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# The relationship between conflict and development in Colombia predicated on a public policy precedent

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## The relationship between conflict and development in Colombia predicated on a public policy precedent

La relación entre conflicto y desarrollo en Colombia a partir de un antecedente de política pública

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**ABSTRACT.** It has been traditionally established that the relationship between armed conflicts and development is inversely proportional; the greater the conflict's intensity, the lower the country's development. However, the Colombian case shows that this is not necessarily true. This article examines the National Rehabilitation Plan's precedent to understand how public policies developed in the context of the conflict have helped identify territorial characteristics that show a nexus between development and conflict in the areas most affected by violence. Thus, this precedent of differential development policies in Colombia is analyzed to understand their scope, territorial approach, and limitations, given the territory's specific economic, social, and geographic dynamics.

**KEYWORDS:** armed conflict; Colombia; economic development; National Rehabilitation Plan; public policy; social development

**RESUMEN.** Tradicionalmente se ha establecido que la relación entre los conflictos armados y el desarrollo es inversamente proporcional, es decir, a mayor intensidad del conflicto, menor desarrollo de los países. Sin embargo, el caso colombiano permite entrever que esto no necesariamente se cumple a cabalidad. Este artículo estudia el antecedente del Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación para comprender cómo, en el marco del conflicto, se han desarrollado políticas públicas que permiten identificar características territoriales particulares que muestran un nexo particular entre el desarrollo y el conflicto en las zonas más afectadas por la violencia. De esta manera, se analiza este antecedente de las políticas de desarrollo diferencial en Colombia para comprender sus alcances, su enfoque territorial, así como sus limitaciones, debido a las dinámicas propias del territorio, tanto económicas como sociales y geográficas.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Colombia; conflicto armado; desarrollo económico y social; Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación; política pública

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## Introduction

Studies on the link between armed conflict and socio-economic development have been marked by the discussion of development models –influenced by an economic and neoliberal vision– that reduce the multidimensional dynamics of development to merely economic aspects.

Historically, the concept of *development* has been associated with the economic dynamics of countries, especially linked to *economic growth*, defined by the United Nations (UN, 1987) as: “when all the goods and services produced by a country in one year are more than those produced the previous year.” Since then, this concept has been in constant evolution. Various schools of thought have influenced this concept, especially economic ones, including the structuralism of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), neo-structuralism, sustainable development of the UN, and development on a human scale (Mujica & Rincón, 2010).

Although there is no consensus among academics on the concept of development at present, the UN establishes one of the most widely accepted views, which includes broad and diverse aspects that involve the articulated work of all the agencies and subsidiary units of the UN system. In this sense, the “Agenda for Development” resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly defines it as follows:

[...] Development is a multidimensional undertaking to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. Economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development. (ONU, 1997, p. 2)

Sustained economic growth is essential to the economic and social development of all countries, in particular developing countries. Through such growth, which should be broadly based so as to benefit all people, countries will be able to improve the standards of living of their people through the eradication of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy, the provision of adequate shelter and secure employment for all and the preservation of the integrity of the environment. (ONU, 2021, p. 1)

On the other hand, there is a similar dilemma regarding the conceptualization of armed conflict and a lack of consensus on what characterizes it. Conflict is generally understood as a struggle of values and claims over scarce resources, power, and status (Boulding, 1962). In the International Law and Geneva Conventions’ (International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], 2008) frameworks, armed conflict is distinguished into international and non-international conflicts. The former corresponds to the declaration of war between two high contracting parties (states); meanwhile, the latter occurs when one or more non-governmental armed groups confront the state or each other within a country’s territory.

At the international level, multilateral organizations, such as the UN or the World Bank, have developed policies primarily directed at countries with internal conflicts to provide them with international assistance for their resolution. According to Elhawary (2008):

[...] peace, development and good governance are conceptualised as mutually reinforcing and desirable traits that are dialectically opposed to violent conflict, underdevelopment and authoritarian forms of governance. [...] therefore, in order to confront this lack of modernity and ensure rapid progression from conflict towards development, interventions are needed to promote economic growth through liberalization and improved forms of governance. (p. 85)

This compels the states receiving aid to implement policies imposed by international agencies, as the transfer of resources is conditional on their implementation. However, these are largely homogenized measures that, in most cases, do not respond to the particular needs of the countries and their conflicts and can therefore be very detrimental to their development.

Accordingly, the case of Colombia and its armed conflict cannot be understood exclusively as a purely economic problem. Although the conflict has impacted the country's capacity for growth and development, it has not been a constraint to achieving significant progress in this regard, even despite what this situation entails. In the last fifty years, the Colombian armed conflict has been characterized as a multidimensional phenomenon that has permeated all aspects of society, from the economic, political, social, and even the environmental. According to Botero Ospina (2004), from its beginnings, the armed conflict constituted nothing more than

[...] an expression of the heterogeneity of human collectivities. It should be understood as one of the forms assuming the diversity and complexity of a community with multiple interests, expectations, demands, and problems of the different groups that comprise it. (p. 9)

As stated by Bajoit (1990; cited in Botero, 2004), "conflict is evidence of the inequality of which certain members of society are victims, resulting from their exchanges with another social category, defined as an adversary" (p. 9). Indeed, confrontation results from multiple tensions that generate discontent in part of the population, which organizes itself in an armed manner to achieve political, territorial, and economic ends.

Therefore, this descriptive research uses a qualitative approach to identify the precedent of differential development policies in Colombia that have enabled a new analysis of the nexus between conflict and development. These policies have been implemented through a top-down approach to formulating public policies as measures to remedy the impacts of the conflict in the territories, going from the government (top) to the citizenry

(bottom). In this sense, development strategies have originated from the high government sphere to the local level, in this case, to the territories strongly affected by the dynamics of the armed conflict in Colombia.

To this end, first, the context that serves as a background for the design of the National Rehabilitation Plan (PNR in Spanish) – which emerged in the 1980s– is established, followed by a description of those strategies that pioneered development and peace-building. Finally, an analysis is made of the adverse effects of the conflict on development in Colombia.

## **Theoretical framework**

Studies on *development* and its link with armed conflicts have established an inverse relationship between the two categories, basically indicating that the greater the intensity of the armed conflict, the lower the level of development of the affected countries. According to Collier et al. (2003), armed conflicts are closely related to economic underdevelopment. They are a direct cause of this phenomenon, so the most obvious solution is to promote development policies in the affected countries.

In this same sense, Gates et al. (2012) indicate that armed conflict is a problem that impacts development. According to the authors, it destroys social infrastructure, leads to “forced migration, increases refugee flows and capital flight; creating a development gap between countries that have experienced armed conflict and those that have not” (p. 1713).

However, Elhawary (2008), in his article “Violent Paths to Peace? Reconsidering the nexus between conflict and development in Colombia,” poses a rather disruptive thesis to address this link: “violent conflict and development may be interconnected as part of the transition to capitalist forms of production and the process of state formation” (p. 85). Elhawary elaborates this questioning of the traditional view on the relationship between conflict and development by analyzing the Colombian case. He dismisses this inverse relationship on the basis of the violent processes of primitive accumulation that have driven various outcomes (Elhawary, 2008). This author also indicates that this traditional vision has led to the assumption that, given the nexus between conflict and development, the process following the signing of the peace agreements could create an environment conducive to implementing projects that promote development and peace. However, failure to understand this complex nexus may mean that peace-building processes and development projects funded by international organizations fail to achieve their objectives.

Therefore, it is pertinent to delve into the analysis of Elhawary’s non-traditional vision to establish the antecedents of differential development policies in Colombia in this article that have made it possible to analyze the nexus between conflict and development from a new perspective.

## Methodology

The methodology's qualitative approach is developed through a descriptive study with a contemporary transactional, univariate documentary design. As stated by Hurtado (2010), concerning this design:

The objective is to achieve the precision and characterization of the event under study within a particular context. [...] are designs whose objective is to describe an event, situation, fact, or context and whose basis or source of data is constituted by documents. (p. 422)

This method will establish a starting point for future studies that seek to deepen the type of relationship between conflict and development in Colombia, based on Elhawary's ideas, through a bibliographic review to specify and conceptualize the events that occurred within the framework of the PNR.

The process by which the research was carried out involved, as a first phase, a bibliographic review and consultation of databases such as Scopus. Subsequently, the bibliography obtained was organized in an analysis matrix that enabled systematizing and managing the information. Thus, the most relevant search criteria obtained are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Most relevant search criteria*

Search criteria	Number of publications
Conflict and development	65,696
Armed conflict and development	2,191
Conflict and development nexus	493
Conflict and development Colombia	466

Source: Created by the author.

Thus, it can be said that there is an interest in the scientific community in addressing this issue. However, research products related to the "Conflict and development Colombia" criterion are still incipient; since 2000, only 466 products have been published in Scopus. Most of the research has been developed in the area of social sciences, which accounts for 43.2% of the total number of publications, followed by humanities with 10.2%.

Subsequently, the PNR was defined as the event to be researched, as well as the context that allows characterizing it, comprising a univariate documentary research design. Then, the precedent of the PNR was established, and the strategies implemented within this plan, potentially cataloged as pioneers of peacebuilding and fostering development,

were described. In this way, we analyzed and integrated the data describing the process and its sequential relationships and indicating some effects of the nexus between conflict and development for Colombia based on the PNR.

## Results

### National Rehabilitation Plan and the road to peace-building

With the creation of the National Commission for Reconciliation and Rehabilitation during Alberto Lleras Camargo's mandate in 1958, the Colombian State began to offset the disastrous results of the explosion of the period called *La Violencia* (The Violence) in Colombia between 1946 and 1957. This period was the consequence of the intense polarization between the traditional parties (Liberal and Conservative) added to the conflict of interests over the country's productive lands, which resulted in the armed confrontation between the political parties with strong violent actions against the civilian population.

It is worth noting that the first guerrilla movements were created during this period. Their activities, driven by political ideals of change and transformation of the State, resulted in around 300,000 victims (Wills, 2013), mostly peasants. A large unquantified number of people were displaced from rural areas of the country, unattended by any public policy to aid them.

According to Wills Herrera (2013), this commission designed diverse programs: one for the population of displaced peasants and another to increase the State's presence in peripheral rural areas with the so-called colonization programs (areas of Ariari in the department of Meta, Saravena in Arauca, and another in Caquetá). The last program aimed at creating road infrastructure to connect the most distant peasant populations and strengthen the economy through the commercialization of agricultural products. However, these rehabilitation programs' benefits were not continued during the conservative government of Guillermo León Valencia, between 1962 and 1966, due to partisan quarrels and the dispute that these programs had provided greater benefits to the liberal areas to the detriment of the conservative.

At the beginning of the 1980s and the mandate of Belisario Betancur (1982-1986), the rehabilitation ideas were revisited. They were aimed at supporting the peace policy and direct dialogues between the Government and the armed groups to consider the objective and subjective causes of violence in more than 130 municipalities and provide a holistic framework for the laying down of arms and the reinsertion of guerrilla groups into civilian life through the transfer of resources. Thus, a presidential directive created the National Rehabilitation Plan (PNR), which became the main tool of Virgilio Barco's government (1986-1990) and extended until the government of César Gaviria (1990-1994) with several adjustments and reforms.

## Characteristics of the National Rehabilitation Plan

The PNR was one of the main strategies during Barco's presidency to bring the State to the most remote areas of the country, thus, consolidating and legitimizing it in the eyes of society. It was also one of the main tools to fulfill the objectives of the Government's plan. Hand in hand with the Social Economy Plan, it sought to harmonize economic and social policy to achieve the structural change required in Colombia to reduce economic and social development inequality between regions.

To this end, the PNR focused its efforts on the most undeveloped and poorest areas, which coincided with the conflict zones. The previous covered 250 municipalities of the national territory (Departamento Nacional de Planeación [DNP], 1987, p. 26), historically overlooked by the development model used until 1986. However, this model

[It] generated important levels of growth, energized key sectors of the national economy, and contributed to the general improvement of social indicators; [...] at the same, time it was characterized by its lack of equity and causing structural distortions in the distribution of wealth. (Wills, 1990, p. 203)

These issues were because the established economic model favored regions with consolidated political and economic structures and prevented regions with weak structures from participating in the growth dynamics.

Thus, according to Wills Herrera (2013), the PNR's main objective was essentially aimed at "benefiting people and communities, regions, and productive sectors that until then (1986) remained affected by poverty phenomena and disintegrated from the country's economic and social development process" (p. 25). Among the reasons for these regions and communities' underdevelopment was the State's absence and low legitimacy in these areas, the lack of participation of the peripheral populations, the existence of a model of social exclusion, the low tolerance directly affecting the population's coexistence, and the lack of social cohesion.

It is worth noting that the PNR tried to have a comprehensive approach to the concepts of *reconciliation*, *normalization*, and *rehabilitation*. According to Herrera (2013), the first concept encompassed, on the one hand, dialogue with the guerrillas to reach a peace agreement and, on the other, reconciliation and the re-establishment of trust between civil society and the State. The second concept, *normalization*, focused on making the State's presence effective in the regions in aspects like justice and the definition of land ownership rights. Finally, the third concept, *rehabilitation*, was oriented toward executing plans and investments agreed upon between the communities and the State.

The Presidential Council for Reconciliation, Normalization, and Rehabilitation headed the PNR's implementation, with a well-defined structure and mechanisms based on the participatory model. The Secretariat for Popular Integration (SIP in Spanish) and



the Regional Rehabilitation Coordinators were in charge of technical coordination. The Municipal and Regional Rehabilitation Councils (created by Decree 3270 of 1986), made up of the community, discussed and developed regional rehabilitation plans. These were one of the PNR's most important tools; they represented a vital input and were able to channel citizen participation. Finally, the national and territorial public entities were responsible for executing activities and projects, and popular oversight bodies were implemented as a mechanism for social and budgetary control (DNP, 1987; Wills, 2013).

### **The PNR: pioneer in development and peace-building strategies**

The presentations and reflections made at the 1990 Seminar on Peace, Democracy, and Development, collected in the proceedings entitled *Building Peace* (Bejarano, 1990), evinced that the PNR's implementation helped the State finally understand what was needed to achieve peaceful coexistence, that is, a stable and lasting peace. Overcoming the conflict would not solely require integrating and committing the Government and its advisory team's will and articulating the objectives with the entire institutional apparatus; it would also require the national will. Miranovic (1990) defined this *will* as the "national consciousness of overcoming the conflicts associated with regional and personal inequalities of development, welfare, and political participation."

In examining this correlation, it should be emphasized that it is the State's task to lead an articulated effort, including national actors –both public and private–, its government agencies, and the communities of the peripheral regions. The purpose is twofold, to generate positive impacts in all dimensions and make the State's sovereignty effective in the conflict territories by legitimizing its presence and reducing the power of armed groups there.

It can be said that the map of the conflict corresponds to the same map of unsatisfied basic needs (UBN). Moreover, the use of violence to achieve some objective signals the fragility of the political system (democratic), given its failure to channel the requirements of its citizens through institutional participation (Haddad, 1990). On the other hand, in his comments on the papers presented at the Peace, Democracy, and Development Seminar, Bruce Bagley (as cited in Bejarano, 1990), argues the following:

It is not at all absolute poverty that creates violence or political instability. On the contrary, it is precisely modernization or capitalist transformation that mobilizes these groups and creates inequalities in the process of economic growth and accumulation. (p. 294)

In addition to the previous, there are other associated factors, such as corruption and institutional fragility. On the other hand, the PNR raises the question of the tension between democracy, decentralization, and efficiency. In this regard, limits must be estab-

lished to satisfy both the regions' desire for decentralization and the State's will to reduce the development gap between them.

The PNR became the first state strategy to tackle the objective and, especially, the subjective causes of the conflict, transitioning from an exclusionary and unequal development model to a regional one, focused and appertaining to a more harmonious growth, closely related to the distribution and political-administrative organization of the country's geographic space.

This plan also embodied a state instrument for economic, social, and physical integration to improve the living conditions of Colombians. Despite the lack of consistency between its instruments and objectives, this plan showed the State's remarkable efforts and concern in generating structural changes allowing for the reconstruction of the social fabric. However, the PNR's *top-down* approach undermines these efforts, as they are interpreted as impositions of the central government.

## Discussion

It should be highlighted that the armed conflict has had multiple negative consequences for the country, especially the victims it has left behind and the impact on the population's well-being, which should be analyzed from an integral perspective. This study, however, is limited to the armed conflict's economic consequences and the link between it and development, seen from the particularities of the regions where armed groups have occurred.

According to González (2008), "the relationship between development and peace is two-way: the economy influences the conflict, and the conflict influences the economy" (p. 32). However, this relationship is not univocal. The determinants of war and peace go beyond economic aspects; therefore, the analysis must also consider the political and institutional factors.

In any case, it is necessary to analyze how the economy affects the conflict in principle. This assessment can be done based on three closely interrelated factors proposed by González (2008): poverty, inequality, and how production is organized. Regarding poverty, it can start from the premise that armed conflicts worldwide are concentrated in countries with a high poverty and inequality index (low or lower-middle-income countries) and not in mid or high-income countries. In this regard, the Colombian case is somewhat atypical; the map of armed conflicts tends to coincide with the map of wealth and not the map of poverty (González, 2008, p. 32; García, 2008, p. 224). Thus, armed groups in Colombia searching for control of resources have been accentuated in the regions with the highest economic growth. This situation coincides in principle with Paul Collier's thesis, stating the following: "in scenarios with abundant natural resource endowment, the propensity to violence is greater and, additionally, the incidence, intensity, and duration of armed conflicts increase" (as cited in Echandía, 2006, p. 26).

Concerning inequity, García Durán (2008) establishes that it refers to the abysmal gaps between the different population groups that make up a society, especially regarding access and distribution of wealth. This aspect is precisely the originator of the perfect scenario for a distributive dispute; thus, it can explain the armed conflict in Colombia much better than poverty.

Regarding the third factor, García Durán (2008) also points out that the definition of economic dynamics is underlain in the organization of production, emphasizing connections between the links in the value chain that provide greater competitiveness in global markets and taxation. This means that in cases where it is impossible to develop enclave-type production chains, where there is a dependence relationship between a developed country and a less developed one, taxes become a strategic mechanism for redistributing the benefits derived from wealth.

However, another fundamental variable determines the conflict: the geographic component. It is understood as the territory's geographical characteristics that determine different types of conflict zones. Indeed, in addition to the tremendous socioeconomic inequalities and the intense polarization of social structures and institutions, the geographic conditions of several regions make it particularly easy for armed groups to force the civilian population and dominate the territory. Thus, because of their geography and the strategic place they occupy in Colombian territory, regions such as the Caribbean, lower Cauca, and Chocó (to mention a few) are enormously attractive for armed groups, especially those that have concentrated their economic efforts on drug trafficking.

The analysis of the armed conflict's effects on development, which has so far been carried out from a negative perspective, establishes the concentration of public and private resources for the conflict as one of the major impacts. This, as highlighted by García Durán (2008), becomes an indicator of the conflict's intensity. It leads to a concentration of economic resources in army maintenance activities and issues related to the armed conflict, which would be destined for productive activities under different circumstances. Therefore, everything allotted to end the conflict ceases to finance social demands, impacting the citizens' welfare. It should be noted that this argument is as valid for criminal groups and guerrillas as it is for the Armed Forces, given that, in both cases, the armament used and military activities require permanent financing.

An additional adverse effect involves the sources of financing of the illegal groups and their consequences. For instance, according to the Attorney General's Office (2019), the sources and mechanisms of financing the Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC) were mainly associated with kidnapping, extortion, drug trafficking, and illegal mining. It should be noted that these same sources of financing extend to other illegal organizations. Thus, the impact of the mentioned sources goes beyond the creation of a subway econo-

my. They also undermine the structure of social values and the idiosyncrasy of the affected areas, affecting the development associated with legal and economic activities that favor the creation of wealth. Instead, the culture of easy money is encouraged through the social precepts and imaginaries that validate and reinforce these behaviors.

Thus, the conflict's adverse effects on development are interrelated with its mentioned causes. By themselves, they do not explain its emergence; however, together, they lead to conclude that structural imbalances in different aspects of the territory support the conflict. This is particularly so in the rural context, where they have been the triggers of the armed conflict endured by the country during the last fifty years.

According to Martínez (as cited in Botero, 2004, p. 21), the absence of comprehensive rural development policies has favored the lag of the Colombian rural population behind the urban population, encouraged by the violence affecting the countryside. This lag added to the concentration of land, limited resources for implementing social policies, civil society's lack of commitment, and violence has allowed armed actors to consolidate territorial and political control in rural areas throughout the conflict. In these areas, these actors have directly involved civilians, social leaders, institutions, and local authorities in legitimizing their actions and taking advantage of the profits from the illegal economy, especially drug trafficking, to maintain hostilities within the internal conflict. As a consequence of the conflict, employment possibilities and productive activities in the countryside are limited. Instead, the armed groups force the rural population through threats and intimidation to become involved in these organizations or be displaced.

Undoubtedly, the conflict has introduced productive processes associated with drug trafficking in the affected regions, which have ideal production characteristics for this type of crop, especially coca. In this sense, the technification of cultivation, collection, processing, and transport of psychoactive products, such as cocaine, has generated a regional economy with seeming stability that could translate into economic growth, according to Botero (2004). In this regard, the Attorney General's Office (2019) points out that the FARC's participation, at the time, extended from extortion of drug traffickers and the gramage tax to the control of the different stages of the process. In economic terms, this represented a refinement of their participation.

Thus, the dynamics of the illegal economy and the introduction of capital flows in populations with high multidimensional poverty rates have made violence the distribution channel for the wealth resulting from these illegal activities. This strengthens structural violence and increases cultural violence, which legitimizes and normalizes any form of violence through cultural practices. It also strengthens direct violence, materialized in concrete actions (in terms of the typology of violence developed by Johan Galtung, known as the triangle of violence), which leads to the blurring of social and political institutions and instrumentalizes the community for the purposes and interests of the irregular

actors in the territory. As Botero (2004) states: “Development based on illicit economies unleashes processes of organized violence, as they resort to arms to defend themselves from the control of the State and to achieve their interests” (p. 22).

This is a brief example of the complex relationship between armed conflict and development that unfolds with illegal and extractive economies in the Colombian case. Both the national government in power and the armed groups and criminal groups have based the financing of their various activities on the extraction and exploitation of the country’s natural and agricultural resources. In the case of the institutions, the different national development plans have highlighted the strategic importance of mining and energy resources to promote the country’s development model. To the extent that the benefits derived are redistributed through royalties in all departments to finance projects of various kinds, among which it is worth mentioning the promotion of research and education in the regions.

## Conclusion

At first glance, establishing the nexus between conflict and development would seem easy because, as we have seen, traditional theories suggest an inversely proportional relationship between the two variables. This would imply that conflict is both cause and effect of underdevelopment and structural and institutional gaps reflected in the economy and the level of citizens’ welfare. However, as we have seen in the Colombian case, this nexus must be analyzed from a different approach than the traditional one.

This departure is based on the country’s economic growth despite the armed conflict in its territory; it reflects the fact that the nexus between conflict and development is not inversely proportional in all aspects. Indeed, thanks to the Colombian conflict’s particularities, the country had a relatively significant economic growth since the second half of the 1980s. Compared to previous decades, economic sectors began to be strengthened. In addition, institutional capacity and legitimacy and governability and governance increased, even though this coincided with growing hostilities between various actors in the conflict that increased violence in a generalized manner in the country.

The association between armed conflict and socioeconomic development in Colombia is particularly linked to the inequitable distribution of land, which is a structural cause of the conflict. This situation responds to the development model implemented in the second half of the 20th century, which privileged regions with a relatively strong political, social, and economic institutional structure. Consequently, inequity in the territories increased, as a marked regional difference was established in terms of the socio-economic conditions of the population. In some cases, the poverty of some of the regions favored by the prevailing development model equated to the wealth of some of

the non-favored regions. Thus, the applied development model favored mobilizations against the State, adding to its poor representation and legitimacy in the peripheral territories and boosting the emergence and consolidation of guerrillas, including the FARC and ELN.

Thus, strategies such as the PNR stand out in terms of public policy. It holistically integrated economic and social policy towards the specific goal of tackling the objective and subjective causes of the conflict and providing different tools for peaceful coexistence among citizens. The PNR sought to invert the equation between conflict and development in Colombia by using the development and improvement of society's conditions as a tool to strengthen democracy through participation. It aimed to boost the economy through specialized projects for the regions that were scenes of the conflict and offset the historical debt with the less favored communities of these territories by improving their living conditions. Finally, it strived to increase legitimacy and confidence in the institutions of the State.

Despite these aspirations and efforts, this strategy fell short in practice, resulting in a mere transfer of economic resources. Without detracting from the redirection of public spending by the Colombian State toward the poorest during the PNR years, a more effective strategy was lacking to repair these peripheral regions' social fabric, as Marinovic (1990) highlighted concerning creating a national conscience to promote the intention of emerging from the conflict.

In analyzing the nexus between development and conflict under this new approach, the most important lesson learned is the need to particularize how this problem has been presented in the regions of the country and the respective consequences it has left. Development in Colombia does not depend exclusively on the transfer of resources. As this article showed, these transfers must respond to previous observations of the socioeconomic context to analyze the social dynamics and structures, their composition and interaction with the conflict, the accumulated experiences in development, and the differences in how the population assumes this.

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