lower social capital than in intact families, resulting in better academic achievement as an expression of their higher level of social capital. Network-mediated benefits or non-family benefits, is the most commonly outcome associated with the social capital concept, as it provides opportunities that would not have been at reach of its beneficiaries otherwise (Portes 2010:35). The resources that are at the disposal of the network become particularly relevant . Kozel and Parker argue that the networks of the poor are used to reduce risk and vulnerability, while the networks of wealthier are used to gain benefits such as investment capital and lucrative jobs (2000:66).

As social capital can have positive outcomes, it can also have negative ones. For instance, the same norms of social control that according to Coleman allow the children play in the street without fear of criminality around them, can also negatively restrict their freedom of development. Moreover, in case of break of the social norms, individuals and their families can be excluded from their networks. Also, significantly dense networks or isolated networks might hinder the individual's capacity to reach the benefits of larger networks. Furthermore, the economic success of an individual within a network, in which resources are scarce but cohesion is high, might hinder individual development, given its duties towards the rest of the network. Other examples include the clash between two of the different outcomes, which are not easily identifiable as one does not clearly distinguish the consequences of social capital from social capital *per se*. For example, the benefits that one individual might attain from its belonging to a network, might go against the regulations that are represented by the norms of social control. Thus, if social capital is too equated with trust or civicness, it would be paradoxical to explain such a situation given the two different unit of analysis (Portes 2010:38).

Portes' distinction between the sources, outcomes, and social capital *per se* it is relevant to my study as it provides the tools to better understanding the current situation that people are facing. It is particularly attractive as other definitions of social capital, which do not have a clear analytical distinction between the three aforementioned features, would suggest that the community lacks a stock of social capital, or that the levels of trust are low, while blurring people's social relations based on their inability to achieve certain economic gains. Rubio's analysis of social capital in Colombia, suggests that there is a deficiency of social capital reserves, thus explaining the high levels of corruption and criminality (1997:808). Based on the conceptual framework presented above, and in order to help to elucidate my research question, the following two sub-questions have been formulated:

*What kind of sources, consequences, and social capital is found among FEST beneficiaries?*

*What kind of structural and historical factors affect FEST beneficiaries social capital?*

## 4.1. Economic development and Social Capital

In the relationship between social capital and economic development, the networks perspective, which is associated with the work of Portes among others, suggest that the different interactions between the two different dimensions of social capital bonding and bridging account for the different range of outcomes (Woolcock & Narayan 2000:226).

Bonding social capital refers to the resources found in the belonging to a closed community or network, often related to sense of common identity. On the other hand bridging social capital refers to the cross-cutting ties to access resources outside of one's close group (Narayan 1999:1).

Unlike other perspectives in the relationship between social capital and economic growth, the network perspective based, in part on Portes work, provides a systematic analysis of both vertical and horizontal association (Kozel & Parker 2000:66). Moreover, it acknowledges the role of power in the networks capabilities to act collectively (Woolcock & Narayan 2000:234). Other perspectives fail to capture the analytical capability of social capital as an explanatory mechanism, as it is equated with normative values or understood as an outcome



of institutional capabilities, thus belonging to groups rather than to individuals (Woolcock & Narayan 2000:229-34).

Studies of social capital at the mezzo level suggest that for communities need both bonding and bridging social capital in order to become economic sustainable, as the lack of bridging links would limit their resources. Granovetter suggests the same at the micro level, as individual's, they first draw on their close community to gain the necessary skills to further on participate in larger networks beyond their closed community (in Narayan 1999:9; Bauer et al 2012:439). Based on the conceptual framework presented above and in order to help to elucidate my research question, the following sub-questions has been formulated:

*What kind of bonding and bridging social capital can be identified among FEST beneficiaries?*

The most prominent measurements of social capital such as the World value survey are based on Putnam's work; therefore they used certain indicators that do not fit with the theoretical framework employed in this study. For instance, levels of trust that are used as indicators social capital per se, would rather correspond to an outcome of it, based on the theoretical framework that has been employed. For the purpose of this study, the measurements will draw on Lin's model of egocentric networks (2001:22). His model focus, firstly on the individual endowments that will condition his/her participation in a network; secondly, the capacity of the individual to access resources from the network, based on the strength of his/her connections and finally the outcomes of the participation in this network, such as better jobs (Lin 2001:22).

## *5. Methodology*

In this section, the methodology used for this study will be presented and discussed, thus motivating the choices made, including the implications on the study. This study was done in rural areas of the department of Sucre. However, given the complex security situation in the area, the names of the specific villages in which the study took place will remain anonymous, therefore it would often be referred as the area during the study. The selection of the location for the implementation of the study was made in collaboration with the FEST officials in

Bogota. The selection of the area took into account matters of security and accessibility. Moreover, the area was also chosen given its emblematic representation of the Colombian conflict, as it is one of the areas in the country that has witnessed the highest levels of violence and the participation of most the actors in the conflict. This is a case study of the IDP's beneficiaries of FEST in Sucre and does not attempt to make any generalizations about the IDP's situation in Colombia (Bryman 2012:406).

This study is based on an interpretivist conception of social research. Thus, it aims to understand human behavior from the subjective view of the respondents (Bryman 2012:30). A qualitative approach of data collection was employed in order to capture the beneficiary's subjective understanding and interpretations regarding their social capital. It did not seem appropriate to collect quantitative material, due mainly to issues of trust and resource limitations. Given the short time that I had, an extensive collection of quantitative material would have hindered my capacity to gain the villagers trust.

## 5.1. Interviews

Qualitative, semi-structured interviews were the main method employed to gather material. In total, there were 17 interviews done to FEST program beneficiaries in three different villages. However, two of the interviews could not be used due to technical issues. Besides the interviews done with the beneficiaries, three different FEST program officials, working at different levels within the organization, were interviewed. Moreover, five other key informants working in areas such IDP's<sup>9</sup>, social programs, and economic development, were interviewed in order to get a better picture of the social context in which the interviewees are embedded.

### 5.1.1. Sampling

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<sup>9</sup> Key informants interviews, Esteban Arnoldo Nina, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá. He is an expert in social policies in Colombia, and thus provided a historical account for the evolution of social policies and the rise of Conditional Cash Transfers in the 1990's, in which the FEST program is based. Luis Sánchez Ayala, Universidad de Los Andes in Bogota. At the moment of the interview he was preparing his thesis on IDP's and place attachment depending on type of migration pattern. Aldo Morales head coordinator of UNDP in the area of Sucre and Montes de Maria; he helped us to get an updated view on the current process of land restitution and social organizations in the area. Hernando Jaimés Amorochó Red ORMET in Sincelejo, Sucre; provided a description with the current state of the economy and the economic development in the area. Juan Sebastian Silva, researcher for CODHES, provided with an overall view of the challenges that IDP's face in Colombia and the different processes of Displacement that were taking place

Prior to the interviews, I went in company of the FEST program official in charge of the development of the productive idea component in the area, and a fellow researcher<sup>10</sup>. During three days we observed his work and used this time to get acquainted with the villagers. We had the chance to witness an improvised village meeting in which villagers complained about the delays in the delivery of materials promised by the FEST. In this occasion, we were introduced to all of the attendants to the meeting, and could express the purpose of our work. Also during the meeting, it was possible to identify who were the community leaders.

The sampling method combined the use of snowball and purposive sampling. The use of other methods of sampling such as random or non-probability sampling would have been problematic as we faced restrictions in our access to the villages. Given the security situation we could only be in the villages in company of FEST officials, who were in charge of our security as they are acquainted with the area. Also, we could only access the villages during the day, so having those factors in mind it restricted our time and resources. Since, most farmers are absent during the day as they are working in the field, the use of the snowball sampling method was necessary (Bryman 2012:424). In combination with the snowball sampling, and in order to avoid the biases involved in the interviewee's selection of the next interviewee, we also used purposive sampling based on gender and status within the community. Therefore, the combination of the two approaches aimed at having a diverse sample, avoiding biases of over representation of communal leaders or gender bias sampling (Bryman 2012:418).

### 5.1.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

Prior to the interviews the respondents were informed of the purpose of the project and how this would not affect their status as beneficiaries of the program. It was necessary to clarify several times that I was not working for the FEST program and that the information provided

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<sup>10</sup> During the development of the Minor Field Studies another student from the department of Human geography was in the field with me. I assisted this student in the realization of her interviews which aimed focused on IDP's relation to land attachment.

would remain anonymous under any circumstances. The choice of semi-structured interviews was the best suited to gain the maximum of knowledge in the topic, given the limitations of time and resources (Bryman 2012:471). Also the semi-structured interviews allowed the flexibility to ask questions on topics that were originally outside of the focus, but that emerged during the interview and seemed relevant (Bryman 2012:472).

## 5.2. Ethnographic Observation

During my time in the villages I tried to be attentive of all of the activities that took place around me, thus gathering material as an *observer as participant* (Gold 1958 in Punch 2005:183). Nevertheless, I am aware that there are risks of misinterpreting the observed phenomenon, as is the case in ethnographic observation.

## 5.3. Limitations of the Method

There are a significant number issues surrounding the chosen methodology, as all methods have certain weaknesses. The first issue that I faced was the possible assumptions that people might have had about our research and us. In the first communal meeting, despite the clarification of the aim of the research, one of the villagers expressed his gratitude for the presence of the international community in the village, which would act as a watchdog of the FEST commitments with the community. Therefore, it was necessary to continually and systematically express that we were not part of an international organization, and that our aims were merely academic.

The use of qualitative methods to gather material tends to leave many open questions and tends to touch many other topics outside of the focus of the research. This posed a significant challenge as, quite often, interviewees wanted to talk about their traumatic experience of displacement, which meant that I had to remain attentive but in a way lead them back to the topic of the research. Also, many of the interviewees wanted to express their frustration regarding the delays in the program schedule. Thus, I also had to remain attentive to their complaints, but at the same time express the fact that I was not working with the program, and there was nothing that I could do for them in this particular matter (Bryman 2012:474).

## 5.4. Data Analysis

I have transcribed and translated the collected material to English. Furthermore, the material has been organized by themes, guided by the thematic proposed in the theoretical framework, and the themes that were identified while reading the material (Bryman 2012:480-1). A Thematic analysis of the material allowed me, not only to work in a structured way, but also to keep an articulation between the theory and the empirical material. Also, triangulation between the different sources was used in order to confirm the statements that were made, and draw more robust conclusions (Bryman 2012:392).

## *6. Analysis*

I have transcribed and translated the collected material to English. Further on the material has been organized by themes, guided by the thematic proposed in the theoretical framework and the themes that were identified while reading the material (Bryman 2012:480-1). A Thematic analysis of the material allowed me not only to be able to work in a structured way but also allowed to keep an articulation between the theory and the empirical material. Also the use of triangulation between the difference sources was used in order to confirm the statements made and drawn more robust conclusions (Bryman 2012:392).

This paper has presented the background in which the FEST program and this study take place. Furthermore, it has discussed the concept of social capital, through which the material will be analyzed, and the model of measurement that will be employed. First, the material will be grouped around the three stages of Lin's model of measurement, and further on the material will be analyzed in the light of the previously stated concepts of social capital in order to answer the research question.

As Lin suggests, people's endowments conditions the resources that they can offer in a network, thus having an impact on the power position within the network. All of the FEST beneficiaries that were interviewed expressed to be living in a precarious situation, that was to some extent the result of the event of displacement. All beneficiaries expressed that they have

had significant capital assets losses during the period at which the conflict was at its peak, and furthermore once they were forcibly displaced

*“Before the displacement the life here was good, we were not rich but we always had our animal stock that we could use if needed, but when we came back there was nothing left. Someone must have come here and took the animals”* (Participant interview No, 3)

*“We had to leave everything behind us, the little that we could sell like the cows or the chickens and to others things we sold them for the little that people could give us or we just left them behind, we needed the money”* (Participant interview No, 5)

In this farmer community, most of them registered loss of animal stock, which they have been unable to replace given its high cost. For them, investment in animal stock, mainly cattle, was one of the most reliable sources of income and capital assets on which they relied. As most of them do not possess land of their own, they have to rent out a parcel of land for the implementation of the productive idea project. There were different cases of land tenure among the interviewees, most of them did not have land at all and others were in possession of land<sup>11</sup>.

*“It is different if the program does not want to give us more money they could give us cattle, is not like chickens I am not going to cut one leg from the cow to eat it, I will keep it and I can get the milk and later it would give birth to another cow, or if needed I could sell it”* (Participant interview No, 1)

*“I bought my land with money that I got when I sold my cow 19 years ago, but in those days people did not use written contracts, the word was enough, but now with the arrival of the people from the inner country you need to have everything written down”* (Participant interview No, 11)

In some cases, the beneficiaries have lost their land due to a different set of reasons, despite having legal land tenure titles. For instance, since their plot of land had been abandoned over an extended period of time, the owners lacked the means to get the land into a productive state. In other cases, rightful owners have been forced to relocate from their original place of living, and their land is located too far for them to work in it.

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<sup>11</sup> This means that they do not have a formal title over the land but they have bought it from someone without realizing the proper documentation of the transaction, which was a common practice in the area until 15 years ago or so

*“Now I rent a small plot of land nearby it only takes me 15 minutes to get there and it costs only 3.000 Colombian pesos. Instead, if I wanted to go there, to my plot it would cost 20.000 Colombian pesos. So, it does not work, otherwise I will have to stay over the whole week”*(Participant interview No,7)

*“No after all this time all of that has been eaten by the forest, it would take a lot of effort, even to use a backhoe, and all of that is costly”*(Participant interview No, 6)

The farmers that are renting the land for their agricultural labor cannot freely decide what to plant, since contracts tend to have a duration of a year or two, and some of the most profitable crops in the area, such as *avocado*, require an investment of at least five years. Therefore, they are losing significant economic opportunities.

*“If you rent the land they do not let you plant avocado trees. If you do so, they start to say that you want to steal their land, as it takes around 5 years so that they can start to produce”* (Participant interview No, 3)

During the time that the people were gone they had to dispose of their life savings in order to ensure their survival in the new places of arrival. Most of the beneficiaries returned to their land, as they could not afford to live elsewhere. Many of them could not find jobs given the mismatch of their skills with the demand in urban settings. So, as they endured a difficult situation, and despite the risk for their lives, they decided to come back to their homes. Once they came back they also faced the deterioration of their houses, which had suffered considerably given the state of abandonment

*“Now all the houses have fallen apart, but it was not like that before”*  
(Participant interview No, 11)

Lin, in the second part of his model, refers to the people’s capability to mobilize resources, such as contact support or information (2001:22). The capabilities of the beneficiaries to mobilize resources has increased for some purposes but decreased for others. The use of mobile phones has increased their capacity to share information with each other. However, they have lost support and contacts as consequence of the displacement. Many of the

respondents expressed how those who are left behind are those who lacked the capital assets and social capital to make a living elsewhere. Moreover, many of the young people did not return to the villages, but instead remained in the cities. This has a significant consequence, as they constitute the closest and strongest link for many of the beneficiaries, therefore reducing their network's resourcefulness.

Within the villagers in cases of need, due to sickness or other scenarios, there is significant bonding social capital that provides support in order to increase the resilience of its members. However, the bonding social capital that is mobilized in case of need, it's not present in order to develop other kind of activities, such as income generating activities through business-oriented associations. Despite some cases in which people have planned to associate themselves with other family members, in no case it was expressed any association with non-family members.

*“One has to help, if someone is sick well you can go there and bring them soup or something if it is needed”*(Participant interview No, 13)

*“the problem is the first day we are ten to go and get the seeds, the next day we are six to dig the holes and the next we are only three to plant them. So, it does not work to do it like that is better to do it alone”*(Participant interview No, 9)

Instead, the respondent's networks for the commercialization of their harvest go beyond the immediate community. They are engaged in networks of commercialization with middlemen that come to the villages during the harvest period and buy their products. They have reflected that it exists an unequal relationship of power with the middlemen, as they lack the means to commercialize their products themselves. Furthermore, middlemen provide credits to beneficiaries in need in exchange for a preferential position to buy their harvest, thus setting the prices as well.

The third part of Lin's model refers to the outcomes that emerge from the participation in the network, such as better jobs or social promotion (2001:22).

There are different sets of outcomes from the beneficiaries' participation in networks. For



instance, the existence of the IDP's associations, which aims to foster the respect and compliance of the IDP's rights within the framework of the Law 1448.

Other outcome for the respondent's participation in networks of commercialization is the gain the capability to commercialize their products that would not be possible in the absence of such network. Also these networks provide the access to loans and other resources that otherwise would not be at the reach of the respondents.

*"It is very common method here, if you do not have the money to grow your crops then you have to sell them your production or half of it".* (Participant interview No, 9)

I believe Lin's model has provided a structured form to present the information and set the stage for the analysis of the material through the lens of the aforementioned social capital theoretical framework.

*What kind of sources, consequences and social capital is found among FEST beneficiaries?*

The villagers have undergone a traumatic experience, combining not only the event of displacement, but also the violence associated to it. As a result of this experience people are significantly considered towards the wellbeing of others, creating links of bounded solidarity for each other. An expression of this bounded solidarity is the existence of the IDP's association, and program beneficiaries hold informal meeting to demand to the FEST officials a better follow up of the program schedule. However, all of these actions have a character to improve the resilience of the individuals rather than promoting economic development as Kozel & Parker suggest (2000:66).

At the same time there are significant historical events that have had an impact on the social mobilization of the population in the area. The group achievements in the 1970's were diminished by the selective killings during the 1990's and the persecution of the civilian population. Moreover, beneficiaries were subject to the uneven relationships of power during a long time, which drastically limited their collective action capacity. So, if one would judge the character of the beneficiaries' networks without its historical context, one would provide a

blurred image in which the collective actions of the past would be forgotten. Furthermore, it should also be taken into account that the risk for communal leaders and other collective action in pro-IDP's rights is still latent (SAT 2012:4).

*“During that time there were no programs, if you went to the main village and participate in a state program, the guerrilla would say that you were collaborating. If the army stopped you for an ID check someone would say that you were collaborating with the army. The army also would claim that you were a collaborator with the guerrilla, and they would do so during the harvest and post harvest period. So they knew that we had money during that period and they will get some. It was a mafia a big mafia”*(Participant interview No, 6)

One of the observable consequences of social capital is the family support that people receive, as many of the beneficiaries during the event of displacement went to places where they have family. Also, family appeared to be the first and strongest social tie to which people recurred in case of need. Furthermore, network-mediated benefits are observable as people obtain small-farmed related day jobs through their social ties.

*What kind of bonding and bridging social capital can be identified among FEST beneficiaries?*

Bonding social capital has already been discussed above. Bridging social capital among the beneficiaries is limited, mostly is relate to their connection to middleman agents for the commercialization of agricultural production. This relation is characterized by subordination of the beneficiaries given their precarious situation, as Kozel & Parker suggest (2001:66). Prior to the displacement, when they enjoyed of more economic resources they have a better position within this same network, as they were able to hold on and storage their crops until the prices in the market would rise. In the present they cannot afford to do the same. The FEST program has includes the promotion of public private partnerships for the commercialization of goods and support for credits demands. However, the beneficiaries have not heard anything related to those topics to the moment that the data collection took place.

Their bridging social capital is also highly limited due to the geographical isolation of their communities. The transportation system is not optimal and very costly, thus limiting people's

ability to reach other networks. Moreover the department economic structure does not provide nearby networks from which beneficiaries could have access to larger resources. Particularly as Sucre's economy lacks an industrial sector that could incorporate the beneficiaries given their low levels of human capital or create alliances with the agricultural sector in the area. Another significant issue is that the self-reliance promoted by the FEST would have to compete with the agribusiness economic model that has emerged in Sucre and its continually expanding.

*What kind of structural and historical factors affect people's social capital?*

The individual capacity to draw benefits from a network has been severely affected historically by the resourcefulness of the networks in the area. Land inequality is a deep-rooted historical phenomenon in the area (SAT 2012:15). The lack of access to land has restricted people's access to credits and to exploit economic opportunities. Moreover, the infrastructure in the area has hindered the interconnection among the different communities in the area. Furthermore, Sucre's failure to develop an industrial sector that could also be a source of employment for the population and expand their social ties hinders the beneficiary's potential social capital. In that context isolated projects will have a hard time to be successful, thus it is needed to increase people capabilities alongside with strategies and means to reach other networks with more resources.

The phenomenon of displacement has had significant negative consequences for beneficiary's social capital as their networks were reduced, given the departure of many of their members. Even more when in many cases is the IDP's youth that has non-return leaving those behind with a significant decrease of network resourcefulness.

Another significant factor that impacts beneficiary's social capital is the traumas related to the conflict and their subordinated relationship with the different armed groups and allegedly the state. These relationships that have a clear uneven power dimension have affect people's organizational capacity, even more when the risk is still present.

The implementation of the productive as such will be embedded in the aforementioned social capital of the beneficiaries. Therefore, there are great challenges to overcome for a productive

project to achieve self-reliance. There are severe structural and historical obstacles that should be taken into account and that are not easy to overcome, therefore the design of social programs should take into account such elements that constrain or foster beneficiary's action at the individual and collective level.

## *7. Conclusion*

This thesis has discussed and elucidate to the relationship between beneficiaries social capital and the FEST productive idea. Prior to the discussion this study has presented the background in which FEST program is embedded and highlighted the relevant features that have a significant impact in the beneficiaries lives.

The empirical material has been analyzed through the lenses of Alejandro Portes theoretical work on social capital, thus elucidating the sources and outcomes of social capital. The material has shown how the conflict that the community endured and the event of displacement have had a pervasive impact on the FEST beneficiary's social capital. These two factors have affected people's social capital, as they have the diminished individual's material endowments and substantially decreased the resourcefulness of their social networks. Furthermore, the diminishing of individual's capital endowments and bounded network resourcefulness has increased the vulnerability of the individuals. In this scenario, bounded social relations operate as resilient risk mechanism. However, the same bounded relations do not have an economic oriented orientation, which could be partially explained by the historical attack on collective action in the region, by armed actors. Otherwise the aforementioned could be explained could be related to Kozel and Parker 2001 argument on poor and richer groups network operation.

The analysis has also shown the unmixed blessing of network belonging in an unequal power relation, as beneficiaries were able to gain access to resources that would not have had otherwise, while middleman gained substantial economic gains from their economic relation with the beneficiaries.

The study of the beneficiary's elucidate the social context in which the productive idea will be embedded, including constrains and endowments that they have. Interventions should be

sensible to those elements; moreover, isolated intervention would not be capable to overcome significant structural obstacles.

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