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Social capital and violence in developing countries SSR Project - R7902

Final Report

South Bank University, UK
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Executive Summary

This project began in February 2001 and finished end February 2002. This report summarises the principal activities of the project:

1) a **qualitative study of community relations and conflict resolution** among low income populations, *carried out by four youth groups in Cali, Colombia*
2) an **international youth workshop in Cali** focusing on the topics of social capital, community development and violence.

Literature review

The principal focus of this research project is upon social capital, a subject that is currently being widely debated within development studies. Amongst many definitions of social capital to be found in the literature, perhaps the most cited comes from Putnam's pioneering work on social capital: '.."social capital" refers to features of social organisation such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit' (Putnam 1995, p67). This concept can be helpfully disaggregated by considering types of social capital: 'bonding' capital meaning social cohesion within the group structure, and 'bridging' capital, the type of social capital that links, or cuts across, different communities/ groups. Also structural social capital which refers to the networks, linkages and practices within and between communities, and cognitive social capital which refers to the values, beliefs, attitudes, social norms and behaviour that exist within communities, such as social trust and norms, solidarity and reciprocity. Many studies have found evidence associating social capital with a wide range of other variables such as health, wellbeing, poverty and violence, suggesting that it is an important resource for poor people around the world. However, there is little research that shows how young people draw upon this resource to solve their basic needs.

Part 1: Youth qualitative study

The general objective of this study was to train four youth groups to explore community relationships of solidarity and trust, and to analyse how social capital is used on a daily basis within the community. Prior training in research methods was carried out with the youth groups involved in the study. The study took place in four low-income neighbourhoods in Cali, selected because this is where the youth groups have their interventions.

Youth researchers used a variety of qualitative techniques to collect data for this study: focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, life histories and observation. Each group produced a separate report as this was not a comparative approach.

The youth studies found that relationships between community residents (bonding social capital) are developed over time through exchange of various different favours, and through collective activities in the community. In particular, solidarity was generated in difficult circumstances, such as founding a settlement, illness, unemployment and other problems affecting the neighbourhood as a whole. Instances of solidarity and mutual help were found to take the form of material resources (food, lending telephone), emotional support (advice, intervening in conflicts) and information (employment opportunities, information about the neighbourhood etc). Amongst youth in particular, social capital appeared to provide a safety net in times of need. Existing alongside this social capital, however, was a major problem of

'common' violence. There were no concrete suggestions by residents as to how social capital could reduce violence problems.

In general, high levels of trust in community leaders were observed, despite instances of corruption, and community organisations were perceived as beneficial agents of development. In contrast, bridging social capital between neighbourhoods and institutions, particularly institutions of the state, was very weak, with the exception of the church. It is difficult to see how community development programmes can be successfully carried out by local government until there is a basis of institutional trust. Recommendations for developing social capital in the neighbourhoods include developing opportunities for dialogue with external institutions, promoting collective activities and documenting and sharing the history of neighbourhood development.

Part 2: International youth workshop in Cali

The international workshop aimed to provide a forum for exchanging experiences between South African and Colombian youth in social capital and violence; to share information from the youth study described above with local policy makers, civil society, international academics and youth groups; and to develop proposals or other collaborative ideas amongst participants.

The workshop took place 20-22 February 2002. Participants attended from South Africa (youth groups, non-governmental organisations - NGOs - and research organisations), Europe and USA (academics) and Colombia (youth groups, NGOs and local government). The emphasis of the event was upon youth participation, involving exchange of experiences and ideas regarding the selected themes of social capital, conflict resolution, and community development.

The main topic of discussion during the workshop was the relationship between governmental institutions and youth groups /community (bridging social capital), and the need to create an opportunity for dialogue between these stakeholders: the issue of trust in institutions and how this can be generated or strengthened were central to the debate. The establishment of a Youth Network was proposed by youth participants, in order to facilitate exchange of information (such as strategies for dealing with violence, best practice, information about funding opportunities, etc). However, the lack of a shared language between South African and Colombian youth has complicated this proposal to date.

A training component in managing conflict was also implemented, involving a series of workshops by conflict resolution experts and other professionals. This complemented the research and the workshop discussions.

Introduction

It should be noted that this ESCOR - SSR project is somewhat different in form to most DFID research projects[1]. This is because the empirical research was carried out by local youth groups, not academic institutions, and in itself formed a kind of intervention to train the youth in research. The project took the form of two principal elements:

- a qualitative study of social capital and problem solving among low income populations, carried out by four youth groups in Cali, Colombia
- an international youth workshop in Cali focusing on the topics of social capital, community development and violence.

An additional complementary component, training in managing cases of domestic violence, was also incorporated into the project and is described in Annex A.

This report is divided into three parts:
Part 1: Background to the project (relevance of research topics and activities of collaborating institutions)
Part 2: Objectives, methods, findings and dissemination of the youth research activity
Part 3: Objectives, methods, discussions and dissemination of the workshop.

Part 1: Background

Definitions and dimensions

The principal focus of this research project is upon social capital, a subject that is currently being widely debated within development studies. Amongst many definitions of social capital to be found in the literature, perhaps the most cited comes from Putnam's pioneering work on social capital: '.."social capital" refers to features of social organisation such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit' (Putnam 1995, p67).

In order to explore this vast topic, it is helpful to disaggregate the term into dimensions and conceptually clarify different types of social capital. One framework for doing this is provided in a model of social capital, developed by Woolcock (1998), which shows that, at both micro and macro levels, two dimensions of social capital exist, embeddedness and autonomy. Woolcock characterises these dimensions as follows: integration (strong ties), linkages (weak ties), organisational integrity (vertical, formal institutions at macro level) and synergy (interaction between state and community). These can be characterised as follows:

1. Micro level embeddedness (integration within local community, links with other community members)
2. Micro level autonomy (linkage between local community and groups with external and more extensive social connections to civil society)
3. Macro level embeddedness (synergy between civil society and macro level institutions)
4. Macro level autonomy (organisational integrity within corporate sector institutions and state)

1 See adjustment to original proposal as described in Annual Report Feb 2001- Jan 2002, by Emma Grant

Woolcock (1998) stresses the need to optimise social capital by finding a balance between these different dimensions: community social capital (embeddedness) needs to be complemented by non-community social capital (autonomy), ie linkages to non-community members, including formal institutions. This ensures not only that the community offers the advantages of a socially cohesive community, but also means that they are connected to groups with greater access to resources and to power. Linkage thus needs to be combined with integration. Woolcock stresses the importance of top-down processes being combined with bottom-up processes, as opposed to one or the other in exclusion:

> "For developmental outcomes to be achieved in poor communities, linkage thus needs to be combined with integration. Strong intra-community ties, or high levels of integration, can be highly beneficial to the extent they are complemented by some measure of linkage…In short, for development to proceed in poor communities, the initial benefits of intra-community integration, such as they are, must give way over time to extensive extra-community linkages: too much or too little of either dimension at any given moment undermines economic advancement" (Woolcock 1998).

In this research, macro level autonomy will not be discussed as it falls outside the scope of the research.

Woolcock's conceptualisation of social capital draws upon an earlier distinction which referred to 'strong' and 'weak' ties, the former being those between close family, friends and professional colleagues, and the latter being more distant relatives, contacts and acquaintances (Granovetter 1973). This differentiation is also made in the 'bonding-bridging' construct of social capital which has also developed within the World Bank: Narayan (1999) describes 'bonding' capital as meaning social cohesion within the group structure, whilst 'bridging' capital refers to the type of social capital that links, or cuts across, different communities/ groups. These two dimensions thus incorporate the communitarian social cohesion elements as well as the institutional social capital between informal and formal institutions. The different dimensions have different functions and implications for the groups or individuals concerned: for example, the bonding social capital represents cohesion within a particular group, however, this may also imply the exclusion of others (for example, Morrow, 2002 discussed the way in which young people's participation in gangs has a negative effect on the social cohesion of the broader community). In contrast, the cross-cutting links (bridging social capital) described by Narayan (1999) may stretch between institutions or between the community and an external actor (state or other): the importance of these latter is that they reach outside the primary network and thus allow access to resources and power not normally available to the community.

The embeddedness-autonomy and the bonding-bridging constructs are useful for illustrating the way in which both civil society and a multitude of non-civil society stakeholders are incorporated into the social capital framework. Civil society is understood to refer to "the space that exists between the family and the state, which makes interconnections between individuals and families possible, and which is independent of the state" (Narayan 1999, p10). This includes non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community based organisations. Other stakeholders with whom the community develops cross-cutting ties might include, in addition to civil society, governmental bodies, private sector organisations and funding agencies, for example. Although communitarian social capital theorists tend to

see social capital existing only amongst civil society, many other authors, including Putnam, include those links that tie communities to other 'external' groups, often with more power or resources.

Another framework is the structural/ cognitive construct of social capital, developed in much of the World Bank literature on the subject, including the Social Capital Assessment Tool. Drawing on Bain and Hicks (1998), Krishna and Shrader (2000) describe structural social capital as including 'the composition and practices of local level institutions, both formal and informal, that serve as instruments of community development. Structural social capital is built through horizontal organizations and networks that have collective and transparent decision-making processes, accountable leaders, and practices of collective action and mutual responsibility' (Krishna and Shrader, 2000; 10). Structural social capital, then, refers to the networks, linkages and practices within and between communities. In contrast, cognitive social capital refers to the values, beliefs, attitudes, social norms and behaviour that exist within communities, such as social trust and norms, solidarity and reciprocity. Krishna and Shrader (2000) describe the different 'roles' of the two dimensions as follows:

> "While cognitive elements predispose people toward mutually beneficial collective action, structural elements of social capital facilitate such action…Both structural and cognitive dimensions matter, and they must be combined to represent the aggregate potential for mutually beneficial collective action that exists within any community" (p 5).

Similar concept specifications of social capital are social glue and social bridges, reflecting social cohesion and social networking (Lang and Hornburg 1998), and relational social capital (the organisations, associations and networks to which people belong) and material social capital (the resources that a member can access by virtue of their membership) (Hawe and Shiell 2000). Veenstra (2000) refers to social psychological (cognitive social capital) and action dimensions (structural). Most dimensions of social capital found in the literature broadly include this balance between social resources, such as trust and social support, and social structures and participation, such as networks and linkages.

In much of the literature, the structural and cognitive dimensions of social capital tend to be viewed as going hand-in-hand (eg Putnam, et al. 1993; Stolle and Rochon 1998). Putnam (1995), citing evidence from the World Value Survey of a correlation between social trust and civic engagement, argues that social trust (or cognitive social capital) and associational membership (structural social capital) are associated: "..the greater the density of associational membership in a society, the more trusting its citizens. Trust and engagement are two facets of the same underlying factor – social capital" (Putnam 1995, p 73).

However, it is not always apparent that the two dimensions are inherently mutually inclusive. Other social capital theorists (eg Newton 2000) argue that empirical evidence correlating features of associational life (such as trust, sense of belonging, and social solidarity) with social networks is weak, and that at the individual level membership in voluntary organisations is not associated with social trust or political trust in any significant way. It is certainly feasible to think of a context in which trust in formal institutions such as the state is low (institutional social capital), but where people fall back upon their local social networks (communitarian social capital) in order to compensate for this vacuum.

In this research, social capital will be understood to refer to all these dimensions, and will specifically include trust (in people and institutions), social cohesion, solidarity, informal social control, civic participation and participation in groups.

Relationships with other variables

Research on this topic to date has shown that social capital has an independent relationship with variables such as poverty, health, crime, well-being and inequality (Kawachi and Kennedy 1997); Kennedy et al 1998; Sampson et al 1997; Coleman 1988; Grootaert 1999; Grootaert and Narayan 1999). Until the 1990s, there was little agreement on the role of social relationships in contributing to economic development, and traditional social relationships and ways of life were often considered to be obstacles to development, as opposed to potential resources (Woolcock and Narayan 2000). Currently, a large part of the literature on social capital focuses upon its relationship with economic development and poverty reduction (for example, there are numerous World Bank studies in this area). A number of studies have shown that social trust is related to better economic outcomes (Knack and Keefer 1997; LaPorta et al. 1997), and others have shown that group membership and quality have a positive effect on household per capita expenditure (Grootaert 1999; Narayan and Pritchett 1999). Since social capital is being increasingly examined as an important means of improving quality of life in general, particularly amongst the poor, evidence for the relationship between social capital and economic development is of critical importance, in particular to organisations such as the World Bank, given the policy implications that might result.

However, social capital is not always associated with wealth; Onyx and Bullen (2001) found that in a selection of Australian communities social capital was unrelated to socio-economic indices, whilst de Filippis (2000) cites the example of wealthy American gated communities with very little social capital but plenty of financial resources. This suggests that the importance of being able to access social capital may be significant principally for lower income groups, since upper income groups rely on other forms of capital to ensure their quality of life (Saguaro Seminar 2001).

Despite the long-due recognition that the World Bank is now awarding to social relations through its research into social capital, Norton (2001) warns that the term 'social capital' itself may convey a potentially reductionist or simplistic view of social relations, noting that the acceptance of social capital by the World Bank was "part of a bargain which implicitly reduced an entire discipline to a single sub-variable in the toolkit of positivist, deductive economic enquiry" (p 1). This is a timely warning that social relations within and between communities are extremely subtle, complex and variable according to context.

However, overall the evidence suggests that it is a useful, independent concept (apart from social networks and social support) that can contribute to our understanding of poor people's livelihoods. Within the context of DFID's overarching goal of poverty elimination, it is therefore a potentially critical asset that requires further exploration. Within the sustainable livelihoods framework (DFID 2000), social capital represents the least explored of the livelihood assets, including its inter-relationships with other assets. This project is thus focused upon an emerging policy issue.

Conflict and problem solving

There is little research on social capital and its association with conflict resolution. The work of Sampson, et al. (1997) stands out as a key example of research that has analysed the relationship between social capital and violence. In a multi-level study, Sampson et al (1997), in Chicago, found that 'collective efficacy', defined as social cohesion among neighbours combined with a willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good, is linked to reduced violence. Associations of concentrated disadvantage and residential instability with violence were found to be largely mediated by collective efficacy. The authors suggest that communities lacking in social cohesion (bonding social capital) are less effective in exerting informal means of social control through establishing and maintaining norms to reduce violence compared to communities with higher levels of social capital.

Another key study that examines social capital and violence, again in the USA, is that of Kennedy, et al. (1998). They measured social capital through the use of two items from the U.S. General Social Survey: the per capita density of membership in voluntary groups in each state; and the level of social trust as gauged by the proportion of residents in each state who believed that 'most people would take advantage of you if they got the chance'. Their measures of violence were homicide rates and firearm robbery and assault. Both social trust and group membership were associated with firearm violent crime and these relationships held when controlling for poverty and a proxy variable for access to firearms.

The question arises as to whether violence and crime themselves reduce social capital – thus raising the question of whether social capital can be strengthened in communities with high levels of violence. Sampson (1999) suggests that although the number of empirical studies is relatively small there is evidence from the USA that crime generates fear of strangers and a general alienation from participation in community life. However, Sampson concludes that there is an important role for policy in trying to change the dynamics of places rather than people:

´I believe that a 'social capital' perspective offers plausible and realistic insights. Perhaps the most important goal is bringing together resident-based informal social control, local institutions and public control as equal partners, while at the same time ameliorating the constraints imposed by structural differentiation' (p21).

The Colombian context reflects multiple types of violence, which directly impact upon youth violence:

'The links between family and youth violence have already been established. It is also clear, however, that the presence of political violence leads to a legitimisation of violence to resolve any conflict in the culture at large. Countries such as Colombia that experience high levels of political violence also display a high level of tolerance for economic and social violence' (Moser and van Bronkhorst 1999, p 15).

Many other types of problems in addition to violence characterise low-income urban communities in Colombia which residents have to tackle on a daily basis: these include poor provision of basic services, un- and under-employment, poor health and education, drug (and alcohol) consumption and trafficking, inadequate income for purchasing the basic

basket of goods, and other problems typically associated with poverty and inequality. These problems frequently result in conflict, a situation that can be catalysed due to competition over scarce resources (Moser and van Bronkhorst 1999).

One previous attempt to measure social capital in Colombia was carried out by Sudarsky (1999) at the request of the Colombian National Planning Office. The study was designed to fit into the World Value Survey (WVS), and when compared to the other national results from WVS (1995-1998) showed that Colombia has some of the world's highest levels of interpersonal distrust and corruption. Colombians have very low trust in national government and civil service while trust in ethnic, women's and ecological groups is high. When internationally compared, Colombia is second only to Nigeria in the ratio of active membership in voluntary organisations that are religious, over total active membership in nine types of organisations – an indication of the weakness of secular civil society. Educational, sports, neighbourhood associations and political parties were the most significant non-religious voluntary organisations.

However, little evidence exists regarding low income youth perceptions of social capital and its importance in conflict resolution and problem solving within the community (with the exception of Moser and McIlwaine 2000, and Colletta and Cullen 2000), despite the fact that the importance of such research is acknowledged:
'I believe that a 'social capital' perspective offers plausible and realistic insights. Perhaps the most important goal is bringing together resident-based informal social control, local institutions and public control as equal partners, while at the same time ameliorating the constraints imposed by structural differentiation' (Sampson, et al. 1997, p21).

This research project aims to provide insights from empirical evidence linking social capital and problem solving in Colombia. Focusing on the social networks, resources and assets of poor and marginal groups in Cali, the research contributes to understanding how communities, and in particular youth, generate and 'capitalise upon' social capital to solve problems, including conflict, particularly in the absence of financial or physical capital. The research is carried out by young people working in their own communities in community development interventions, thus it contributes to their own understanding of the dynamics and processes which characterise the population with whom they work.

The Fundaps - South Bank University Collaboration

This DFID funded project complements a programme of social capital and violence that Fundaps and South Bank University are carrying out. This programme involves empirical research (funded by the US National Institutes of Health), and an intervention to strengthen social capital.

The intervention involves work with youth groups in four low-income areas of the city; work with local institutions (justice centres, health centres, schools); advising local government (Departments of Health, Governance, Well-Being, Justice, as well as the Mayor's central office). Representatives from all these groups and institutions attended the international workshop (the other component of this project), thus providing an excellent opportunity to build links between key stakeholders from all different ambits.

The research project funded by US NIH is a cross sectional, quasi experimental design over three years, evaluating the impact of the intervention described above: qualitative and quantitative methods are used to explore the situation in intervention and non intervention areas before launching the intervention, and then repeated after two years of intervention. The project is currently coming to the end of the first research phase.

Within this context, this DFID project constitutes an excellent and highly complementary opportunity for involving and training key stakeholders in research and violence intervention (the youth groups); providing important insights from the grassroots level as to forms, uses and perceptions of social capital for problem resolution; linking stakeholders both within the city and also internationally through the workshop with South African youth (presenting a forum for exchange and collaboration).

Part 2: Youth qualitative study

Focusing on the social networks, resources and assets of poor and marginal groups in Colombia, this research contributes to understanding how youth in low income areas of Cali generate and 'capitalise upon' social capital, particularly in the absence of financial or physical capital. This contributes to DFID's objective of promoting social cohesion and responding to conflict.

Objectives and hypotheses

(i). To provide an in-depth exploration from "the grassroots level" of the context of 4 socially excluded, low-income communities in Cali, Colombia, including: the experience, norms and perceptions of social capital (community relations) and conflict**;** the supply and demand of institutional and cultural services (bridging social capital, trust in institutions); and social relationships and problem solving (including conflict resolution) amongst community residents
(ii). To strengthen the qualitative research skills of the youth groups involved in the research
(iii). To strengthen networking between the youth organisations carrying out the research
(iv). To improve youth groups level of information regarding the characteristics of the target population with whom they work, and to recognise the dynamic of community relationships in marginal urban areas similar to those where the youth organisations work, thereby allowing them to develop alternative strategies for community interventions

Since the research is exploratory in character, seeking to develop a picture of what kind of social capital exists and how and when it is used in these communities, the hypothesis of the study is fairly general, namely that social capital can be used effectively by community residents in solving problems, both collective and individual.

Methods

Description of the youth groups taking part in the qualitative study[2]

The four youth organisations who took part in this qualitative study are four community based youth organisations who have been trained and supported by the partner organisation in this project, the Fundación para la Asesoria a Programas de Salud (Fundaps), a Colombian non governmental organisation, over a period of five years.

Each youth organisation is comprised of 5- 10 youth aged 15- 30 years old. Two of the youth groups are predominantly made up of black youth whose families have migrated from the coastal areas to Cali in the last 25 years. Several members of the youth groups have been to university, which is unusual amongst young people from their neighbourhoods. The youth groups started as informal groups of young people (15 years upwards) with shared interests, for example hip-hop, sports or black culture. With the help of Fundaps, the partner NGO involved, they have formalised, acquired legal status and expanded their work into areas of community welfare such as sexual and reproductive health and self-esteem.

These youth groups already had a developed understanding of community interventions and processes in their own neighbourhoods. However, they had not previously carried out in-depth research projects or systematised their knowledge of community relations.

[2] For a more detailed description of the youth groups, see the Annual Report, submitted Feb 2001.

Study location

The study was carried out in four marginal neighbourhoods of Cali, Colombia. The communities were selected for purposes of practical utility: in three of these areas, the youth groups are working with communities, thus the research allows the youth group to improve their knowledge of their own communities and to have a participant observer perspective. The fourth area has no youth group intervention, but shows similar characteristics to the other three areas (social exclusion, unemployment, high levels of violence etc). This area was selected because it constitutes a 'control' neighbourhood in the SBU-Fundaps NIH study mentioned earlier (the fourth youth group do not work in any specific neighbourhood thus were not 'tied' to an area). Neighbourhoods are "barrios", administrative districts defined by the municipal government. They constitute an important geographic frame of reference for the youth, who will often refer to "my barrio". Because of the specific selection criterion of the neighbourhoods, this research does not claim that the findings are valid for Cali as a whole: nevertheless, the neighbourhoods are broadly typical of the Whitewater district, the large settlement area of the city (approximately 400,000 residents) in which the neighbourhoods are located. The neighbourhoods were not selected for comparative purposes.

Two of the four areas are particularly poor, comprising small squatter settlements that have not been legalised. These two areas have a predominantly black population, high levels of overcrowding and extremely precarious housing. The other two area are legally formalised but also share characteristics of poor public services, unemployment, violence and poverty. However, in all areas there are a large number of small enterprises and businesses, from pig rearing to games arcades.

Research training

Youth were trained in qualitative data collection methods (focus groups and semi-structured interviews) and analysis (manual coding, sorting and writing up), team management and communication skills. Each youth group participated in plenary training sessions, as well as holding individual group meetings with the Fundaps-SBU staff. For more information on the training, see Annex B.

Research tools

The following methods were selected for use in the study:

⇒ Observation, for characterising: the institutional offer present in the neighbourhood (including shops and services); leisure facilities; community organisations and meeting places. This was essentially an inventory of localities which youth noted on their neighbourhood maps, and then returned to interview some key informants later.

⇒ Life histories/ in-depth interviews, for finding out about the history of the neighbourhood and history of relationships and problems in the sector

⇒ Focus groups with youth (15-25 years), to explore conflict resolution and relationships amongst youth, youth and adults, youth and institutions

⇒ Semi-structured interviews, to explore relationships between residents in general, residents and local institutions, and collective efficacy in the neighbourhoods

⇒ Photographic registration.

Each youth group was free to decide how to conduct the research, how many interviews and focus groups to manage and how to assign tasks within their team. Each youth group conducted a minimum of one focus group (most conducted several) with young people aged 15-25 years, and between 20-60 semi-structured interviews with young people. In addition, community leaders and some employees from health centres were interviewed in-depth. The researchers used a variety of methods for selecting youth interview respondents and FGD participants: snowballing, knocking on doors, inviting young people who were involved in their on-going interventions. The qualitative techniques employed did not require random selection or representative selection of youth, and given the difficulties in getting people to FGDs (particularly 19-25 year range), any interested youth were encouraged to attend. For key informant interviews, community leaders were already known to the researchers, and approached for interviews.

Neighbourhood	*Focus groups*	*Semi-structured Interviews*	*Life histories/ in depth interviews*
El Vergel	5 (youth and adults)	26	1
Puertas del Sol	5	30	1
Charco Azul	1 (young women)	62	5
Belisario Betancourt	5 (youth, leaders and residents)	30	1

Questions in the focus groups with youth asked them about relationships within their families, for example how parents view youth and vice versa, and about the ways in which these relationships can result in conflict. Issues of social capital and conflict resolution were explored, for example relationships between youth, and between youth and adults. The young people's perception of the church was also explored. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with youth and adults, and focused upon perception of institutions; trust in people (for example, how do people get to know one another, what kinds of favours are exchanged between neighbours, etc?); solidarity and collective efficacy (do people get together to carry out collective activities?).

In interviews with community and youth leaders, questions focused upon conflict within the community, how it was resolved and the role of institutions (structural social capital) in problem solving. In this way the varying types of social capital within the community and within the family sphere could be explored. It should be noted that "community" was essentially used to refer to the neighbourhood (a formal administratively defined area), which has a fairly clear meaning for respondents. People tended to refer to neighbours, people on the block and people on the street in their responses.

In three of the instances, youth researchers were working in their own communities therefore tended to be recognised and trusted, thus they were in a good position to identify respondents, understand nuances and meanings in responses, and make young people feel at home in discussions. In the fourth community (Puertas del Sol) the youth researchers were not from the area; nevertheless this group had more experience of research (two of the youth

members had studied sociology as undergraduates) which assisted them in identifying techniques for getting close to residents and identifying key informants. They were helped in this by the community leaders who were very keen for the research to take place, seeing it as a chance to get more information on the community and to use this information to lobby local government for more infrastructure.

Youth carried out analysis and writing up of the data with some support from the SBU-Fundaps team, but were largely responsible for deciding how to organise the data.

Findings

Profile of neighbourhoods

A brief summary of the four settlements highlights parallels and contrasts in their development and profiles. Three of the neighbourhoods were founded approximately 22- 25 years ago. Settlers are a combination of immigrants from the Pacific coast and South West of the country, families displaced through violence, and relocated residents of other neighbourhoods. One of these settlements, Belisario Betancourt, is an illegal squatter settlement, whose divided community leaders have lobbied ineffectually with politicians for many years. Sardi Sector, adjoining Charco Azul, is in a similar situation, whilst Charco Azul itself has been granted land tenure. The same is true for the more developed neighbourhoods of El Vergel and Puertas del Sol IV, despite the fact that the latter is only seven years old. This is due to the fact that the majority of the residents here were relocated by the municipal government from another squatter settlement. El Vergel, although possibly the neighbourhood with the most physically developed infrastructure and housing, is notorious for its violence, and residents particularly stigmatised by this reputation. In all neighbourhoods, the neighbourhood history shows how residents are politically practical and flexible, changing allegiance according to promises regarding land legalisation, provision of services or other clientelistic offers.

In all four areas, the employment of the adult population in the neighbourhoods has been and continues to be informal sector, that is, an unstable income with no medical insurance. The women interviewed were employed as domestic staff, street sellers, community mothers taking care of children and community health volunteers; the men were in construction or recycling, had small enterprises or worked as security guards. During the research numerous children were observed working as street sellers and recycling food. Perhaps the most notable issue was the diversity of small enterprises: in Belisario Betancourt, for example, a neighbourhood of approximately 3500 people, 74 different businesses were counted. The majority of these businesses rely upon local custom, suggesting the importance of relationships between community residents in terms of livelihoods.

All of the neighbourhoods are characterised by overcrowding, which is most extreme in the squatter settlements. An overall picture of inadequate services, lack of recreational areas, the presence of youth gangs and unemployment illustrates the high exposure to risk factors faced by young people in the area.

Generation of social capital: community history

Each study documented the history of the neighbourhood and how the settlement had begun: in three instances, this was through spontaneous land invasions, and in the fourth

(Puertas del Sol) it was through government relocation of another community. This latter instance is interesting because the local government failed to move the entire community, reneging on the agreement at the last minute: this has resulted in a relationship of distrust between the community and local government since the very beginning of the settlement, and is still present in their perception of local government today (seven years later). At the same time, the disbanding of the community meant that committees were broken up and the settlers had to start re-organising from scratch, admittedly with a semi-successful history of negotiation under their belts.

The invaded settlements have all been through processes of clientelism in order to acquire legal tenure, with varying degrees of success. In Belisario Betancourt and Sardi sector (attached to Charco Azul), no legal tenure has yet been acquired, and the community leaders are frequently in dispute amongst themselves as they try to negotiate different promises from political leaders. This arguing and in-fighting took place in the two more formal settlements in the early days as different committees rose and fell while residents sought to improve the area. Now, in contrast, these formal neighbourhoods have legally elected and approved committees (this conforms with municipal requirements, and are called Neighbourhood Action Committees) that are stable bodies. Even if some residents complain of corruption and self-interest by committee members, there is no sense in which they are 'cowboy' entities, in contrast to the informal committees of Belisario Betancourt. In this instance, then, community organisations (structural bonding social capital) have been consolidated in a context of land security.

The clientelistic relations between settlers and government mentioned above are characteristic of many informal settlements across Latin America (see (Grant 2001), and underpin the negative perception and link between these stakeholders (weak bridging social capital).

Sardi sector, attached to Charco Azul, remains an extremely poor and excluded settlement with no land tenure. Their history, however, shows an interesting use of horizontal (between neighbourhoods) bridging social capital with Charco Azul itself. Many of the families in Sardi are related to families in Charco Azul, and when the army tried to evict residents of Sardi, the residents of Charco Azul came out in force to prevent the eviction. Thus an extremely poor and vulnerable group of families were able to use their connections with another poor community to hold onto their crucial resource, land. It provides a fascinating example of the value of social capital to the very poor in times of crisis.

In El Vergel, the threat of eviction by legal owners of the land led settlers to organise amongst themselves, ie draw upon bonding social capital: community committees led the legalisation campaign and community organisations served as the main shield in this time of adversity.

In the community history of Puertas del Sol, community leaders organised an environmental campaign to clean up the neighbourhood, and the success of this initiative led to acknowledgment by community members and generated trust in this group, who then promoted further community activities. This is a good example of structural social capital generating cognitive social capital, putting into place a 'virtuous circle'. Moreover, the

success of the committee led them to lobby for housing subsidies for the neighbourhood residents, and the success of this campaign, according to the committee members, assisted in changing local government statutes concerning access to housing subsidies.

Many of the residents of Puertas del Sol talked about the solidarity of the neighbourhood with a great deal of pride: the fact that in seven years they had accomplished so much was felt to be due to people's capacity for working together and sticking by one another, and these values were appreciated by residents. Nevertheless, people also referred to the fact that currently most basic needs have been met and as a result people showed less solidarity and were less united than in the 'difficult days': this was an opinion voiced in other settlements too, and reflected a general sense that community values and mutual support were most evident in times of hardship and need. This suggests that, from the perspective of community residents, social capital resources are most important for the most vulnerable, and once a certain level of basic needs have been met, it is likely that people will revert to a more individualist perspective.

Perceptions of social capital in the communities today
One of the messages emerging from all the studies was the crucial importance of the street as a meeting place, as the place where social life and activities occurs, and as the place where business (including drug dealing) takes place. The neighbourhoods either did not have community centres or these were marked by in-fighting between community leaders, and as a result the most important locality identified for interacting, relaxing and getting to know others was "the street". In Puertas del Sol, even though gangs and crews (possibly non violent) also used the street as their territory, residents in general saw these groups as non-threatening, tending to identify violence amongst youth as coming from external gangs. This perception of other neighbourhoods suggests a lack of solidarity between different neighbourhoods (weak bridging social capital). However, in other study neighbourhoods residents felt more threatened by local gangs and crews.

Focus groups were carried out with youth aged 15-18 years, youth aged 19-25 years and with older residents. Amongst youth, social capital was perceived to function in a rather different way on a daily basis. In Charco Azul, young people were asked what kind of favours they carried out for each other, and they produced a range of examples of daily exchange that responded to felt needs and bonded youth together. These favours included loaning money, food, telephone and clothes, help with studies and with gaining permission from parents, acting as intermediary, running errands, looking after kids, emotional support, and even 'sharing a girlfriend'. Such instances of exchange between individuals appeared to be commonplace amongst young people, and required the receiver to respect particular norms (repaying loans on time for example, and sometimes repaying the favour) if they were to continue: this is similar to the closure/ sanctions amongst diamond traders discussed by Coleman (1988), whereby trust lowers transaction costs and frees up the market. In the neighbourhoods in Cali, this trust allowed youth to have access to a variety of resources that they would otherwise not have been able to draw upon. Although most of these appeared to be resources that were outside 'basic needs' (for example, borrowing clothes), they were identified as important to the youth themselves.

In contrast, older residents talked about borrowing food and money from neighbours in times of hardship, in other words drawing upon social capital for emergencies more than 'luxuries'. Both older residents and youth perceived that emergency situations were instances where social capital resources were most in evidence. Fire, flooding and eviction attempts were examples of emergencies that neighbours cited that would result in solidarity and collective action: most people believed that in such instances community residents mobilised to support one another in a variety of ways: they talked about collection of money and objects, offering housing to those left homeless, people drawing upon their personal contacts to generate resources, and, on a personal level, emotional support and advice. In El Vergel, the participants discussed how people tend to draw upon multiple sources of social capital in order to 'spread the load' of responsibility. In almost all the communities, both in their histories and in the present day, times of adversity appeared to turn residents towards use of social capital. This is an interesting finding that should contribute to the debate as to whether crises result in people resorting to individualist mechanisms for survival (ie they cannot afford to 'indulge' in social capital) or to collective survival strategies.

Structural social capital within all four communities enjoyed by most residents are the Christmas festivities (see photograph on front cover of report by Arte y Cultura, Vergel, for example). These activities involve participating in competitions with other neighbourhoods to decorate the streets, collective events and celebrations. However, in Charco Azul, people talked about the reduction in community festivities due to violence and insecurity, and none of those interviewed had any practical ideas as to how to tackle this problem, although they did perceive that youth groups and organisations 'kept kids out of trouble' and thus indirectly reduced violence. The lack of opportunities for community interaction was also perceived to be a shame since it prevented people spending time with one another as in 'the old days'. Across all four neighbourhoods, people harked back to the time of invasion or settlement when it appeared that bonding social capital - cohesion, trust, solidarity- had been much higher.

Although some of the young people interviewed discussed belonging to and participating in various types of groups, such as artistic, cultural, dance, sports etc, the youngest age bracket (15-18 years) appeared to be largely incapable of organising themselves or activities for their own benefit, but relied upon others to do this. They appeared to have neither the will nor the commitment to take part in collective activities. The19-25 year age group showed more interest and experience of such activities, but overall there was a sense that the large majority would participate in Christmas activities, go along to big cultural events if they heard about them, but were not themselves *organisers*. This confirms the findings in other studies (Thomas 2002); (Fundaps 2002) that the majority of residents are fairly weak in structural social capital on a day to day level, and depend upon leaders or a civically-minded few to organise and reach out.

Trust in institutions

Residents' trust in community committees has already been discussed in the previous section on community histories. Community's expressed trust in public institutions varied widely across the four communities, partly because in the informal settlements there were very few institutions with an actual presence, requiring residents to seek health, education, police and religious services outside their own areas.

The police were the institution with the worst reputation and most distrusted across all four communities. In addition to their reluctance to enter the communities, youth accused them of letting crooks off lightly and instead harassing innocent bystanders, sometimes asking for money too. In Puertas del Sol, youth reported that the police had encouraged them to sort out their own problems with a gang entering the neighbourhood: "*they have given us the authority to take justice into our own hands, but we are not used to that and don't want to do it, we don't want to become paid assassins*" (focus group with youth leaders). In such situations, community cynicism of the police and accusations of corruption are inevitable. Health centres were viewed ambiguously: in all communities, people complained about the lack of resources and difficulties they had in accessing health care, but on the other hand they did not tend to blame the centres themselves, more the 'system'.

Perhaps the most admired institution was the church. In El Vergel, for example, years of intervention by the Catholic church had resulted in a confidence and admiration for this institution, which was enhanced by the commitment shown by particular charismatic priests over the years. People discussed the way in which the church provided both physical/ financial and emotional/ spiritual support to community members, and believed that it played an important part in community life, particularly for adults.

In Belisario Betancourt, there was a complete lack of any institutional presence (no schools, health posts, church, police station, no cultural groups etc), and residents argued that this absence affected the sense of community, although they did not specify how exactly. This may have been because a community without any institutions is somehow incomplete, or may have been related to the lack of community owned collective spaces where people could interact. However, in this same community a shop keepers credit system was also in place, which was identified by residents as a crucial factor in assisting them to survive economically. Such credit is an excellent ecologic indicator of social capital for a community, which suggests too that people follow the social norms in order to avoid the sanctions that failing to re-pay would incur.

Violence

Violence was identified as a major problem in all the studies, particularly gang violence and common assaults. Particular areas were identified as being especially dangerous and to be avoided, and this spatial characterisation of the community informed the places and ways in which people interacted, avoiding passing through certain areas if possible: violence was thus seen to impact upon social capital, not the other way around.

In El Vergel, residents talked about the problems of high violence and insecurity levels, but also discussed the high degree of solidarity and strong sense of community that existed. This apparent paradox suggests that *at the community level*, violence and social capital may not, in fact, be inversely associated, as found by Kawachi, et al. (1999) and Sampson, et al. (1997) in the USA. It might also suggest that bonding social capital amongst residents is a survival strategy in difficult circumstances: it is indispensable to know your neighbours to get by, both for the instrumental help they can afford you and also for the emotional support, as reported in El Vergel by neighbours.

In addition, violence was perceived to be not only an economic phenomenon whereby young people are carrying out crime and violent crime in order to get money for purchasing drugs, but also as a type of initiation process to being accepted and respected, or for entry into a gang.

In the four studies, violence was an issue that arose but was not explicitly discussed in most focus groups and interviews due to the sensitivity of the issue. Despite the fact that most of the youth groups came from or were working in the neighbourhoods studied, there was nevertheless a serious security issue surrounding the observation of localities for example, because if the police had carried out a raid during this period some local residents might have suspected the youth of informing. As a result, violence discussions were less explicit and the topic arose in relation to social capital as opposed to in its own right. It was not clear from the studies how residents could draw upon social capital to reduce violence in their neighbourhoods.

Conclusions
In conclusion, all the studies recorded important resources of social capital existing in these marginalised and violent neighbourhoods. They found that elements of bonding social capital were particularly generated and drawn upon in times of hardship, and in less extreme circumstances (when basic needs were being met), they appeared to diminish, at least in everyday exchanges such as social support. Although there was a general perception that bonding social capital had been stronger "in the old days", and despite problems of communication between generations, nevertheless, elements of social capital were observed and valued in everyday interaction within the community. In contrast, the lack of institutional presence in many of the neighbourhoods, the history of clientelism and the marked distrust felt towards the police and other state institutions, suggests that bridging social capital is severely limited. This might point towards the need for civil society or church based interventions in order to promote community development programmes, since in the absence of institutional trust external interventions are unlikely to be given community support. However, this is a tentative conclusion that requires further research since, based upon a literature review, there is as yet no firm evidence to suggest that externally driven programmes can effectively strengthen community level social capital.

Some other tentative recommendations from the research are:
1. Developing opportunities for dialogue / exchange of ideas, perspectives, activities etc between residents and institutions present in the neighbourhood, and between adults and youth, in order to strengthen bridging social capital.
2. Promoting collective activities (leisure, community development, celebrations) that get people together and strengthen community ties (bonding social capital).
3. Documenting and sharing the history of the neighbourhood amongst residents to permit them to value the efforts put into the area and the importance of community.

Capacity building
Objectives ii and iii of this project were to strengthen qualitative research skills of the youth groups and strengthen networking between the groups. The first objective was achieved and can be seen in the reports themselves (see Annexes): although these reports are not typical

academic outputs as such, their participant observer perspective and the use of multiple qualitative techniques provide interesting insights into community social capital. The project evaluation carried out with the youth researchers also identified other benefits such as: information generated by the research can be used in interventions with community; personal and organisational growth through developing new skills, and strengthening of groups by working together on the project; increased recognition of youth groups in their neighbourhoods, in particular by community organisations and leaders; possibilities for developing new research proposals targeting important areas identified by the present research. Youth are now in a position to develop their own research proposals using skills and techniques developed during the DFID SSR project.

Problems identified by the South Bank University- Fundaps research team in some of the reports were: the lack of analytical perspective (particularly in the Charco Azul report, which presents data but fails to discuss); too many generalisations based upon limited data sources; insufficient data sources (see below) and inadequate conclusions/ drawing out implications of research. Problems identified by the youth researchers in the project evaluation were: security issues in the neighbourhoods; difficulty getting youth to participate in focus group discussions; inadequate training in qualitative data analysis and systematising the data. Regarding the security issue mentioned above, the youth noted that during the period in which this research was carried out, some of the neighbourhoods were going through a particularly uncertain period, and people were reluctant to give information which might compromise them: this meant that focus group discussions were replaced with individual interviews where people felt more at ease to express themselves.

Dissemination

Each youth group produced a research report describing the research objectives, methods, context, findings and conclusions (Annexes C, D, E and F). A summary of key findings in the reports has been submitted to *Environment and Urbanisation* journal (volume on urban youth). This journal places a strong emphasis community based research and processes. Nevertheless, it should be emphasised that the research component of this project was centred upon youth **learning** for their own, direct benefit (for example, systematisation of knowledge, data to inform their interventions), and **capacity building** the youth in research skills. It was *not,* therefore, to be expected that all the research reports would achieve the level of sophistication of an academic research report typically published by the majority of academic journals. This does *not* diminish the importance or the value of the findings, but rather suggests that the principal dissemination outlet of the research is closer to home (community, civil society, local government) as opposed to the international academic community.

A joint presentation regarding the overall profile of the communities studied (in terms of conflict resolution, social capital etc) was given by the youth at the international workshop in Cali in February 2001 (see part 3 of this report). This provided the opportunity for disseminating and discussing findings with members of the international academic community, and with peers from different cities in Colombia and from Johannesburg, South Africa. In addition, in order to meet the specific networking objective (iii) of the proposal, youth exchanged copies of their reports between different groups and compared and contrasted findings.

Local community dissemination of research findings is currently taking place through the youth researchers: these groups are leaders in their communities, work with neighbourhood committees, local institutions, and multiple other population groups within their communities (children, youth, parents, etc). Feedback to the community will take the form of presenting and discussing results with these groups, and circulating copies of the report amongst leaders and community organisations.

Since the research fits into the social capital and violence programme being carried out by Fundaps and South Bank University (the collaborating institutions), the results will also be used in adjusting the intervention: for example, the strong trust in various institutions revealed in the study suggests that interventions to reduce violence could be channelled through these institutions, such as church and health centres.

Since Fundaps is closely linked in with numerous departments of local government, access to policy makers is greatly facilitated. As the next section on the international workshop shows, representatives from these bodies also attended the workshop and have expressed interest in the social capital framework for violence reduction and community development.

Part 3: International youth workshop in Cali, Colombia

Full details of the workshop are available in Annex G, the Workshop Report.

Objectives

The objectives of this workshop were to:

1. Exchange experiences between South African and Colombian youth in the themes mentioned
2. Share information about the South Bank University /Fundaps social capital work
3. Identify shared interests among participants
4. Develop proposals for collaborative work amongst the youth organisations, with the support of the other participants

Methods

In order to promote integration between the youth groups and to increase their understanding and familiarity with the theme of social capital, various activities were carried out prior to the main workshop, including a field visit to four Cali youth organisations and their work areas, and group work to discuss the concept of social capital from the perspective of youth community work.

The workshop format involved presentations of social capital research and presentations of youth community work to strengthen social capital; breakaway tables in which youth identified the main social capital problems facing them as youth organisations, and

suggested strategies and activities to address them; and plenary sessions to discuss the proposals and develop a work plan.

The participants came from youth organisations in South Africa and Colombia, as well as from academic institutions, non governmental and governmental organisations from South Africa, Colombia, UK and USA.

Workshop presentations and discussions

Studies show that social capital is associated with multiple indicators of well-being, amongst which are poverty, inequality and health. This establishes the importance of this resource in terms of community development.

It is important to bear in mind that social capital takes time for its construction and strengthening (if, indeed, this is possible through external intervention) and that it is not an end in itself: rather, it is a means to improve different aspects of community welfare. In the particular interest of this workshop, it is a means for young people to intervene in order to reduce youth violence and to develop democratic relations with other organisations and the state.

The results of the studies presented show the existence of high levels of trust in particular institutions and social support between people. Based upon this evidence, the need to make the most of social capital (such as youth organisations and religious groups) was identified and discussed, in order to implement effective and sustainable policies, programmes and projects for community development.

In terms of strengthening social capital within communities, the danger of creating a culture of dependency was discussed, in the case where such interventions are implemented directly by institutions or agencies from outside the community. In order to avoid this situation, it was suggested that "bonding" social capital interventions should be implemented by community based organisations, whilst the role of external agencies such as NGOs could be to create a bridge or link between community and local government ("bridging" social capital).

The relationship between governmental institutions and youth organisations appears to be impeded by mutual distrust, and a lack of interest in carrying out collaborative proposals. The reasons for this were identified as: low quality of services provided by institutions; the feeling of manipulation that youth have towards the employees of these institutions; the perception of employees of these institutions that youth are trouble makers, not problem solvers; a lack of knowledge about programmes and projects carried out; and lack of political will.

This situation demonstrates the need to focus on community interventions not only in terms of strengthening participation and structural aspects of social capital, as development projects for the past 20 years have sought to emphasise, but also cognitive aspects of social capital such as trust, solidarity and social cohesion. A process of reconciliation is needed in the first instance in order to be able to develop closer, more trusting ties between these groups.

The youth from both countries identified two central strategies for improving relationships between government and youth groups, and in order to work in a more effective way within the community: establish a dialogue platform between government organisations and community and youth organisations; establish a youth network to exchange ideas, strategies and work methods. The objectives of the network are to:

- Exchange youth work experiences (for example, strategies for violence reduction)
- Develop proposals for international collaboration
- Develop training proposals
- Develop empowerment proposals

Tasks include the establishment of a (rotating) committee for each city (Cali, Medellín, Manizales, Johannesburg) responsible for co-ordinating communication and activity; circulation of a document that describes the context of the youth in each of the Colombian cities and Johannesburg; circulation of a document regarding the theory of networks and how they are composed; and circulation of a document about methods for project management.

Dissemination

This activity constituted a dissemination activity in itself (dissemination of social capital studies in South Africa and Colombia) as well as a discussion forum. Workshop reports have been distributed to all participants, and in addition to the following key interest groups:

- local government and research institutions working in youth violence in Cali
- international funding and research institutions
- youth groups in the UK with whom a link exists
- different individuals within DFID who have expressed interest

The possibilities of publishing the report in the Urban Health and Development Bulletin (produced by the Medical Research Council, South Africa) and a brief description of the event in the *Environment and Urbanisation* journal are also being considered. These publications reach a wide international audience, principally researchers and civil society.

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Annex A: Training in conflict resolution

An additional component was added to the project to fulfil objective (iv), namely the training of youth groups in *managing conflict*. This component provides an important contribution to the everyday interventions of the youth group in their own communities.

Training was carried out with a group of 15 youth, representatives from different youth organisations, in **Developing Interventions for Peace-Building and Social Harmony.** This training was provided by a group of professionals from the International Research Centre in Clinical Psychology and the House of Justice[3] in Siloé. Through the topics dealt with in the training, the youth participants acquired conceptual and methodological tools for guiding their work in the community.

Topics covered in the training included: youth organisations and their role and responsibility within the community; why is violence a form of conflict resolution; legal mechanisms available for conflict resolution; and "resilience", a new way of approaching violence problems.

The point of departure of the training was conflict situations that the youth had experienced, and which affected their work in the community. Situations identified included conflicts and aggression between men and women; difficulties faced by youth in relating to other youth; and difficulties experienced by youth in carrying out community activities as a result of family problems (abuse by parents, repression). These situations were discussed and analysed in order that the youth should gain a better understanding of the different factors at play and find an effective way of using the resources available to resolve these difficult situations in their community work.

[3] The Casas de Justicia are institutions based in low income areas designed to provide community residents with a reporting and referral service for acts of violence, aggression or crime which have taken place both within and outside the domestic arena.

Annex B: Research training

Initial capacity building of youth in the conceptual framework and methods took place over three days (but continued throughout the research process). The concept of social capital was debated with the youth groups, in particular focusing upon the kind of social relationships which the youth strengthen in their everyday work (solidarity, trust, collective efficacy, community organisation to resolve conflicts). In addition, the bonds and relationships between the community and public and private institutions present in the neighbourhood was also discussed (for example, what is the population demand for particular services, what alternatives do residents use when services do not exist in a particular neighbourhood, how do people feel towards institutions working in the neighbourhoods). Social capital was thus analysed as a resource existing *between people* and also *between people and institutions*.

Issues of conflict and the particular problems facing low income communities were also discussed. Youth expressed their desire to consider a range of problems facing communities, not just violence: they pointed out that other problems, such as lack of access to services, overcrowding, insecurity of land tenure etc, are associated with and generate violence, therefore should be also be explored within the study. Moreover, an exclusive focus on violence would entail greater security risks for them.[4] In response to this request, the research focus was broadened to become social capital and problem solving in general (as opposed to conflict resolution only).[5] After discussion of relevant concepts, the youth groups worked together to define the key questions of interest to them within this social capital framework[6].

Observation, focus group and interview techniques were also discussed with the youth researchers. The SBU-Fundaps research team described the purpose of qualitative data, and how to apply the different techniques. Focus group discussion guides and interview guides were initially developed by the Fundaps- SBU team, and adapted where necessary by youth.

[4] To observe and discuss violence in the community presents a major risk for researchers because people interviewed or observed may view the researchers as threats, linked to police intelligence or other "dangerous" entity.

[5] The security situation was highly volatile at the time of research: in fact, the peace process in Colombia came to an end soon after the fieldwork was finished.

[6] Youth were consulted about which aspects of social capital were of particular interest to them within this conceptual framework, in order that the research benefit their work more fully and that the research should be a participatory process