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## The Resilience of a Community in a Rural Environment of Armed Conflict, Macondo 2018.

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### ABSTRACT

The Colombian government has passed for decades' various policies aimed at national and citizen security and peace processes. This political-social and mental transition has generated a public health problem that impacts the generation of welfare. However, breaches of the pacts have favored a flare-up of violence and criminality. This study seeks to determine the level of resilience in the perception of coexistence and citizen security in Macondo-Magdalena, Colombia. A "social survey" study with quantitative analysis used univariate and bivariate characterization through the raw odds ratio. There were 91 subjects from 15 to 85 years old participating, obtaining a high measure of resilience of 91.2% at a 95% CI (84.8–97.5). The tool gave a Cronbach's alpha of 0.795. No association was established with the variables of interest. It is necessary to delve into aspects of resilience using a qualitative approach to explore family functioning and mental health. The people perceive insecurity but are resilient to adversity. It is necessary to continue processes of assistance to victims and consolidation of the peace process and restitution of land.

**KEYWORDS:** Armed conflict, Rural population, Resilience, Security, Public policy

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, human coexistence and people's perception of various variables in the area of security have changed. The tireless search for peace should not be confused with the absence of direct violence. It is necessary to understand resilience like a development's process that requires exposure to adversity, determined by characteristics of the vulnerable community and affected by internal conflicts. Colombia has had one of the most widespread armed conflicts in Latin America, with origins dating to the early 1960s. It has been sustained by illegal armed groups, organized as guerrillas that arose under Marxist-Leninist ideals and paramilitary groups that protected the lands, avoiding agrarian reform. Between 1958 and 2018, more than seven million citizens were internally displaced, and 215,005 were killed. The office for people's protection estimates that 311 community leaders and human rights defenders were killed between January 1 and July 30, 2018. Between 1997 and 2002, massacres as a mechanism of territorial control and a greater number of deaths in combat between irregular groups and security forces were documented. In contrast, in Central America, authoritarian regimes and guerrilla movements in the rural sector have developed. In the 20th century, the rural population in Colombia has not been surveyed since the 1970s. Thus, more than 40 years has passed without detailed information on a population that has been impacted by phenomena such as the armed conflict. It is urgent to understand the importance of the armed conflict as a social determinant of health and inequalities in the territories in Colombia. The medical sector, as a fundamental axis in post-conflict processes, must be a guarantor in providing elements for decision-making in the social dynamics of the rural sector. Public health events associated with the dynamics of the armed conflict transcend the social determinants of health, inequality, distribution of power, programs, policies, goods and services. Mental health associated with the nature of the conflict and intensity of violence has been studied as a public health event.

The program “Visión Colombia” indicated that “the action promoted by the state in terms of bringing lasting peace and security to citizens is somewhat limited”. The reduction in violence has been marginal, owing to the presence of other criminal groups.

The constitutional court has stated that the security of society is a primary public service, with coexistence and citizen security being some of the most precious public goods of citizens. Rural areas have historically suffered from a deficit of presence and institutional activity. The active presence of legal armed entities has not meant an improvement in security and coexistence in rural areas that have a weak fiscal capacity to support citizen security. Health officials are facing the challenge of taking measures aimed at reducing the risk of relapse into conflict by strengthening national capacities for conflict management and laying the foundations for a sustainable peace. Therefore, it is necessary to advance the creation of territorial peace, calling on all actors, organizations, funds, national and international and governmental programs for joint work to build peace within a free, safe and healthy social fabric. During post-conflict, comprehensive rural reform is configured as a positive coping mechanism for the transformation of rural areas. Recent reports state that “inhabitants of large cities in Latin America and the rest of the world are regularly consulted on the status of crime in their environment through systematic victimization surveys, whereas the population of small cities and rural areas are not surveyed in the same way”. In this sense, the purpose of our research was to determine the level of resilience in the perception of coexistence and citizen security in a community marked by armed conflict in the rural area of Macondo-Magdalena, as hidden figures of criminal acts that serve as a tool for various social actors who contend with this problem.

### THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CONTEXT

**Historical context of the armed conflict:** Violence in Colombia arose before the creation of illegal armed groups, with bipartisan violence. Roughly, the following timeline shows how there were escalations and ups and downs throughout the presidential terms before reaching the post-conflict stage and peace agreement. There was liberalism during 1934–1946. A leading figure was Alfonso López (1934–1938), whose government enacted the constitutional reform of 1936. Its agrarian reform sought to improve land distribution. This led to opposition against the government by various social sectors, such as large landowners and the Catholic church, who sought to defend their interests. With the arrival of conservatism and President Mariano Ospina Pérez (1946–1950), the bipartisan dispute between peasants and landowners increased. In presidential campaigns on April 9, 1948, the Liberal party candidate for the presidency Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was assassinated, which triggered the Bogotazo, an important milestone in the spread of violence to rural areas.

The conservative Laureano Gómez Castro (1950–1951) fostered the period of the *popol* (political police), detectives, the *Chulavitas* and *Los Pájaros*, who served the regime as forces of intimidation and rural control, initiating the first displaced people in the nation. After the state of health of the previous president, the conservative Roberto Urdaneta Arbeláez took charge (1951–1953). In a coup during 1953, the presidency was occupied by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953–1957), who achieved a handover of arms by the guerrillas of the plains and inaugurated a period of bipartisan ceasefire, which lasted until the end of the Frente Nacional. The bipartisan violence of the Frente Nacional (1948–1957) left incalculable deaths and forced a displacement from the countryside to the city. Liberalism regained power with the first president of the Frente Nacional, Alberto Lleras Camargo (1958–1962). The Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA) emerged in 1961, to facilitate access to land for peasants. In the period of conservative Guillermo León Valencia (1962–1966), the FARC and National Liberation Army (ELN) were begun in 1964. This saw the implementation of Plan Lazo, which dealt with counterinsurgency tactics.

In the presidential term of the Liberal Carlos Lleras Restrepo (1966–1970), the Popular Liberation Army (EPL) emerged in 1967 and the April 19 Movement (M-19) in 1970. An attempt was made to introduce agrarian reform, which brought with it pockets of emerging paramilitaries in the departments of Cesar, Sucre, Bolívar, Córdoba, Magdalena, Cauca, and Antioquia. In response to this, the National Association of Peasant Users of Colombia (ANUC) was created. The Frente Nacional culminated with the conservative Misael Pastrana (1970–1974). The Chicoral pact was signed, provided for in the 4th Law of 1973 in order to avoid agrarian reform and impede peasant organization. Alfonso López Michelsen (1974–1978) sought to “close the gap between the rural and urban population”. Under an exceptional state of siege, Decree 1923 of 1978, known as the Security Statute, was applied. The government of President Turbay Ayala (1978–1982) declared a state of emergency under the National Security doctrine. During his government the first Peace Commission emerged, which failed because there were multiple human rights violations with indiscriminate arrests and torture of people from trade union groups, popular organizations, and intellectuals considered to be on the left. This gave legal free reign for the training of paramilitary groups in rural areas. Belisario Betancur (1982–1986) failed in his attempt to negotiate amnesty for the FARC, ELN, EPL and M-19, because of opposition from the ruling class, military,

ranchers, the church, banana exporters, agribusiness, and some members of the traditional political elite. This caused paramilitary groups to grow exponentially in the 1980s. Because of breaches of the Corinth accords in 1985, the M-19 guerrilla movement took the Palace Of Justice, considered one of the massacres that left countless dead and disappeared. Subsequently, on March 9, 1990, Virgilio Barco (1986–1990) achieved a political agreement with the M-19 group, who, after signing the peace agreement, handed over their weapons and accepted reintegration into civilian life. In the Cesar Gaviria period (1990–1994), the 1991 constitution emerged, there was a breakdown in conversations with the guerrillas, and he created the decree that he organized, the Private Cooperative for Vigilance and Security for Agrarian Defense, "Coexist". In the period of Ernesto Samper Pizano (1994–1998), there was a vision of security with military predominance, and in turn, paramilitary and guerrilla violence was more noticeable.

Andrés Pastrana Arango (1998–2002), in his attempt to implement dialogue roundtables in the so-called *El Caguán* peace process with the FARC, managed to withdraw the military from three municipalities in an area of 42 km<sup>2</sup>, which gave FARC the power to recruit around 18,000 fighters. His government worked under the National Security and Defense System, characterized by political incompetence in the demilitarized zones. This led to the restructuring of the Colombian armed forces in the charge of the United States. Plan Colombia (2000–2016) was also implemented, during which several guerrilla commanders were discharged. In the presidential terms of Álvaro Uribe Vélez (2002–2006 and 2006–2010), costs of the war reached 108 billion Colombian pesos, and the Democratic Security policy was launched under a concept of the nonexistence of armed conflict from the terrorist threat. During his government, the Santa Fe de Ralito Agreement was reached, promoting the demobilization of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) in 2005, the offensive against the FARC "Plan Patriot," and public policies: Peasant Soldiers, Live Colombia, and travel for her. This encouraged desertion, the informant network, and the National Plan for Community Vigilance.

However, one of the problems was false positives, and the perception by the peasants was that a right-wing government probably would not redistribute surplus in the form of land or other resources among the rural poor, but would divert it to the richest sectors of the population. This generated economic and social disparities, leading to a greater concentration of land ownership, wealth, and income. Juan Manuel Santos (2010–2014 and 2014–2018) held a referendum on October 2, 2016 to ratify the peace agreement. The "Yes" vote was concentrated in municipalities with the highest rates of conflict-related violence, which are also rural and farther from the main urban centers. Nonetheless, people generally disagreed by voting "No". After dialogues between the state and FARC, a peace process in Havana (Cuba) was signed, resulting in a bilateral ceasefire. Likewise, actions were taken prioritizing agricultural development and the creation of public policies providing solutions to drug problems, justice, truth, and reparations for victims. Thus began the most expensive stage of the war, in which dynamism is required in the search for a true lasting and stable peace. This was the beginning of the post-conflict era. Currently, Iván Duque Márquez (2018–2022) is promoting networks of civic participation, through joint work between the public force and the citizenry, reward systems to capture leaders, and the termination of territories for them, seeking a reduction of criminality. This also implements effective control of spaces, drastic changes in the model of police surveillance on the streets, and makes mental health an important factor for prevention. Among the proposals are security in the field, with the presence of the Public Force and strengthening of the Rural Police, Environmental Police and Armed Forces to guarantee the safety of rural residents.

**Conceptualization of Resilience:** Resilience comes from the Latin *resilio*, "to go back," jump back, highlight, or rebound. It is studied in all stages of the life cycle in various contexts, without distinction by age, gender or race. There is no consensus on the concept of the term resilience, but several authors define it from their area of knowledge. Resilience is not considered the trait of an individual, because it can vary over time and the stages of life (...); the correct way of referring to people is stating that "this person has a resilient pattern" or "this person shows characteristics of resilience". Among the first reference studies are works treating the resilience of individuals with schizophrenia. " Also, there are longitudinal studies of resilience in children on the island of Kauai (USA) who were subject to extreme poverty and psychosocial risk. Other authors studied resilience-building with a focus on the cause of problems based on environmental risk factors and not on the individual. In turn, the attributes of individuals and their contexts, often associated with resilience, have been studied as sources and opportunities of community security. The term resilience is widely used, both in prevention and in the treatment of people with mental health disorders. It can be promoted through direct interventions for people or communities affected by stressful phenomena.

In 1992, Rutter discovered the development and functioning of the brain from the physiological bases of the phenomenon of resilience, as well as its contribution to the processes of psychophysiological development, arguing that resilience has been characterized as a set of social and intrapsychic processes that enable a healthy

life while living in an insane environment. The first scale to measure resilience was used in a qualitative study of 24 women, showing positive adaptation to different life events, evaluating the degree of individual resilience through the characteristics of equanimity, self-confidence, meaning, perseverance and existential loneliness.

Resilience can be studied in multidisciplinary fashion. Proper use of the concept allows researchers to conceptualize it, considering that it is not static. It is characterized as a normal adaptive factor of human beings, it changes through the stages of the life cycle, and can be strengthened by considering not only risk factors but also protectors.

**Resilience in rural communities victims of the conflict :** Rural communities have been victims of the conflict since long ago. These conjunctural phenomena are present in the coexistence of people and depending on how they are managed, resolved and overcome, positive or negative results can be obtained . It is necessary to remember historical events to build resilience. In the 20th century, the rural population in Colombia has not been surveyed since the 1970s, so more than 40 years has passed without detailed information on a population that has been impacted by phenomena such as armed conflict. In the 1980s, the rural sector was conducive to illicit drug trafficking. In the 1990s, there was a confrontation between guerrillas and paramilitaries for control of certain lands, with rurality conceived as a historical process that was sustained by the dispute over natural resources and inequitable distribution of land.

The re-significance of historical memories builds resilience, as in the case of two women leaders in Chivolo and Zona Bananera, who testified about the sexual violence and attempted murder they suffered when they were detained by paramilitaries, after being accused of collaborating with the guerrillas. This reveals the aftermath and irreversible consequences perpetuated by violence. It is important to mention events in the communities of Zipacoa and El Salado, where the AUC gathered the population in the plaza, selected those whom they considered to be collaborators with the guerrillas, and murdered them in front of everyone in the town. The vereda of Macondo, founded in 1820, has large tracts of land for banana production. Its population center is made up of two streets and 53 houses, located on the left bank of the Seville River. It was attacked by a guerrilla cell, where two people were murdered at a family meeting and a 28-year-old man was kidnapped, which was located in the district of Seville, with three bullet wounds, injured the supervisor of the Association of Banana Growers (ASOBAN) and a minor.

Exploring some of the realities of the armed conflict in rural areas facilitates identification of the meanings of a culture of peace and reconciliation of victims. Security in rural areas has improved significantly in recent years, but the social, economic, political and cultural consequences of the internal armed conflict have not been fully resolved. Since the signing of the peace agreement, the recidivism of ex-combatants has been diverted toward organized criminal violence, generally unrelated to political ends. The peace agreement announces a new but uncertain chapter in the history of Colombia, the *post-conflict*, understood as that period following an armed conflict shaped by positive coping mechanisms for human development. It deals with themes of "comprehensive rural reform," designed for the transformation of rural areas and mental health of victims.

**Perception of Security and Citizen Coexistence in the field of Public Health:** The human being has rooted in his daily life situations that reveal various conflicts that affect citizen coexistence. Security policies have emerged since the stage of bipartisan violence, and disputes between liberals and conservatives have been encouraged, causing countless affectations in the population. These policies have had military currents. Since the rise of insurgent groups, the state has safeguarded national security by coercing certain groups into the massive subjection of war in rural areas. However, citizen security has been implemented that seeks to safeguard the common good of the population. In the post-conflict framework, the design of security strategies with a regional focus is required, because the actions of the state are uneven across the country's geographical extent. Implementing existing policies requires a consolidated database in areas affected by armed conflict, and the transition from national to citizen security in rural areas is necessary. The policy of coexistence and citizen security aims at the common good, eliminating or counteracting the various forms of criminal actions. However, this has not been properly implemented in rural areas of the country.

Information systems of the victims of the armed conflict in rural areas are not adequately structured, so it is necessary to strengthen them for the correct decision-making by government actors. The responsibility of the Colombian State in the post-conflict constitutes a scenario of regulations. In this, sentence T-045 of 2010 issued by the Constitutional Court reinforces the right to health of displaced populations and emphasizes the processes of mental health care, and Law 1448 of 2011 consolidates public policy for the care and redress of victims. However, the commitment necessary to execute these requires institutional efforts. The state conducts inter-institutional coordination of security from "top to bottom" with respect to the national



government. Despite decentralization of the territorial entities, direct responsibility for the constant accompaniment of the public force is conferred on the state, ruling out any form of direct violence. In a rural context, criminal actions cause a perception of insecurity and mistrust in institutions. It is necessary to strengthen the public force and adopt the Comprehensive Plans for Citizen Security and Coexistence (PISCC) in response to the problems. Mayors in particular have a duty to fully comply with the PISCC, not only as a legal requirement but as a strategic planning tool, not seeing security and citizen coexistence as separate but perceiving them as a single need of the community, which must be intervened jointly. A diagnosis of rural communities implies having reliable sources of information for making timely decisions, and respecting the guarantees of the people through their institutions. The social determinants of health affect the dynamics of coexistence and citizen security of the rural victims of the armed conflict. Unfavorable social conditions, being exposed directly or indirectly to armed conflict, inequalities, contextual factors, and population vulnerabilities are important in how conflict influences people and in building resilience. This implies the implementation of a range of strategies for the primary prevention of mental health through psychosocial interventions. The Bronfenbrenner socio-ecological model, adopted by public health professionals, is useful for understanding violence, development and human behavior. Having professionals in mental and public health, trained to identify problems related to armed conflict, plan and implement rehabilitation programs, individual and collective therapies, is a challenge that requires a compendium of possibilities, but above all the local authorities must show interest in achieving resilience and lasting and sustainable peace in rural communities.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**Study design:** The type of study was a cross-sectional analytical "social survey". The study's source of information was primary. The variables included were sociodemographic, personal, neighborhood, and household. Resilient people were categorized into two groups, those with very high (82–98 points) and high (64–81 points) scores, along with non-resilient people with normal (63–49 points), low (48–31 points) and very low (30–14 points) resilience.

**Processing and Analysis:** Measurements generating statistical information on people aged 15 and older were taken in a pilot study in Vereda La Agustina, using the Citizen Coexistence and Safety Survey (ECSC) and 14-item resilience scale (RS-14), with previous interviewer training and socialization of the instruments in theory and practice. We socialized with local authorities in the area of the vereda for dissemination, acceptance, and facilitation of the development of field surveys. The instruments were applied in Macondo over a week. Measurement data for both explanatory and response variables, including covariates and/or confounding variables, were tabulated using Microsoft Excel 2010 computer software and then exported to SPSS Version 24.0 for univariate and bivariate descriptive analysis, and inferential analysis via parametric analysis of the proportional difference test and crude odds ratio (OR) with its respective *p*-value or *a priori* level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

**Characterization of study area:** Consisting of 53 houses located on two streets on the banks of the Seville River, in the rural area of Macondo-Magdalena, the study area has neighboring veredas Agustina, La Abarca, and La Goya.

**Sample:** Targeting 91 people aged 15 years and older and residents of 43 homes in Macondo-Magdalena, the type of sampling was probabilistic by conglomerates, corresponding to an area that contained an average of ten homes; all dwellings, households and persons aged 15 years and older were investigated.

**Inclusion criteria:** Civil non-institutional population comprised of spouse or head of household, and all persons over 15 years of habitual residency in households in the village of Macondo-Magdalena who were at home on the day of the visit.

**Exclusion criteria:** Churches, abandoned houses, those who did not want to participate in the study and refused to sign informed consent and assent.

**Ethical aspects:** In accordance with current legislation (Resolution 008430 of 1993), this study was approved by the ethics committee of the Universidad del Norte on March 28, 2019. After the election of the proposal in the Young Investigator call. Colciencias was approved again on August 22, 2019.

## RESULTS

**Reliability Analysis:** The pilot test allowed adjustment of the collection instruments, validation of the questions of interest, and estimation of median times for implementation of the surveys in the study area. Some questions required adaptation according to the level of studies. The reliability analysis was conducted using the Cronbach

coefficient. The 25-item resilience scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.861. When 11 items were eliminated, the Cronbach's alpha became 0.824. This shows that the items behaved similarly, so there would not be any negative effect on the results of the investigation if the shorter instrument of 14 items (RS-14) was applied. The range of scores of the resilience scale applied to the Macondo community ranged from 10 to 96 points. The mean was 78.62 and standard deviation 10.12, with an adequate internal consistency of  $\alpha = 0.795$ .

**Participants:** The sample consisted of a total of 91 people aged 15 years and older. The normality of the distribution was measured and, for statistical analysis, values of  $p < 0.05$  were considered statistically significant. Of the total sample, there was a proportion of the male gender at 47.3% ( $n = 43$ ) and female 52.7% ( $n = 48$ ). There was an age range of 15 to 85 years, with an average of 40.37 and standard deviation 18.15. The majority (61.5%) had a partner ( $n = 56$ ). Two groups of participants were considered: Head of household at 40.7% ( $n = 37$ ) and other (household members aged 15 years and older) at 59.3% ( $n = 54$ ). The type of dwelling with the largest proportion of surveyed heads of household responding was "own," at 70.3% ( $n = 26$ ). Criminal problems at a 54.1% rate ( $n = 20$ ) were "theft of people" and "fights," followed at 51.4% ( $n = 19$ ) by "drug use". There were 8.1% ( $n = 3$ ) reporting knowledge of the "presence of combos and gangs," 2.7% ( $n = 1$ ) criminal gangs, and 100% no presence of "guerrillas" during 2018.

Of all participants, 89.0% ( $n = 81$ ) perceived security during 2018, and those who perceived "insecurity" were 11.0% ( $n = 10$ ). The heads of household had the largest proportion of insecurity at 70.0% ( $n = 7$ ). Of all participants, 41.7% ( $n = 38$ ) had very high resilience and, of these, 30.0% ( $n = 3$ ) felt insecure. People with normal, low and very low resilience perceived security in Macondo. A comparison of independent proportions was made. The resilient category corresponds to the high, normal and very high levels of resilience, and the non-resilient to the low and very low levels. It was observed that they had equal populations; there was no difference between the resilient and the non-resilient populations, except in the category of people with no educational level ( $p$ -value = 0.00) (Table 1). The inferential analysis did not establish any association with the variables of interest and there was no statistical significance. There were more than 5% of errors for which the observed association was due to the random  $p$ -value  $> 0.05$ . In general, there was greater resilience among people who managed to overcome periods of violence (Table 2).

**Table 1. Resilience based on characteristics of families affected by the armed conflict in the rural area of Macondo, Magdalena. Year 2019**

Characteristics	Not resilient (n = 8) 8.8%	Resilient (n = 83) 91.2%	N (%) 91 (100%)	p
AGE (YEARS)				
15–29	2 (25.0%)	30 (36.1%)	32 (35.2%)	0.52
30–39	1 (12.5%)	12 (14.5%)	13 (14.3%)	0.88
40–49	1 (12.5%)	15 (18.1%)	16 (17.5%)	0.69
50 and older	4 (50.0%)	26 (31.3%)	30 (33.0%)	0.28
EDUCATION LEVEL				
None	4 (50.0%)	10 (12.0%)	14 (15.4%)	0.00
Basic Primary (1–5)	1 (12.5%)	16 (19.3%)	17 (18.7%)	0.63
Basic Secondary (6–9)	1 (12.5%)	20 (24.1%)	21 (23.1%)	0.45
Average (10–11)	1 (12.5%)	23 (27.7%)	24 (26.4%)	0.35
Higher or university	1 (12.5%)	14 (16.9%)	15 (16.4%)	0.75
CIVIL STATUS				
With couple	5 (62.5%)	51 (61.4%)	56 (61.5%)	0.95
Single	3 (37.5%)	32 (38.6%)	35 (38.5%)	0.95
GENDER				
Male	3 (37.5%)	40 (48.2%)	43 (47.3%)	0.18
Female	5 (62.5%)	43 (51.8%)	48 (52.7%)	0.56
TYPE OF POPULATION				
Head of household	4 (50.0%)	33 (39.8%)	37 (40.7%)	0.57
Other	4 (50.0%)	50 (60.2%)	54 (59.3%)	0.57

(\*)  $p$  valor  $< 0.05$  with Chi square Source: Imported data SPSS V 26, Data base. Sav.  
Source: authors.

**Table 2. Risk factors between resilient and non-resilient populations, Macondo rural area, Magdalena. Year 2019.**

Characteristics	Not resilient (n = 8) 8.8%	Resilient (n = 83) 91.2%	OR IC	p
AGE (YEARS)				
15–29	2 (25.0%)	30 (36.1%)	Ref	
30–39	1 (12.5%)	12 (14.5%)	1.2 [0.10–15.1]	> 0.05
40–49	1 (12.5%)	15 (18.1%)	1.0 [0.08–11.9]	> 0.05
50 and older	4 (50.0%)	26 (31.3%)	2.3 [0.39–13.6]	> 0.05
EDUCATION LEVEL				
Higher or University	1 (12.5%)	14 (16.9%)	Ref	
None	4 (50.0%)	10 (12.0%)	5.6 [0.54–57.9]	> 0.05
Basic Primary (1–5)	1 (12.5%)	16 (19.3%)	0.8 [0.05–15.3]	> 0.05
Basic Secondary (6–9)	1 (12.5%)	20 (24.1%)	0.7 [0.04–12.1]	> 0.05
Average (10–11)	1 (12.5%)	23 (27.7%)	0.6 [0.03–10.5]	> 0.05
CIVIL STATUS				
With partner	5 (62.5%)	51 (61.4%)	Ref	
Single	3 (37.5%)	32 (38.6%)	0.9 [0.213–4.277]	> 0.05
GENDER				
Female	5 (62.5%)	43 (51.8%)	Ref	
Male	3 (37.5%)	40 (48.2%)	0.4 [0.07–2.28]	> 0.05
TYPE OF POPULATION				
Other	4 (50.0%)	50 (60.2%)	Ref	
Head of household	4 (50.0%)	33 (39.8%)	1.5 [0.35–6.48]	> 0.05

(\*) *p* valor <0.05 with Chi square. Source: Imported data SPSS V 26, Data base. Sav.

Source: authors.

## DISCUSSION

The prevalence of resilience in the study population was 91.2% at a 95% CI (84.8–97.5), higher than for females – 51.81% at a 95% CI (41.0–62.5). For subjects 15 to 29 years old, a prevalence of resilience of 36.14% at 95% CI (25.0–46.4) was obtained. People with a medium educational level (10–11) were more resilient, with 27.71% at a 95% CI (18.0–37.3). Regarding marital status, people with a partner were resilient, with 61.44% at a 95% CI (50.9–71.9). In a sample of 30 adult victims of the armed conflict in the community of Zipacoa, the prevalence of resilient people was 96.8% in an age range of 30 to 55 years. It was also found in a sample of 677 adults exposed to the armed conflict in a Colombian municipality, 61% had a moderate level of resilience, and 32% had a high level. This indicates that despite having been exposed to conflict situations, people have a resilient pattern. Therefore, recovery from the horrors of violent events also varies with the childhood of the victims. It is important to strengthen the characteristics of resilience not only in adults but also in children, with an affective environment that allows them to feel safe, considering individual, family and social factors that in the long run influence the creation of resilience.

RS-14 has been adapted to various countries (Germany  $\alpha = 0.91$ , Portugal  $\alpha = 0.82$ , Japan  $\alpha = 0.88$ , China  $\alpha = 0.92$ , Korea  $\alpha = 0.90$ , Spain  $\alpha = 0.79$ , Italy  $\alpha = 0.88$ , and Greece  $\alpha = 0.89$ ). The average score on the resilience scale of the Macondo population corresponds to a high level of resilience, although the minimum (10 points) and maximum (96 points) levels obtained from this population would not support the results of the original classification, because a participant did not finish responding to the scale. Adequate internal consistency was obtained with Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha = 0.795$ , with the use of recognized and standardized instruments for all validity measures being a strength of the study. Recent studies investigating the psychometric properties of the abbreviated resilience scale indicate a positive correlation between RS-14 and age. The mean rates of RS-14 do not differ significantly according to sex ( $p$ -value = 0.984) and marital status ( $p$ -value = 0.704). Older people tended to have higher resilience scores, although the correlation coefficient did not reach statistical significance ( $p$ -value = 0.704). In our study, there was no evidence of association with the variables of interest, likely the influence of some uncontrollable individual, family, and context factors (adaptability, cognitive assessment,

temperament, health, intelligence, sources of community opportunities, confidence in relationships, problem solving, ability to get ahead, flexibility, perseverance and personal beliefs, among others).

A systematic review examined the impact of war on sub-Saharan Africa, finding that armed conflict reduced school attendance for boys and girls. This was compared with the findings of a Colombian study that suggested that in conflict-affected areas, in the long term, adults had poorer educational outcomes. Unlike in rural Macondo, participants showed some education, so there were statistically significant differences between the resilient and non-resilient populations in people lacking any education ( $p\text{-value} = 0.00$  at 95% CI [0.02–0.73]). In the present research there was a similar proportion between women and men, which validates the measurement of the construct. However, understanding how they protect resilience factors against adverse outcomes after criminal victimization appears to be limited. Therefore, it is considered important to measure resilience by adapting it to vulnerable rural populations in risky situations, which have suffered the consequences of armed conflict. According to DANE surveys regarding “the perception of insecurity for 28 cities, 62.7% of the population aged 15 and older reported feeling insecure in their city during 2016”. The present study indicates that 10 (11.0%) of the population perceived insecurity, but despite this they were resilient in the face of adversity.

In the post-conflict framework, the design of security strategies with a regional focus is required, because the actions of the state are uneven across the country's geographical extent. Implementing existing policies requires a consolidated database in areas affected by armed conflict, and it is necessary to transition from national to citizen security in rural areas. Mayors must conceive citizen security and coexistence as a single need of the community, which must be jointly intervened. Diagnosing rural communities implies having reliable sources of information for making timely decisions, respecting the guarantees of the people through their institutions. The responsibility of the Colombian state in the post-conflict requires inter-institutional coordination of security from “top to bottom” [...] Among the regulations that protect victims is judgment T-045 of 2010 issued by the Constitutional Court, which reinforces the right to health of displaced populations and emphasizes the processes of mental health care, and Law 1448 of 2011 that consolidates public policy for the care and reparation of victims. However, the commitment to carry these out requires institutional efforts. The level of resilience increases in people who perceive insecurity despite having been exposed directly or indirectly to armed conflict, and the importance of understanding and evaluating this demands approaches that allow identifying and prioritizing risk and protective factors. Resilience as a defense mechanism allows people to face adversity. Public health professionals should focus on people with low levels of resilience and offer them early support.

Limitations of the present study are related to the small proportion of non-resilient subjects. The sample was small because of the voluntary nature of participation and absence of people on the day of the visit, which could explain non-participation. Further, only sociodemographic, personal, housing, neighborhood, and household factors were examined. More samples are required and other variables such as family dysfunction, state of mental health, type of event, duration and time of exposure to armed conflict must be included, which would permit evaluation of the effect of resilience on the subjects and examining how they have adapted and become resilient. The value of such work is that the community becomes resilient, although it is not known why. In rural areas affected by armed conflict, there is institutional indifference. Existing public policies remain incipient and show strategic and methodological weaknesses, such as the Government Program for Psychosocial and Holistic Health Care of Victims [PAPSIVI]. In Macondo, the model of community surveillance by quadrants of the National Police is only known by 33.0% ( $n = 30$ ), and 8.8% ( $n = 8$ ) have participated in the citizen participation program of that police body.

Lack of trust in state institutions generates perceptions of insecurity. In Córdoba, they feel that the peace process and even previous demobilization processes have continually failed, claiming that paramilitary leaders still own most of the land, not returning it to the rightful owners during the demobilization process. This is in addition to the fact that police forces are seen as largely inefficient and permissive in their treatment of criminals. However, in Macondo, although insecure people are resilient, most do not perceive any contribution to security by the Mayor's Office and military forces, and little contribution from the National Police. Rural communities have been victims of the conflict since long ago. These conjunctural phenomena are present in the coexistence of people and, depending on how they are managed, resolved and overcome, positive or negative results can be obtained. Finally, this summons the main governmental actors, the public force, and professionals in public and mental health to plan intervention studies to determine the characteristics of resilience and implement public policies aimed at rebuilding the social fabric violated by armed actors, yielding results that can be replicated in subsequent investigations of rural areas in the country.



## CONCLUSIONS

The characteristics of the community regarding resilience capacity favor transformation in the context toward a culture of peace, and summon governmental actors through their institutions to direct activities towards the social, moral and psychological reconstruction of the victims of the armed conflict.

The findings make it clear that although some people perceive insecurity, they are resilient. It is vital to develop future research that goes beyond the descriptive and attempts to improve data quality, avoid biases, and understand post-conflict dynamics in rural populations. Peasant culture is a fundamental actor in the post-conflict stage, because the battlefields were in rural areas. This implies major challenges in the development of human wellbeing and community resilience, calling for inter-sectoral actions that promote the free action of victims of violence and the understanding that direct violence has not ceased. The latter problem requires more effort and dialogue with small criminal groups that are still armed, in order to achieve longed-for peace throughout Colombia.

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