



## **The Private Sector as Peace-builder?**

### **Two experiences from the Colombian context**

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To my parents and my sister, for being an endless source of support, energy  
and happiness in my life.

To all those who have crossed my path until today.

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## **List of Acronyms**

CNRR	National Commission of Reparation and Reconciliation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility.
ELN	National Liberation Army.
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.
FINAGRO	Fund for Financing the Agricultural Sector.
IA	International Alert.
INCODER	National Institute for Rural Development.
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization.
M-19	19 <sup>th</sup> April Movement.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization.
PB	Peacebuilding.
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships.
PS	Private Sector.
SF	Semana Foundation.
TNC	Trans-National Corporations.

## Abstract

This research is about the implementation of peacebuilding projects initiated by private actors in Colombia. Through elaborating a framework based on a combined NGO-academic toolkit, the study tries to elucidate the motivations and means of two private actors in engaging in peacebuilding activities in the Montes de María and Middle Magdalena regions of Colombia. The study also looks at how these private sector organisations' motivations and means shaped how the projects developed in practice.

By taking two contrasting examples of private sector institutions, Semana Foundation and Indupalma Ltd., the study assesses a number of key variables to better understand the varying engagement of private sector actors in peacebuilding. Broader Corporate Social Responsibility strategies are drawn out to make some comparative conclusions possible. The main finding is that although both Semana Foundation and Indupalma Ltd. share a broad 'liberal peace' approach to development and peacebuilding, in practice the two initiatives involve distinct types of CSR strategies. Whilst Semana Foundation views CSR in terms of Corporate Social Investment for '*broader*' peace, for Indupalma CSR is strategized in terms of a Business Integration model based on *inclusive principles*.

As a consequence, private actors vary in the extent to which they engage in economic, social and political activities in the peacebuilding initiatives, given that each private sector actor has a different understanding of their role in peacebuilding and development. Overall the study concludes that the potential contributions of private sector actors, though variable, can also be substantial in the longer-term, situation that should be seized by other relevant development actors.

## Relevance to Development Studies

The relation between the development of humans (considering a variety of definitions) and the establishment of social justice has been widely discussed in the academic literature. The achievement of peace emerge as a process by which that relation is materialized, especially in contexts of armed conflicts or in societies dealing with process of post- conflict transitions, reconstruction and peace negotiations like Colombia in 2013.

Hence, activities aimed to building peace are considered essential, and today new actors beside the State like private companies are gaining importance in the field through the establishment of partnerships and the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility strategies. The private sector appears as a controversial player that can be despicable or treasured, but definitely, taken into account in the Development Studies field.

## **Keywords**

Colombia, Peacebuilding, Development, Private Sector, Corporate Social Responsibility, Liberal peace.

# Chapter 1 . Introduction

## 1.1 Research Focus.

The role of the Private Sector (from now on, PS) in development process in general and in peacebuilding activities in particular (with strong emphasis in its impacts in developing countries) has been widely discussed during the last two decades by a wide range of actors. Very roughly, two lines of argumentation that will be discussed throughout the research paper (especially in Chapter 2) can be identified around this subject.

In the first line are scholars and development practitioners who believe that there can be *no* role for the PS in conflict and post-conflict settings. At the other extreme are situated the 'market fundamentalists', arguing that any question about the society can be solved through market self-regulation mechanisms. However, in practice, mixed realities are present and enterprises are taking action into the field.

As expected, those debates have had an impact in the way in which Colombian private companies are getting involved in these subjects, opening new arenas for research and analysis from the field of Development Studies. In this process of engagement, the discourses linking the strategies of Corporate Social Responsibility implemented by the enterprises operating in conflictive environments with developmental outcomes and impacts have gained particular importance allowing the private actors to affirm the importance of its contributions.

Beyond theoretical debates, in practice alliances between private actors, non-governmental organizations and state institutions has been incrementally formed in Colombia around the implementation of what is labelled as peacebuilding projects, in the middle of the still occurring armed conflict. They are seen positively by civil society and governments as one of the preferred strategies to solve social problems that have not been fully addressed by traditional development actors.

Equally, specialized literature has emerged and methodical work has been done in creating categories of analysis about the motivations of the PS for getting involved in these kind of initiatives, but in depth observation of specific cases is still missing.

Considering this, the present research paper will be focused on two contrasting projects implying peacebuilding activities led by private actors in my country. Both projects, in one way or another, are receiving the attention from the government, other private actors, INGOs and local media nowadays.

The first one (marked in the map 1 with the orange pointer) was initiated by the corporate group Semana Publications, one of the main communication enterprises in Colombia, through their own NGO called Semana Foundation, set up as a non-profit organization in 2009. The same year, the foundation

started to lead the process of reconstruction of one small village in the department of Bolívar called El Salado, recognized as the scenario in which one of the cruelest massacres in the recent history of Colombia occurred.

During the almost 4 year's process of implementation, a lot of attention has been paid to this intervention considered as the biggest PPP running in Colombia at this time. More than 90 different allies get involved, including private enterprises, public institutions and other NGO's (Semana Foundation 2013).

The second one (signaled in the map 1 with the red symbol) is the experience of Indupalma Ltd, a palm oil company founded in 1961 in the department of Cesar. Since the end of the nineties it started a new business model based on cooperatives of associated workers. In recent years varied its focus, designing and implementing projects to promote access to land property.

Despite the critiques the palm oil sector in general faces in relation with argued connection with forced internal displacement or support to paramilitary groups committing violations to human rights, the enterprise decided to 'set its own hallmark'. From a perspective of promotion of entrepreneurship, income, wealth generation and education, they argue as a business are contributing to a long term process of prosperity and growth in the region, which is contributing to bringing peace.

Contrastingly with the previous one, it did not receive much attention from public opinion until the month of September this year, when Indupalma's CEO was appointed as Minister of Agriculture in the country. As a result, intense debates were generated about the applicability and relevance of this model in a context like the Colombian. Opposition groups assume that the same scheme Indupalma is applying in its operations will be replicated through the public policies implemented by the Ministry from now on. In this sense, analyzing the argued relation of this kind of projects and peacebuilding processes from the agricultural sector becomes important today.

**Map 1. Geographical location of the projects under study.**



Source: Own elaboration via Google Maps.

## 1.2 Motivation of Research.

This research is conducted with the aim of exploring the participation of private actors in process of broader social transformations, especially in scenarios in which the armed conflict is still alive but post-conflict and peacebuilding has started in certain areas, like in Colombia currently. This implied to work on a specific area of knowledge that does not seem to have been deeply studied at the International Institute of Social Studies until today, fact that also configures a personal challenge.

The investigation is also informed by my convictions, after some years of work experience with the government of my country on issues of conflict and human rights defense. I realize that the State alone is not fully capable to solve the problematic situations Colombians are facing. Resources owned by different actors are needed, different roles can be performed by a variety of actors, and coordination of efforts is essential.

In that sense, I claim that the PS has a responsibility, can play a decisive position in process of peacebuilding in Colombia and should increase its participation, especially considering a scenario of post-conflict reconstruction in the case in which the National Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia- FARC sign an agreement for the termination of the armed conflict between them. A peace agreement among two parties in conflict will be the starting point, not the end, of the process of creating the bases for a peaceful society.

However, I do not want to assume a naïve and over optimistic perspective about the contributions PS can make. The objective of my investigation is to critically

explore the strengths but also the limitations this new models of *privately-led* peace construction could face and the challenges it brings for other actors in the field, as the State and the non- profit sector.

### **1. 3 Contextual Background.**

The internal armed conflict that affects Colombia since more than 4 decades ago is the only one that remains in the western hemisphere, and it has been described as the most difficult to resolve in the area(International Centre for Transitional Justice, 2013). Today it still affects direct or indirectly the life of more than 45 million of inhabitants in the country and has caused around 3,7 millions of internal displaced people(Fisas 2012, 81), despite the improvement of the country in issues related with security and economic growth in the previous years.

In this scenario, the overcoming of the armed confrontation and the structural violence that produced and reinforced it is still a necessity, and there are still a lot of challenges for the academia and the researchers around it. On-going debates are around the causes of the conflict and the interest involved in maintaining it (in the line of the categories of greed or grievances posed by Collier and Hoeffler), about how to define it (in terms of civil war, internal armed conflict, new war, etc.) and about how to end it.

However, one of the few points of consensus among actors is the need to put an end to the confrontation as soon as possible, and the PS appears as one of the key players to participate in processes of peacebuilding and reconstruction. According to some analysts, in Colombia the PS started to be involved in mobilizations in favor to peace only since the decade of the nineties, when a combination of factors such as a strong political crisis, illegal armed groups presence and economic stagnation, started to represent a most visible threat for the business class(Guáqueta 2006, 278).

In 2012, more than twenty years later, peace talks between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the national Government started and great expectations has been created around a possible negotiated solution. Talking about 'peace' is again in the top priorities of the public agenda.

Nonetheless, whilst that bilateral negotiation is occurring, the armed confrontation between various illegal actors (in fact the FARC are still operating, along with criminal gangs, cartels of drug traffickers, groups of neo paramilitaries and other guerrillas like the National Liberation Army) and the official forces remains in some territories of the country, while others areas like the main cities and the more prosperous in economic terms are in 'relative peace'.

Precisely it is in those conflictive areas in which the local populations are facing the negative consequences and the majority of efforts of peacebuilding are occurring and most needed, where the cases analyzed in the present research paper are being materialized.

## 1.4 Research Questions.

Main Research Question:

**Why and how did two private sector actors in Colombia decide to engage with peacebuilding initiatives in 2007-2012?**

Sub- questions:

1. What kinds of interventions are the two selected private sector institutions, Semana Foundation and Indupalma, engaged in?
2. What kinds of concepts or analytical models can help understand private sector's motivations to engage in peacebuilding activities in contemporary Colombia?
3. How did the two enterprises presents their interventions, in terms of their approaches to development and peacebuilding?
4. How Corporate Social Responsibility and peacebuilding relate in the respective interventions of these two actors?

## 1.5 Methodology.

Doing a comparative case study was the best way to conduct analyze the issues I wanted to address. By definition, 'the essence of a case study is that it tries to illuminate a decision or a set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result'(Schramm as cited in Yin 2008, 17), being an empirical examination that scrutinizes a contemporary phenomenon in depthness and within its real-life context(Yin 2008, 18).

As a result, this research can be considered as an example of diverse-case method of selection as it will be focused on two cases *to compare or illustrate the differences and similarities between them* according to some theoretical body of literature(Gerring 2007, 89). In the present analysis, the elements established by International Alert in its report *'Local Business, Local Peace: The peacebuilding potential of domestic private sector'*(2006, 11) and by Rettberg(2004, 17) in her paper entitled *'Business-led peacebuilding in Colombia: fad or future of a country in crisis?* provides the basis for selection of variables that will be used to analyze the two PB experiences(see Chapter 4 for further details).

In terms of case selection, a preliminary exploration between a set of initiatives of this type in Colombia was conducted during the elaboration of the research design. Then, 4 were revised in detail; VallenPaz, Carvajal Foundation, Semana Foundation and Indupalma Ltd, checking its main features and looking for possibilities of comparison and contrast. Later, having into consideration my limitations of time and resources, I decided to review the activities conducted by Semana Foundation and by Indupalma Ltd.

According to Yin(2008, 60), when conducting multiple-case studies a researcher must choose each case carefully depending on what is her purpose: 'to find similar results in a logic of literal replication' or 'to find contrasting results predicted explicitly at the outset of the investigation'. To show contrasting models of CSR and private sector involvement, I chose the second strategy.

These two case studies could be said to represent two different schemes of how the PS can work in peacebuilding due to the diverse motivations, meanings of implementation and long term objectives. But despite its evident differences that will be exposed during the document, both experiences are presenting themselves as attempts to construct replicable models for the designing and implementation of this type of projects in the future and are sharing some common grounds that will enrich the forthcoming analysis.

In practice, the research plan was constituted by two main strategies. The first one related with theoretical part of the research was primarily based on literature reviews and secondary data available in books, articles and specialized journals from international authors and institutions.

The second one associated with collecting and analyzing primary data (and having into consideration that there was no possibility for me conduct fieldwork in my country, situation that imposed higher challenges to the process) was based on the one hand in information produced by the same protagonist (For a detailed list of the documents consulted, See Appendix 1).

On the other hand, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted via Skype, with key actors inside the organizations implementing the projects (For a complete list of the interviewees, See Appendix 2).

Finally, it is imperative to highlight that the present research lacks of an important element in the discussions: the voices of the 'beneficiaries' of the projects could not be reached, and then, considered into the analysis. So, at the end, is not an evaluative exercise about the developmental impact of the initiatives in the field, but more an exploratory attempt to trace its origins, evolutions, hallmarks and future implications for peacebuilding processes in Colombia.

## **1.6 Chapter content.**

This first Chapter was an introduction to the research process in general. The second Chapter explores the main definitions and debates around the concepts of PS, its participation in development processes particularly through peacebuilding activities, and the links established with those concepts and CSR strategies.

The third Chapter describes independently the two study cases under research, mainly due to practical reasons. The fourth one is dedicated in its first section to present the analytical frameworks used to identify the drivers and motivations for PS to engage in PB. In the second section, each variable established in the analytical framework is addressed, combining the information of the two experiences.

To close, the sixth Chapter shows the common grounds but also the differentiating hallmarks among the experiences as a way to reach some analytical conclusions. Finally, some key elements for further research are presented.

## Chapter 2 . Debates around Private Sector engagement in peacebuilding.

This research paper is situated at the intersections of two sets of debates in the literature: one about PS contributions to development, and the other about peacebuilding and how to involve all sectors of society in this process. At the same time, concepts like Corporate Social Responsibility (hereafter, CSR) and partnerships emerges as some of the preferred frameworks when trying to link all the topics aforementioned.

The next Chapter is an attempt to map some of the main concepts and theoretical approaches available in the literature that will help to understand the role that private actors can play in reconstruction and peacebuilding processes in Colombia.

### 2.1 Defining the 'Private Sector'.

It is worth noting that there is no an ultimate or single definition of the Private Sector. The differences between the private sector and the business sector are sometimes also unclear. Even those characterizations provided by the main international organizations working with the private sector in development do not agree on these definitions. For example, it has been defined by the United Nations Development Program as:

Individual, for-profit, and commercial enterprises of any size, and the terms 'business' and 'company' refer to such an enterprise. The definition does not include private sector membership organizations, coalitions or other not -for-profit organizations that either represent or support the private sector, or corporate foundations(UNDP 2013, 4)(Emphasis added).

At the same time, the Global Compact office, also part of the United Nations system, established in the document *Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector* that the Business Sector comprises:

- a) For-profit, and commercial enterprises or businesses;
- b) Business associations and coalitions (cross-industry, multi-issue groups; cross industry, issue-specific initiatives; industry-focused initiative); including but not limited to corporate philanthropic foundations(Global Compact 2013, 2)(Emphasis added).

At a first sight, these differences can appear unimportant and a question of semantics. However, considering the scope of the present research in which one of the leaders of the initiatives is a *corporate foundation* and the other is a more *traditional enterprise*, the lack of clarity can be interpreted as a sign of the novelty of the engagement of the PS with peacebuilding. Understanding who these new social players really are and what is the best way for them to engage with peacebuilding and development remains a challenge.

Equally, the inclusion or not of corporate foundations in what is considered 'PS' can be understood as a symptom of the on-going debates about the boundaries of the 'private' and 'public' in development. Among the different domains in any society, previously differentiated as the market, the civil society and the State, there is growing complexity and hybridity. One example are the discussions around 'new governance agreements' and 'governmentality and securitization', which both cut across the public-private divide(Snidal and Abbot, 2008; Duffield, 2001).

## 2.2 Defining Peace and Peacebuilding

Inherently, talking about *peacebuilding* in development implies talking about imaginaries, or visions of what is to be constructed or built. This has implications on what the PS is expected to achieve. In this sense, since peace is understood in many different ways by different scholars, we need to start somewhere. Perhaps the earliest and most widely accepted categorization of peace is the one first formulated by Johan Galtung(1967,17).

In his approach there is a basic distinction between negative and positive peace. The first concept refers to 'the absence of organized collective violence' and the latter is described as the 'sum total of other relatively consensual values' reflected in the establishment of positive societal relations based on cooperation among individual, economic growth and development, absence of exploitation, equality, justice, pluralism and dynamism(Galtung 1967, 14). From this perspective, the achievement of positive peace implies broader and long term social transformations.

In the same line of thinking, other authors recognize the necessity to pay attention to elements of continuity inherent to any social processes. In his words, 'Peacebuilding is more than a post accord reconstruction... Is understood as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships'(Lederach 1997, 20).

As such, 'metaphorically peace is seen not merely as a stage in time or a condition. It is a dynamic social construct... that requires a process of *building*, involving investment and materials, architectural design and coordination of labour, laying on a foundation, and detailed finish work, as well as continuing maintenance'(Lederach 1997, 20).

In that sense, for analytical purposes the author identifies three different levels of leaderships emerging from the people touched by a conflict (Level 1: Top Leadership, Level 2: Middle Range Leadership, and Level 3: Grassroots leadership), which corresponds with 3 diverse approaches to building peace (Level 1 or 'Top-down', Level 2 or 'Middle- Out' and Level 3 or 'Bottom-up') (For further information about this framework, please refer to Appendix 3).

In his theoretical framework, important for the present research, the private sector would fit in with Level 2 and 3 of leadership. One of the original contributions of the present study would be to analyse the role of the PS into currently influential models of peacebuilding like that of Lederach.

## **2.3 Private Sector and Development.**

Parallel to this discussions about PS definitions, scholars have been making contributions in understanding what private actors can do amidst general development initiatives. For example, Knorringa highlights that 'Development implies more than economic growth and includes social and political aspects required for the achievement of social justice in a specific society' and as a result, it is 'also about struggle, about previously marginalized groups in society starting to claim their rights, and inevitably leads to conflicts with established elites' (Knorringa 2010, 4).

In that sense the participation of PS in this area can be seen as something, for saying less, contradictory. Business class is almost by definition considered as part of these elites struggling to maintain the status quo and hence, the credibility of developmental projects leaded by those actors is questioned.

Nonetheless, the same scholar advocate for the importance of understand 'where and when, what types of private sector activities are more likely to contribute to development' without a simplistic perspective in which enterprises are the only actors either promoting or preventing it (Knorringa 2010, 5).

Thus, requests are being made to overcome that perspective which is rooted in a generic assumption: an image of a homogeneous PS, constituted by large- scale multinational enterprises owned by external capital and extracting local resources (as labor and natural assets) from national economies (Knorringa and Helmsing 2008, 1055).

As Knorringa and Helmsing highlighted (2008, 1055), this kind of enterprises are part of the PS in its *corporate* variant, but are just a part. A multiplicity of large, small and medium enterprises, formal and informal entrepreneurs and local investors represents the higher percentages of business operating in reality and with the potentiality to contribute in developmental issues.

To finalize, is worth to note that in general terms, the minimum aspects in which the PS is portrayed as a key factor in development processes are related with fostering economic growth, supporting job creation and entrepreneurship promotion (Knorringa and Helmsing 2008, 1055). Just bearing in mind economic factors, 'trade and investment flows bring technology, skills, employment and access to markets' that are considered by the mainstream approaches as key issues along the promotion of international development (Fox and Prescott 2004, 2).

However, this limited scope of participation is proved insufficient to the enormous challenges in aspects not only like poverty alleviation and economic growth, but mainly in terms of promoting social equality and inclusive models.

## **2.4 Corporate Social Responsibility as a development and PB instrument.**

As a result of this involvement of the PS in development, recently frameworks like CSR started to gain more attention in the field. Practices of self-regulation

and the implementation of voluntary activities by private companies would boost solving many protracted social problems: 'where the State had failed, private enterprises and non-state actors could succeed' (Utting and Marques 2010, 1). Consequently, armed confrontations and political violence were seen as social problems that can be partially addressed by CSR activities focusing on peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Hence, new expectations were formed: the business sector would undertake a new role as developmental and peace promoter agent, even assuming functions that in the past were exclusive to public institutions like provisioning of basic or public goods and services (Utting and Marques 2010, 2), in a context of hegemonic neo-liberal policies resulting in the reduction of the state and its tasks.

The mainstream discourse surrounding CSR configure it as an attempt of the enterprises to integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations, looking for a balance between economic, social and environmental imperatives, while at the same time improving their financial performance and viability (UNIDO 2013).

Academic efforts have been devoted in trying to explain why business decide to engage in CSR activities, considering that enterprises applying this strategies are still the exception and not the norm. In Colombia, a recent study conducted among 22,266 companies shown that 54% of employers interviewed barely recognize the term CSR, 20% have heard of the issue, 14% say they have no idea of the topic and just 12% knows what it is, and are implementing those kind of actions inside its companies (Suárez 2013).

But in explaining why all around the globe even a small percentage of enterprises decided to work on CSR, scholars like Gutiérrez and Jones (2004, 153) identified a range of motivations starting by pure altruism and finishing in utilitarianism (here, the term is not used in the moral sense of the concept, but as the weighting the PS actors made in relation cost-benefits considering self-interest). Especially in Latin America, they argue that altruism and solidarity have had impacts due to religiosity and catholic background in the region.

As utilitarian drivers, two main motives were revealed. First, there seems to be a desire to manage risks like the opposition of local communities to some private activities or facing a conflictive business environment, to minimize the possibilities of its materialization or to prepare themselves to face it in the better way possible (Gutierrez and Jones 2004, 153).

Second, the search for competitive advantages appears as a key point: upgrading of a firm's perceptions among the public opinion or consumers, or the search for higher levels or market share can be a strong motivation (Gutierrez and Jones 2004, 154). In deepening this argument, other authors suggest that usually CSR implies not only a strategy on public relations but also setting a hallmark for the companies by 'choosing a unique position, doing things different from competitors' and hence, obtaining advantages that other do not have (Porter and Kramer 2007, 88).

When an enterprise decide to implement CSR activities, normally can do it in two different fronts not mutually exclusive: paying attention to social issues

*within* its operations satisfying shareholder interests and/or developing *external* investments outside the limits of the company not related with the core business(Gutierrez and Jones 2004, 161).

When the last option is preferred, two models has been equally identified: to opt for social investment in communities to transform its life conditions (for example, by strengthening community-based organizations, implementing programs defined on the basis of needs expressed by the people or to develop public interest institutions that support those development processes) or to integrate vulnerable populations into their business models (by supplying training and educational services, involving them as suppliers in their productive chains and transferring capital and knowledge in the process) to facilitate the company's operations(Gutierrez and Jones 2004, 161).

As can be seen, is almost obvious that CSR is by definition a business instrument. As a result, the effectiveness of this strategies and practices in promoting long terms development processes implying profound transformations within the societies in which the companies are operating has been widely questioned.

For instance, Newell conceives the CSR discourse as a reaction to a 'legitimacy crisis within contemporary neo-liberalism' trying to serve as a vehicle for recovering public confidence and assurance in the benefits of the capitalist system. In his own words, 'CSR is about capitalism with a human face'(Newel 2008, 1064).

However, majoritarian perceptions are less critical about the role of CSR. In particular, the purpose of this initiatives in countries experiencing armed confrontations and sociopolitical violence is receiving incremental attention. The issues of peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery are now among the topics in which the CSR strategies are supposed to work on.

This considering that especially in developing countries where resources are scarce, the PS can be seen as if not the only, one of the main sources of wealth creation and growth. Its attractiveness in PB processes as long as in general development issues resides in a central aspect: 'it counts with privileged resources –capital, knowledge and managerial skills- to lever up tasks typically associated with the overcoming of armed conflicts'(Rettberg and Rivas 2012, 307).

## **2.5 The Private Sector in Peacebuilding: part of a 'liberal peace'?**

As mentioned before, discussing the role that private enterprises can play in countries with on-going armed confrontations or in post-conflicts scenarios is matter of controversy. In general, two extreme positions can be identified around this subject(Berdal and Mousavizadeh 2010, 3).

On one hand, can be identified those who believes that there can be *no* role for the PS in helping societies to solve conflictive situations and to construct post-conflict settings. According to this position, any participation of business is

driven by the search of quick profits and earnings what in turns fuel the conflict. In other words:

Private business activity and the interests of peace and conflict- resolution are deemed incompatible, because private enterprise will of necessity feed into and reinforce exploitative and predatory war economies that have evolved in the course of conflict(Berdal and Mousavizadeh 2010, 3).

On the other hand are those establishing that any social question can be solved through fiscal discipline, privatisation and liberalisation of trade, capital and financial markets, and the resolution of armed conflict is not a matter of exception (Berdal and Mousavizadeh 2010, 3). Here, the role of the State is almost null, and the market relations are portrayed as the only force that should be driving the social relations, including the possibilities to end violence.

However, both argumentations have proven insufficient in totally explaining what have happened in reality in countries struggling to overcome socio political instability and violence. In this precise moment, private enterprises are increasing its profits by taking advantages of perpetuated violent conflicts. But at the same time, can be documented cases in which businesses have contributed to stabilization processes by providing basic services, helping to rebuild local infrastructure and supporting peace processes(Berdal and Mousavizadeh 2010, 4)

Due to this recognition of mixed realities, plenty literature has been produced to analyse the implications and potentialities of PS participation in peacebuilding processes, with the ultimate goal of attracting its attention and materialize their support through financial, technical and human resources.

From a moderate perspective located between the two extremes previously mentioned, and mainly defended by international organizations and cooperation agencies, the PS is portrayed as a strategic ally in the process of building sustainable peace and reconstruction.

For example, in the report *Doing business while advancing peace and development* the United Nations address the relationship between peacebuilding, development and PS participation from a perspective in which the companies should be interested in building more stable and peaceful societies because in conflict situations their operations are affected: earnings and productivity are reduced as a result of the armed confrontations and socio political instability (UN 2010, 6).

From a very practical point of view, it is said that violent conflict brings operating challenges to the companies. Political instability and increased violence can affect production and supply chains, increase operating costs and making success harder. Hence, 'business has an interest in promoting peace and development' (UN 2010, 6). From this stand point, helping to pacify societies is a win-win strategy for all the actors, in a clear reference to a liberal peacebuilding conception.

Contributing to achieving peace looks like a matter of almost common sense for the PS. Though, this conception is evidently problematic as it is overlooking the potential of business sector also on propelling, fuelling and prolonging conflicts

in the cases in which the profitability of the business is directly related with illegal and war economies (like arms and drug trafficking that can be considered as a business in a wider sense of the concept), or maybe in more subtle ways when the economic activities are not necessarily illegal but generates more profits when there are environments without a clear rule of law.

Nevertheless, this research is focused on that portion of the PS that can be potentially interested in contributing to building peace as being enterprises working in legal activities. Like in non-conflict situations where development processes are occurring, the principal role attributed by the majority of literature to the private sector in post-conflict settings is in investing resources and contributing to rapid economic recovery, impacting in job generation, business opportunities and by providing managerial experience and knowledge to projects implemented with local population(UN 2010, 5):

Participating in post-conflict reconstruction efforts, developing partnership projects with civil society and local governments and building a culture of peace through advocacy and outreach activities are examples of companies' positive contribution to peacebuilding(UN 2010, 6).

A virtuous cycle of economic growth, poverty reduction and achievement of peace is expected, in concordance with what has been labelled as liberal peacebuilding approaches (IA 2006, 1). Liberal peacebuilding is concerned with how the enhancement of democratic regimes, the promotion of market-based economic reforms and the advancement of social and political institutions considered essential in the process of construction of 'modern states' (like free markets) are the main engines for building peace(Newman et al. 2009, 3).

In this liberal and dominant version, a wide range of activities are considered as PB nowadays, considering four main branches: promoting domestic security, fostering development in general, providing humanitarian assistance and enhancing governance and the rule of law(Newman et al. 2009, 3).

Later, during Chapter 5 it will be shown how this new perspectives are reflected in the way private actors are implementing PB projects in Colombia by scrutinizing their activities through this classification of activities.

## **Concluding remarks.**

This Chapter has explored theoretical debates and basic concepts that will be relevant in the study; it has opened a gateway to the next Chapter which describes the two case studies in detail in terms of motivations, means and initial outcomes. The aim of Chapter 3 is to explain the conceptions each organization has about itself and its role in building peace. It also shows how these perceptions led each PS actor to intervene in different – although overlapping – ways. Reflections and analysis are mainly reserved for Chapter 4, which integrate and compares the two case studies.

## **Chapter 3 . Two examples of PS peacebuilding in practice.**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the process of reconstruction of El Salado village under the leadership of Semana Foundation and the design and implementation of two productive projects under the guidance of Indupalma Ltd are the cases under study.

With the aim of more clarity, in this Chapter each case will be described independently. Subsequently, after elaborating the analytical framework in Chapter 4, a concluding integrated overview is presented in Chapter 5, which also serves as a conclusion.

In brief, reconstruction of El Salado was initiated as an attempt to work in a post-conflict setting where a ‘showcase’, but replicable model of reconstruction could be elaborated (Semana, 2013). This, through the establishment of alliances between public and private actors, and by linking activities of Semana foundation with peacebuilding and developmental outcomes.

Meanwhile, Indupalma decided to promote two projects, El Palmar and El Horizonte, as an expression of what Indupalma conceives as an *‘Agrarian Reform from the Private Sector’*. These projects aimed to promote the wealth generation, development and peace of the agrarian sector in Colombia, empowering peasants living in affected zones by violence and poverty (Emprender Paz 2012, 1).

In the following sections more details about the private actor behind each case, its contextual background, their main characteristics and the way in which are operating will be presented.

### **3.1 El Salado reconstruction by Semana Foundation.**

The village of El Salado, part of the municipality of El Carmen de Bolívar is located in the Montes de María region, near the Colombian northern coast. Nowadays, it could be one among many human settlements affected by the armed conflict in the country, as a consequence of historic State weakness and continued presence of guerrilla groups that resulted in stigmatization of the civil population.

However, an extremely violent incident occurred in El Salado between 16 and February 21st, 2000: A massacre perpetrated by a group of 450 paramilitaries belonging to extreme right-wing groups, after which 60 fatalities were counted, 8 women and 52 men, including three children (CNRR 2009, 38). From a relatively prosperous community, the area became completely desolated after a massive internal forced displacement that left the town completely empty during years, and broke every social relation present at that time.

Nevertheless El Salado was not the only town victim of such horrific events in recent years. What makes it particularly well known among the Colombian public opinion today is the rebuilding process that began in 2009 led by the corporate

foundation established by the Semana Publications Group, in what has been called the largest PPP in reconstruction and peace issues in the country's history.

### ***3.1.1 Semana Publications Group.***

Semana magazine is one of the publications of analysis and opinion most widely read in Colombia. It has over one million readers per month and is considered a reference point for the middle and upper classes of the country on issues of politics, economics and culture(Semana, 2013).

The magazine started its work in 1982 and was the initial point for the creation of the Semana Publications Corporate Group, which is constituted as an anonymous society formed by a 100% private capital and its largest shareholder is a Colombian citizen, Felipe Lopez Caballero, founder and president of the Board of Directors(Semana Publications 2012, 17).

### ***3.1.2 Semana Foundation.***

In 2009, Semana Publications decided to create its own foundation being conscious that the reconstruction processes after conflict situations is a duty of all societal actors. However, it is argued that as an enterprise they reflected on its higher responsibility, due to the capacities and privileges that as a media they have in organizing callings and advocacy activities, with the objective of aggregate efforts and actors (Semana Publications 2012, 127).

According to the Sustainability Report 2009-2001, Semana Publications understood that working on post-conflict scenarios is not only a way to believe in the country, but to offer to the cause of the reconstruction the facility that as a media it has to summon aid from both the public and private sector and articulate in an efficient way(Semana Publications 2012, 127). In the words of one of the persons leading the process:

The inspiration to create a foundation was the country context and the added value a company such as Semana can have. The context of the country in 2009 was that Colombia had 53,000 demobilized, about 2 million displaced, I do not know how many victims and everyone was doing their things alone. The inspiration of our board of directors when they decided to set SF was, look, Semana has the power to call, to make visible... let's use the convening power that we use for our business, to help this things to work (Interviewee #1).

Once the decision of starting to work in the field was taken, the Semana Foundation team had to decide where and how to do it. In that process, preceding factors were decisive. Five years before, the Law 975/2005 known as the Peace and Justice Law was promulgated, creating among other new institutions the National Commission of Reparation and Reconciliation (CNRR).

In carrying out its functions, the CNRR decided to choose El Salado as a community to implement a pilot project on collective reparations and developed activities of historical memory construction, because small groups of inhabitants that voluntarily decided to return to the area by its own, recovered the town.

Recognizing the importance of that previous work done by the CNRR for a successful process of reconstruction, SF decide to focus its activities on this village.

### ***3.1.3 From media campaign to multi-actor alliances.***

The first activity designed by SF was a media campaign to sensitize the public opinion about the atrocities of the war that affected El Salado, but most important, to involve other actors from the PS in the reconstruction process. At the beginning, other media enterprises contributed with the strategy, like W Radio and Caracol Television, and business from other sectors like Bavaria, Coltabaco and Coca-Cola started to funding the activities(Interviewee #1).

After, SF invited other corporate owned NGO, the Carvajal Foundation (with experience in implementing communitarian development projects) to design the strategy of intervention with the participation of the beneficiaries of the initiative. Hence, a *Development Plan* was constructed to prioritize multiple but interconnected working areas, the interventions urgently needed and the action plan in short, middle and long term(Semana Foundation 2010, 6).

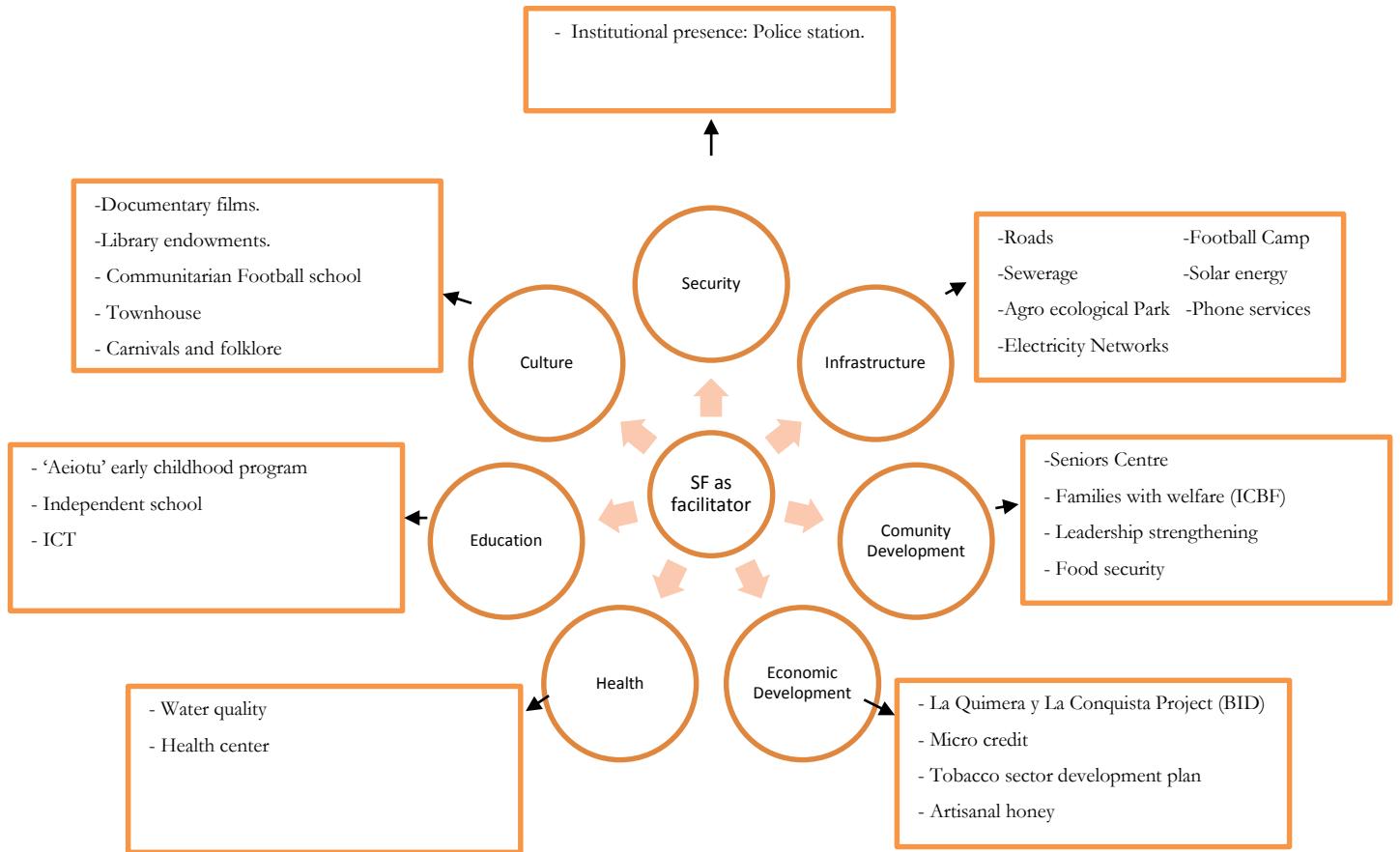
As a result a transformation occurred: there was no longer the implementation of a single project, but the consolidation of the 'Alliance for El Salado Reconstruction', a non-binding partnership that started with 6 allies and by the end of 2012 involved 93 actors, between public institutions, private enterprises, international cooperation organisms and NGOs(Semana Foundation, 2013).

Since the beginning, SF assumed the leadership coordinating the intervention process. As one the members of the Board said: 'with a centralization of the leadership is perfectly possible the participation of everyone, with an identification of objectives that at the end have a common element: to generate a real impact and tangible results for the community'(Semana Foundation 2011, 6).

In practice, thematic committees matching to seven areas of intervention prioritized were established. They are scenarios of communication between and with the participants, and for decision making about the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of each sub-project. There, the contributions of each ally are discussed, trying to go beyond providing money to finance specific activities, but to take advantages of the expertise and technical knowledge that each actor has(Interviewee #1).

The following figure illustrates the organization of the committees and the projects currently implemented in each of them.

**Figure 1. Thematic Committees of El Salado reconstruction process.**



Source: Own elaboration, based on Semana Foundation(2013) and interviews.

Among the most important achievements of the alliance are included the reconstruction of the village infrastructure and of social and community spaces like the Town House and the football field. Also, the construction of the road connecting the town with the rest of the country, and the operation of education programs linked with the agricultural potential of the area, for example, through the creation of an agro-ecological farm.

The implementation of economic recovery projects has become very important in the process.

The hope of all is to reactivate the market economy, not only of subsistence as it has been. Search for an increase in family income is what will ensure that the quality of life of the inhabitants of this region is not only similar to they once had, but much better(Semana Foundation 2012, 6).

These projects are related with the provision of micro-credits, training in new sources of income such as apiculture and production of handicrafts, but especially with the implementation of agricultural projects. So, activities were executed in 2011 to accomplish the titling by the State of 320 hectares of land to 63 families, who became owners of the farms La Quimera and La Conquista, in which are currently implemented productive projects to cultivate cacao, melon, yam, plantain, corn and tobacco leaves(IOM, 2013).

The latest project is called 'Local Economic Development in Post-conflict regions' funded by the Inter-American Development Bank and implemented together with another foundation, the Saldarriaga Concha, with support from the National Institute for Rural Development- INCODER (for its initials in Spanish), designed to last four years, starting in 2013.

Again, the idea is to produce 300 hectares of land (some owned by the beneficiaries of the project, other leased or with bailment contracts for 5 years) by providing financial, technical and social support to achieve more production, ensuring that the products have a guaranteed market, overcoming poverty and improving the lives of the beneficiaries (Semana Foundation 2013, 8). As objective, SF emphasizes the importance of passing a subsistence economy into a market economy and recognizes the need to implement associative models that generate economies of scale to make the initiative successful.

As can be seen, a broader conception of the process required to construct peace and reconciliation is present in the initiative. The seven fronts in which it's working are indicative of this. Also, SF seems to be conscious about the importance to involve different kind of actors, because of the huge challenges faced when reconstructing a community from almost nothing is the objective.

### **3.2 El Palmar and El Horizonte projects by Indupalma Ltd.**

The municipalities of Sabana de Torres and Puerto Wilches are located in the department of Santander, in what is known as the Middle Magdalena region in the north-west part of Colombia. Strategically, is an important zone connecting the borders with Venezuela, the main roads conducting to the Atlantic coast, and to the center region where Bogotá the capital is sited.

In these two municipalities are located El Palmar and El Horizonte initiatives. Both projects operating under the leadership of Indupalma Ltd are catalogued by the enterprise as 'promoters of land ownership and access, and developers of productive projects and wealth generation' (Murcia 2011, 48). Nonetheless, the social contextual background is important to understand its nature.

Since the early sixties, this region has been immersed in armed conflict dynamics characterized by multiple actors and interests at play: large landowners and ranchers, peasants and colonos, state armed forces trying to exert territorial control in response to the threats posed by the presence of leftist guerrilla groups, and finally, paramilitary groups of the extreme right-hand of the country making presence to counter the activities of the insurgency.

According to Alonso (1992, 90), social and political violence in the area until the nineties could be explained in relation to a historically unresolved agrarian conflict, which generated in the peasant a sense of rootlessness and insecurity. However, amidst this landscape legal productive activities were developed as part of a colonization process, especially agro industrial projects due to the fertility of the land, and the cultivation of palm oil has been one of the preferred businesses in this region.

### ***3.2.1 Indupalma Ltd.***

In 1961 the company Industrial Agraria La Palma- Indupalma Ltd., was founded with local capital. The enterprise was initially dedicated to the production and marketing of palm oil, and with the pass of the years broadened its perspective and became a business and investments developer in this field, providing services of Bank Investment and Project operations (IBIO), through the promotion, design, structuration, consolidation, management and commercialization of new agronomic projects, using their know-how and expertise in the business(Indupalma 2012, 15).

The company belongs to the corporate group Haime-Gutt, which supplies the domestic and international sectors of greases, edible oils, soaps and detergents, operating along with six other enterprises. These enterprises are at the same time, the principal buyers of the fruit produced or processed by Indupalma(Indupalma, 2013).

### ***3.2.2 Contextual background of the PB initiatives.***

Because of the zone in which its operations are developed, from the beginning Indupalma's activities were surrounded by a complex social and political context. This was worsened between the decades of the 70s and 90s due to the increasingly presence of leftist armed groups, as the M-19 and ELN, the radicalization of the labor movement and trade unions in the area. Later, the appearance of paramilitary structures trying to exert territorial control worsened the panorama.

However, during the first 10 years the enterprise coped with the situation, despite facing general strikes and conflictive environments with its union. But during the seventies, the affection of the operations of the company was more evident as the violence increased: In 1971, the Chief of Staff was murdered and the participation of some trade union leaders was proven in a judiciary case, fact that verified the bad relations among the workers and the enterprise(Prieto 2011, 21).

Six years after, the M-19 guerrilla group kidnapped the General Manager at that time, as a pressure mechanism in the middle of negotiations between the company and their union. As a result the company agreed to a series of concessions in terms of employment conditions and social benefits, which according to versions of the enterprise (added to external factors like the falling of international palm oil prices and the Colombian political decisions to open the economy to external markets) led to a process of almost two decades of deterioration of the financial situation that thereafter put at risk its financial viability and forced to fire part of the personnel, while others chose early retirement(Prieto 2011, 22).

By 1995, after a process of analysis of how to save the enterprise, Indupalma took a decision: to restructure its entire model of operation, subcontracting most of its production process to the past employees now organized in cooperatives of associative work or Autonomous Business Units-ABU, and focusing in core-business activities (Prieto 2011, 27). Through the formation of a new

‘entrepreneurial mentality’ among the peasants, they would be able to organize themselves, produce more, increase the productivity and hence, income generation will be guaranteed.

With the past of the years the new model showed good results, and by the end of 2011 more than 378 workers were part of the company, and more than 1700 people organized in 39 ABU provided agronomic services to Indupalma (Indupalma 2012, 17), making it the first source of work and one of the engines of development in the area.

Financially, the enterprise recovered from its crisis and began to grow again, even starting a process of expansion (conceived in 1999) of the palm oil frontier, with the special feature of linking local people in the process of land acquisition and development of productive projects, by providing technical support and guaranteeing the purchase of the fruit to producers who entered the program (Murcia 2011, 32).

### ***3.2.3 El Palmar and El Horizonte.***

In this context, the projects of El Palmar and El Horizonte were conceived in the framework of what Indupalma has labeled as an *‘Agrarian Reform from the Private Sector’*. In its conception, the projects are ‘an attempt to spread peace in the Middle Magdalena region, through a model of shared responsibility among farmers, government and the private sector’ (Indupalma 2012, 45). The idea was:

To promote the generation of wealth, development and peace in the Colombian agrarian sector applying the associative models of small producers, to empower farmworkers living in areas affected by violence and poverty, supporting them in generating means for sustainable livelihoods and making them masters of their own development processes (Emprender Paz 2009, 1).

In doing so, different schemes to structure the projects were applied, and the implementation process also required the participation of a variety of external actors.

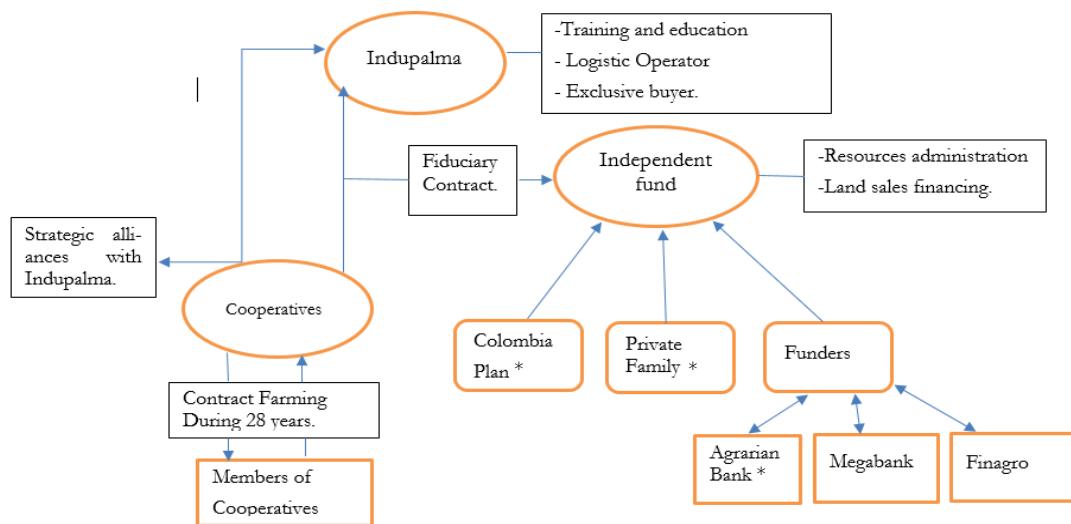
On the one hand, El Palmar is a farm constituted by 2.256 hectares, from which 1.700 are optimal to cultivate oil palm. 170 beneficiaries are part of the project and each of them will be owner of 10 hectares of productive land and 3, 27 non-cultivable additional hectares. In this case, the main actors involved were Megabanco (a financial institution that sold and financed the land, the seeding and the crop maintenance for 12 years), FINAGRO and FAG (by providing the special credit incentives that the government has for this type of projects) and Fiducolombia, another financial institution in charge of the administration of the assets and money (Murcia 2011, 33).

On the other hand, El Horizonte has an extension of 1.460 hectares, 1.300 useful to palm oil cultivation. In this case, 130 individuals are buying 10 hectares of productive land and 1, 23 additional hectares, counting with the support of one family that owned the land previously and financed the 80% of the land, complemented by the Agrarian Bank that financed the 20% left and the cropping activities, the FAG, the Colombia Plan through the Investment Fund for Peace

granted non-reimbursable funds to support the projects, and by Fiducafé, in charge of the assets administration (Murcia 2011, 33).

Both projects were financially, juridical and operationally by Indupalma, who sold the plants for starting the business and is in charge of operating it logically. Equally, a contract-farming agreement was signed to assure the commercialization of the fruit of the crops for almost 30 years.

**Figure 2. Financial and Operative model of El Palmar and El Horizonte.**



\*: Just in the case of El Horizonte.

Source: Own elaboration based on Indupalma (2012) and interviews.

However, for the successful operation of the projects was needed more. Hence, the company put at the service its previous experience and a variety of support activities that have always been part of its operations, to ensure the model based on a cooperative economy works in conflictive contexts, marked by violence and mistrustful environments between the individuals.

In this regard, the company argued that is trying to link the success of the productive projects with broader processes of social change fostered by itself. In that sense, is working on the implementation, in coordination with local NGOs, of different types of projects related to the construction of democracy, protection of human rights and peacebuilding in the region (Indupalma 2012, 79).

For example, the program *Democracy and Human Rights* implemented in collaboration with Citizenship in Action Foundation aims to 'raise awareness, strengthen the skills and empowering local actors to reinforce their role as active citizens and leaders committed to their communities and processes of local development' (Indupalma 2012, 79).

It has also supported projects that directly relates to the construction of peace through bottom-up activities, like the *Football for Peace* initiative, that from the practice of this sport intended to promote among the beneficiaries behaviors in

line with building peaceful societies like the importance fair game, teamwork and participation.

But perhaps the biggest project with greater long-term impact is the Indupalma School, which was founded in 1964 to provide education to the children of the employees of the company but has expanded its objectives and today provides adult education services in basic primary and secondary education. Throughout its history, the College has provided education to over 8141 children and 700 adults(Indupalma 2012, 84).

The school works funded 100% by Indupalma, education is free for children of people working with the company, and is charged a value of approximately 10 euros as a tuition fee for children with parents who do not work with it. Since 2009, redirected the focus of it, formulating an education project called 'Education for Peace and Development'.

According to Indupalma, it aims to 'promote the integral formation of the human being with values for leadership, competencies to work in teams, using information technology, learning to learn and learning to live in peace', and implemented as a pedagogical strategy, the TEB-Indupalma model (for its acronym in Spanish) called like that because it bases the training of students in 3 pillars: -T- information and communication technologies, E-entrepreneurship and B- bilingualism.

Here, it is important to highlight the 'Entrepreneurship' component that becomes so important in the educational model, because it is through the creation of autonomous initiatives to generate income (like the cooperatives) that the operating model of the company is based. It is the way in which it guarantees the sustainability of their operations, while according to its discourse, promotes peaceful environments through the generation of income for the residents of their areas of influence.

## **Concluding remarks.**

In this Chapter, the main features of both cases were exposed, making it clear that these are contrasting experiences, involving very different kinds of PS actors. Not only the context varied, but also the way in which peacebuilding and development activities were conceived, and the form in which they were conceived and implemented (as expressed in Figures 1 and 2).

However, some commonalities also became apparent in this Chapter: both actors were working at local level, both were seeking solutions for specific groups of people, using previous experience and knowledge of the organisation. Both were working on key topics including provision of basic services and emphasising income generation as a key strategy.

In the next Chapter the driver and motivators of this two private actors for engaging in this peacebuilding practices are treated in more depth, by using analytical tools.

## **Chapter 4 . Explanatory frameworks and understandings of local PB initiatives.**

As exposed in Chapter 2, efforts have been made in trying to analyze the participation of PS in PB processes and numerous theories and analytical frameworks have been developed in this regard. Similarly, Chapter 3 showed how in practice two Colombian companies decided to get involved and today are implementing projects in this field.

Chapter 4 has two main objectives, each one fulfilled in a specific subsection.

The first subsection is devoted to briefly present two of such theoretical attempts in identifying the drivers and motivations for the enterprises to get involved in PB; one outlined by International Alert(2006, 11) and the other constructed by Angelika Rettberg(2004, 17). These two academic pieces will be taken as the basis for constructing a new framework consisting on eight variables, which will be concisely presented.

The second subsection is focused on an in-depth analysis of the two PB initiatives, dealing with each of the selected variables in the analytical framework, by using information gathered about the two case studies.

### **4.1 Analytical tools and explanatory frameworks.**

#### ***4.1.1 International Alert's vision.***

In the first analytical tool, International Alert offers a standard and global vision based on international cross-case analysis of projects implemented in nineteen countries. From this study IA concluded that there were nine (9) key factors, including six (6) internal and three (3) external variables that could be considered vital to explain PS engagement in peacebuilding(See Appendix 4).

The first internal element, leadership, highlights the importance of decisions taken by individuals and their commitment to design the initiatives and convince doubters to engage in peacebuilding(IA 2006, 10).

Secondly, legitimacy is important because 'like any other actor seeking to engage in peacebuilding, the PS has to enjoy credibility...and the backing of other sectors'. For corporations gaining legitimacy can be particularly difficult if '...the company have played – or are perceived to have played – a role in perpetuating conflict'(IA 2006, 10).

Thirdly, the size of a company can influence its contribution and the kinds of activities in which it is likely to become participant; big companies are prone to use their influence to lobby at higher political level, and small or micro businesses can influence locally and on a smaller scale(IA 2006, 10).

Fourthly, the capacity of the company to analyse the perceptions society has about it and more importantly its own links with conflict dynamics is determinant if is willing to challenge key broader conflictive social issues(IA 2006, 10).

Fifthly, there are moral imperatives felt by individuals that compel them to participate in alleviating suffering in the society where they belong. As a consequence, a distinction between local and foreign PS is drawn, assuming than the former is more likely to feel empathy as being part of the social fabric affected by war(IA 2006, 10).

Finally, the popularization of CSR practices and standards is seen as a new opportunity to frame the issues related with peace and conflict resolution and deal with it, while at the same time fighting against the image of a PS driving or fuelling the social problems(IA 2006, 10).

Among the external elements, the first is the business environment in which a company operates 'that inevitably affects its ability to contribute to peace, and will shape the kinds of interventions it makes. Where business people have no confidence in the future, investing in peace can seem a remote priority'(IA 2006, 11).

This is also related with the ability of recognizing and counting the cost of conflict. Awareness about costs assumed by the enterprises due to conflictive scenarios is seen as a key aspect: it makes evident the economic rationality of investing resources in solving societal problems(IA 2006, 10).

In second place, the political context can be opened or restricted to address or even talk about conflict issues, and peace entrepreneurship has to adapt to a evolving public agenda to identify opportunities to strength its participation and initiatives(IA 2006, 11).

Lastly, the external facilitation and support or initiatives conceived by others – including international donor agencies, government and civil society – is effective. When other actors are catalysing an initiative that is attractive to the enterprises by configuring 'win-win' chances, almost obviously the possibilities to decide to participate on it are higher(IA 2006, 10).

#### ***4.1.2 Locally produced knowledge: Rettberg propositions.***

Our second key source for the analytical framework is the work of Rettberg, which provides helpful insights into factors motivating business-led peacebuilding with a specific attention on Colombia.

Focusing on local actors, and analyzing four different experiences in various regions of the country, this academic concludes that there are two clusters of variables shaping preferences among private sector actors for peacebuilding and development intervention: some context related and some company-specific conditions(See Appendix 5; Rettberg, 2004).

In the context related conditions, 'an intensification of conflict costs –actual or perceived, general or specific –was crucial in prompting the 4 business- led peacebuilding initiatives' described in the paper(Rettberg 2004, 17).

Added to that, ' in the middle of bleak economic prospects or economic crisis, conflict costs became increasingly unbearable' and originated the active involvement of the enterprises'(Rettberg 2004, 17).

Finally, 'the business- led peace initiatives were a response to the lack of local State presence. Public authorities were not only unable to provide protection to companies but also ineffective at addressing social and economic conditions perceived to cause local populations to either join or support illegal armed actors'(Rettberg 2004, 17).

But when talking about specific conditions, variables like the company sector, the lack of mobility or fixed assets and the size of the enterprise were identified as determinants(Rettberg 2004, 17).

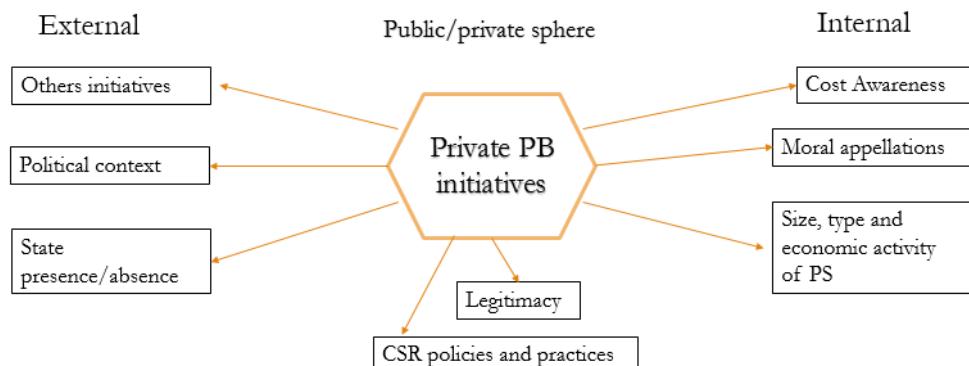
Equally, the previous philanthropic experience of some leaders of the business was taken into consideration as a motivator inside the company. Finally, the ability to free ride on external resources like international cooperation funds or external institution's counted as an explanatory factor(Rettberg 2004, 18).

#### ***4.1.3 Critical adaptation: elaborating our own approach.***

As mentioned before, these two studies are basis for the elaboration of our own framework of analysis. This new tool for understanding the role of PS in peacebuilding was constructed by critically evaluating these two instruments and combining elements of each in a way that made it possible to make sense of data collected. The framework is also useful since it includes general elements, but also takes into account the specific realities of the Colombian context facing PS actors in the present period.

By prioritizing two types of variables, those in which the results are actually very similar to what is said in the theory, and those in which the evidence appeared deviate from the theoretical assumptions, a new proposal was elaborated:

**Figure 3. Own constructed framework for analysis.**



Source: Own elaboration, based on IA(2010) and Rettberg (2004).

According to this adapted approach, three clusters of variables are prioritized: internal, external and those located in a public/private interface.

To start with, *external* variables are concerned at first with initiatives catalysed or promoted by third parties (public, private or NGOs). In all cases, there is the possibility of free riding resources that would not normally be accessible to the enterprise unless peacebuilding was engaged in(IA 2006, 11). Among such initiatives we include bilateral projects but also multi-stakeholder agreements, PPP and informal alliances that can be attractive for different reasons for PS actors, as will be explained later in this Chapter.

Secondly, the political environment in which the projects are being designed and implemented can be crucial(IA 2006, 11). By political environment I understand the openness of the public agenda to discuss issues of peace and conflict in general. Hence, the possibilities for the companies to frame the interventions as PB are higher because of the willingness among the public opinion to recognise the importance of having a PS committed in helping to solve social and political divisions. Also, the political environment can be modified because new legislation is adopted in the country and as a result, new areas of intervention can be easily identified by the private actors.

Finally, the presence or absence of state institutions in the area in which the projects are developed can be decisive in terms of the motivation to start the PB initiatives. Often, private actors decide to start projects that includes delivery of public services because of the incapacity of the public institutions to do it by their own.

But this dimension can be also determinant in the way the activities are implemented in the field. Dynamics of cooperation and dialogue between the PS actors and the State can be established, but also relations of substitution or confrontation, that would lead to the strengthening or weakening of the capacities of public institutions in mid and long-terms(Rettberg 2004, 17).

Among the *internal* factors, awareness of the costs (direct or indirect, and in a short or a long run) that the conflict is bringing to business operations is considered as an important justification to start addressing some of its consequences or to help in its final resolution (IA 2006, 11; Rettberg 2004, 17).

At the same time, some sense of moral appellations and responsibility can be at play. The desire of lessening the suffering of local people and to re-establish social relations affected by armed conflict can exist, at the same time that economic interests are promoted(IA 2006, 11).

Also related with this are the dimensions of size, type and economic activity of the private actor leading the PB initiative. In terms of size, the power of bargaining with other PS actors, lobbying the State, or even financing entirely the projects is evidently different when talking about a small, a medium or a big enterprise(IA 2006, 11).

In terms of type, as mentioned before, there is an assumed higher compassion from the Local PS to what is happening with communities in which the business are being made, contrary to foreign capitals, which can be less concerned about

long terms process of social transformation and more in short term dividends(IA 2005, 11).

And last but not least, the main economic activity deployed by the private actor leading or promoting the initiative seems to be crucial. Elements like the character of being a rural/urban business, the mobility of assets and resources, the type of good and services that are produced and the business models implemented in that production, are elements to be considered(Rettberg 2004, 17).

In the middle of these two groups of variables have been located the aspects of legitimacy and CSR policies and practices. Both involve elements inside and outside the organizations and are situated in what I will call a *public-private interface*.

The legitimacy is normally considered as an attribute that is achieved or augmented through the implementation of PB activities; a result or an end. However, legitimacy can be also a mean or an attribute that is put at the service of the projects to increase the possibilities to success and impact(IA 2006,11).

In relation with CSR activities, as discussed in Chapter 2, they have been depicted as mere public relations tools in the search for legitimacy, better image and reputation among the consumers. Higher profits in short, mid and long term are the ultimate objective.

However, they have gained importance as a developmental tool and as a frame in which the enterprises can fit and justify its PB interventions(IA 2006, 11). It will be naïve to assume that each CSR strategy is conceived with a genuine objective of foster development among local populations in a long term vision, but in some cases, the companies can consider CSR strategies as part of its business philosophy, guaranteeing higher sustainability for the projects(Rettberg 2004,18).

## **4.2 Understanding the cases in the light of theory.**

The next section will present both cases in parallel, briefly analysing each variable exposed in the preceding section. The main characteristics of each PB initiative will be addressed, while presenting the results of the data collection phase in light of the theoretical framework discussed above.

### ***4.2.1 External Collective actions: Taking advantages of others initiatives.***

Regarding the importance of initiatives for projects initiated by third actors, two different perspectives were perceived. SF openly acknowledges that its decision to begin operations and specifically to intervene in El Salado and not in another place was mediated by actions taken previously by other actors, especially by public entities like the CNRR and the Historical Memory Group.

All these towns I visited had similar characteristics in terms of massacres, displacement, and extreme poverty, but El Salado had an additional factor: The CNRR had almost finished the reconstruction of the historical memory

about the violence in the territory, something crucial for the beginning of a reconstruction process (Villareal 2011, 5).

In this sense, it can be argued that SF identified the opportunity to free-ride on a valuable public good in peacebuilding processes which is the knowledge about how the conflict affected the communities. Also, on the memory construction process that is a prerequisite for later reconciliation and reconstruction not only physical but on the social fabric present in the communities.

For its part, in the data gathered about Indupalma was not found a clear evidence of having based its decision beyond the purely internal and individual motivations. The projects were not conceived based on the work of any other actor beyond the previous experience of the enterprise in the business.

Nevertheless, the company identified economic resources that would not be accessed by the beneficiaries if the projects would not have been designed. Resources offered by the State and by international cooperation funding managed through the Investment Fund for Peace (part of Plan Colombia) (Indupalma 2012, 45) were accessed.

In the case of El Palmar a loan for \$ 3,780 million pesos and public incentives up to the 40% of the cost of cultivation were handled. For El Horizonte the financing of the 100% of the value of the land was achieved, and a loan for \$6.652 million with the Agrarian Bank and a non-refundable support from the Plan Colombia of \$ 2,488 million pesos were also arranged (Indupalma 2012, 46).

#### ***4.2.2 Political context: discourses and public agendas.***

In both cases, the political context has been a key motivator, but also a determinant of how the projects are designed and framed.

As a general context, between 2002 and 2010 under the presidency of Alvaro Uribe, in Colombia the official discourse denied the existence of an internal armed conflict. Instead it argued that the country was experiencing a terrorist threat at the hands of leftist groups, making more difficult for companies to recognize their role in PB and conflict resolution issues. However, with the new government the discourse substantially changed to the point in 2012 peace talks with the main guerrilla group started.

During this process of 'political openness' and the inclusion of peace issues on the public agenda, new legislation was introduced as the Law 975/2005-Peace and Justice Law, and the Law 1448/2011-Victims and Land Restitution Law. SF and Indupalma devised both projects having these new events as context, and over time have shown how their activities evolve according to these changes.

SF in its first report relates to the Peace and Justice Law and transitional justice processes as a fact that allowed people of El Salado to think about their desires for reparation and reconciliation (Semana Foundation 2011, 6) fostering the foundation's decision to intervene there. Three years later, the Victims and Land Restitution Law is the main framework, and State institutions in charge of it are seen as one of the main allies in the project implementation.

Meanwhile, Indupalma began the design and implementation of its projects in 2003. However, only until 2009 the company began to outline them as activities contributing to building peace and rural development simultaneously. An example of this is the participation in collective efforts that emphasize the role of business in peacebuilding, as the prize 'Emprender Paz' (Undertake Peace), in which both projects were finalists; El Palmar in 2009 and El Horizonte in 2012(Emprender Paz 2013).

Perhaps the peak of exploitation of the favourable political context to this type of projects was in February 2012. Indupalma invited the president of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, to symbolically offer the title deeds of El Palmar to the farmers when debts were completely paid to the financing banks.

Even if the project is not implemented as part of the land restitution policies from the Law 1448/2011, during the speech proclaimed at the event, Santos made clear allusions to the importance of these projects as PB activities noting that:

It shows that the seeds (of peace) can germinate and how, because what are we doing today is to cultivate peace. What we are doing with this event and with the Victims and land Restitution Law is to sow peace throughout Colombia(SIG 2013).

It appears that both the company and the government have been benefited from a match in its objectives, and as a result are characterising the projects as peacebuilding initiatives more vehemently.

#### ***4.2.3 The State as an absent/weak actor.***

The almost total state absence in El Salado allowed the occurrence of the massacre. Some research even talked about complicity between members of the military forces and the responsible paramilitary groups(CNRR 2009, 37). In this sense, this factor is at the bottom of the origins of the initiative.

In one interview, a member of the SF recognizes that the state absence was, and still is, one of the biggest motivators. However, she made clear that the idea has never been to replace public functions:

We will not replace public institutions because it is impossible and completely counterproductive. But we also believe that often the state needs a boost: sometimes it does not have capacities in a town so far away. In reality, there's no state presence (Interviewee # 1).

We can say that the lack of public institutional presence in the area was not only a motivator, but has determined the way the Alliance has been implemented in these three years. It is clear that one of the main activities of SF has been lobbying public institutions responsible for intervening in the area to ensure the rights of the population.

But it appears that the state is not in practice a monolithic actor and therefore, the level of relationship with it is diverse. The focus has been more on national authorities than in departmental and local, as recognized by SF:

We have worked more with the Ministries. We have tried to work a lot with the departmental government, but unfortunately, it works just better with the national( Interviewee # 1).

In this sense, it seems that although the intention is not to replace public institutions, in practice SF has been forced to do so. Even more when it comes to activities in charge of local and regional authorities.

For Indupalma, the state weakness in providing security and social services in the area of operations of the company was crucial. Illegal armed groups began to affect the company's operations. This (combined with other factors) led the company nearly into bankruptcy and forced a change of business model to the one based in cooperatives. This change years later led to the formulation of the two specific projects considered here.

Beyond the role that the company has taken on El Palmar and El Horizonte, usually in their activities continues showing features of replacing the State (as suggested by Rettberg 2004, 17). Especially at the local level, where it provides education services (as showed in Chapter 3) associated to issues of empowerment and conflict resolution, as supportive activities required for the success of its general operations.

Finally, as in the case of Semana, strong relations were established between the company and the public institutions responsible for issues concerning the projects, especially at the national level (as FINAGRO and Ministry of Agriculture). Explicitly, the company acknowledged that it did not establish relations of any kind with authorities in their departmental and local level for the implementation of El Palmar and El Horizonte projects (Interviewee #4).

#### ***4.2.4 Counting the costs of conflict (or not).***

One of the most discussed issues in the literature is the awareness of the costs associated with conflict that companies assume, and the importance of these as motivators to launch peacebuilding activities. Interestingly, in the present investigation the results of the case studies are mixed.

On the side of Semana Publications, there is no sign that the Board of Directors considered the costs that conflict brought to the company as a motivation to create the Foundation for working on issues of post-conflict reconstruction.

Roughly, the living conditions faced by residents of El Salado as a result of the conflict does appear to have been considered because they had a direct impact on the performance of the company (in fact, Semana Publications develops its operations in the centre of the country, far away the area of intervention). Neither there are references about having developed a process of reflection on the costs that the armed conflict in general brought for the company.

By contrast, in the case of Indupalma there are clear references to the impact that violence brought for its operations. As shown in Chapter 3, since the 80s the company faced increasingly larger costs by the presence of armed groups in the area that made pressure to yield on labour issues, resulting in high fiscal

burdens for the company and in higher costs of hiring private security services(Rettberg 2004, 10).

This, added to an acute economic crisis, almost conducted the company to bankruptcy. Though, strategic decisions were taken leading to implementation of a new working approach based on inclusive business, materialized in El Palmar and El Horizonte. As one of the persons interviewed established, 'at first it was a matter of saving the company, but later became a social commitment' (Interviewee # 5).

#### ***4.2.5 Moral appellations: doing for profits or just doing for good.***

When considering the moral appellations variable, contrasting versions appeared again between the two experiences.

In the case of SF, in the data analysed are clear references to a moral sense that shapes the entire initiative from its origins until today. Evidence of this is that in the first Results Report, one of the main arguments for starting the Alliance was:

As Colombians we were often indifferent to barbarism or, in any case, our response has not been enough to compensate the *suffering* of so many remote communities in Colombia. But if we could not prevent the bleeding, we are called in helping to lay the foundations for a more just and peaceful society, because the *pain* of those Colombians is of all of us. Not only of the state (Semana Foundation 2010, 6) (Emphasis added).

Similarly, that sense of commitment with the resolution of the conflict had impacts on how they developed the first activities of the Alliance. The launch of the project in mass media consisted of campaigns that tried to touch the heart of the Colombian public in general, with the message of 'imagine that there is a town affected by a massacre, imagine the people affected is you and help them' (Interviewee # 1). That initial campaign was also used as a tool to attract more companies that later joined the project by donating money or knowledge.

As can be seen, moral appellations were critical for the decision to create the corporate foundation. Also are part of the strategy of calling and involvement of more actors, moulding practices and activities. Thus, they are both drivers and shapers in the project.

By contrast, in Indupalma, motivations seem to be much more with an economical dye. The 'value generation in an inclusive schema' is according to their perspective the primary responsibility of the company and that is the basis of its CSR: Foster entrepreneurial opportunities to provide social cohesion and solidarity, generate access to property and wealth, build business models and support education as a tool of development' are identified as its main tasks(Indupalma 2013).

Although appeals to solidarity, it is considered as a characteristic that is encouraged among people who belong to the project, but is never portrayed as a clear motivation to start the projects. In the words of the Indupalma Manager in 2004:

Our prime interest is economical: profit. Profit for the company and profit for its partners, in this case the cooperatives. It will have a positive effect on the establishment of a new and vigorous community. The social for the social does not pay(Rettberg 2004, 10).

The company decides not to give away anything to the farmers who are part of their projects, besides the training in entrepreneurship issues that are key for the implementation of its model (these include training on techniques for palm cultivation but also on issues of democracy, participation and accountability).

One of the testimonies collected is very clear in this: ‘our policy is that people, when things are given away, does not value them’(Interviewee # 5). This visions about the company social responsibility and commitment are clearly distant from positions of philanthropic and charitable tint.

#### ***4.2.6 Size, type and economic activity of the private actor: when the business itself matters.***

One commonality between the private actors is that both are made up of national capital, supporting the idea that local players have greater incentives to participate in peacebuilding. Equally, both companies are large enterprises according to Colombian Law: they have more than 201 workers and exceed 15,000 monthly legal minimum wage in assets(Law 590 of 2000; Semana Publications 2012, 134; Indupalma 2012, 37).

Though, this feature is not important just because demonstrates economic capacity implying higher chances of sustainability for the projects. Big companies are expected to exert greater convening power, lobby or third party management to engage necessary actors in the initiatives. Both enterprises are using their size and position as an asset.

This leads us to talk about the importance of the economic activity of each of the companies. Each private actor has different attributes depending on this activity, and has used its convening and/or lobby power for different things, targeting dissimilar actors.

The SF concentrates its productive activity in the services sector, focused on generating information to be consumed by Colombian middle and upper classes. It enjoys high legitimacy and is recognized as a responsible and reliable media, being the second one preferred by opinion leaders in the country (Cifras y Conceptos 2013, 12). As discussed earlier it has focused its lobbying in the central state level, other private enterprises and international agencies to involve them in different roles within the alliance.

On the other hand, Indupalma’s economic activity is related to the goods sector, but also with logistics operation services such as those offered in the projects of El Palmar and El Horizonte. However, its market shares are practically guaranteed; the major buyers of its products are other companies belonging to the same corporate group(Indupalma 2013).

But the company is part of the palm oil sector which for years has faced criticisms for the impact this type of monocrop has in terms of food security,

threatening traditional types of livelihood based on small farms. Also, high levels of capital are required to enter the business. In some cases, it has been accused of causing forced displacement due to the high areas of land needed to make the business profitable.

So, these peacebuilding projects appear to be generated as a response to criticisms the company faces, it is argued, by the mere fact of working in the economic activity in which they work, without considering the specific characteristics of the company (Interviewee #4).

Finally, the business characteristics as a motivator for the development of these projects are important. First, the activities of the company are developed in rural areas of the country where conflict has been felt for four decades and is still alive today. Second, working with a crop with long-term returns, the company requires stability in its environment to ensure its operations. Third, derived from the above, the enterprise has no option to relocate their operations elsewhere in the country. This features can make more rational and profitable in the long run to promote peace in the region through PB initiatives (Rettberg 2004, 18).

#### ***4.2.7 Legitimacy as an asset: Used or produced.***

Closely linked to the previous point is the issue of legitimacy (existing or searched) of the actors. In both cases the legitimacy appears as a variable that deserves attention. Different perspectives can be drawn from the information collected.

As we have seen, SF has a kind of 'inherited' legitimacy derived from the private actor that supports the project, Semana Publications. So, one can say in this case the previous legitimacy is a *mean* that is put at the service of the project, fact of which the Foundation seems to be aware as shown in Chapter 3.

This is not to say that this experience cannot be perceived as another opportunity to improve the public image of the company, even if it is not considered as the main driver. In other words, you cannot have 'too much' legitimacy. Any new activity that increases the recognition levels will be used by any business, especially in a firm engaged in public relations and expert in image management.

From an almost opposed perspective, it could be argued that Indupalma is framing the two projects as peacebuilding initiatives as a strategy to increase their levels of legitimacy and acceptance, historically low for the sector to which it belongs, as discussed above. In this sense, the projects are both *means* and *ends* in terms of legitimacy.

Nevertheless, we must take into account what would be the firm's real needs in terms of legitimizing their activities, for example, in front of potential buyers. As mentioned before, Indupalma does not produce goods purchased directly by consumers in a supermarket. In that sense, increasing market shares should not be considered as the only or main motivation for the projects.

However, broader and longer-term interests seems to be at stake, like accessing government incentives for this type of agro industrial activities, or improving its

‘social license to operate’ among the communities in which operates (Porter and Kramer, 2007) achieving higher stability and support.

#### **4.2.8 CSR as a motivator and framework.**

Finally, the issue of how CSR policies and practices of both companies are related to peacebuilding projects is the last variable to consider, as a transition issue leading to the Chapter 5. As common element, both actors implement activities catalogued as CSR strategies, and the two PB initiatives are presented as part of a broad picture of commitment to the society in which companies develop their operations. However, none of the organizations formulate its strategies considering their contributions to peacebuilding as their main objectives or priorities.

In each case this has particular implications. For Semana Publications, the activities promoted through its foundation are just a part of a much larger scheme: its greatest contribution to sustainable development is related with ‘printing an ‘intellectual footprint’ in public opinion responsibly’. In so, they decide to assume responsibilities *as a Media* (reflected in editorial principles as independence, quality and diversity and plurality), *as a Company* (in areas such as profitability, environmental care, and qualified service) and certain *Commitments* with what they call ‘key agendas’ for the country (Semana Publications 2011, 8).

These key agendas are the strengthening of Colombian journalism, democracy and governance, leadership and competitiveness, promoting sustainable development and the construction of historical memory (Semana Publications 2011, 8). In the last one is inscribed what is doing SF in El Salado, but this work is not presented as the centre of the activities in social responsibility issues. It seems that Semana believes its impacts are greater in other fronts of work with activities beyond those promoted through its corporate foundation.

In relation to Indupalma, the company understands CSR as ‘how to manage the business, considering how this positively impacts all stakeholders’ (Indupalma 2013). According to the head of the Department of CSR in the company, it is intended that ‘each processes of the company operates in a way that does not generate negative impacts or damage to external stakeholders or employees of the company’ (Interviewee # 4).

As its general strategy, the company sets out five areas of work: To create value for shareholders and stakeholders, provide entrepreneurial opportunities for social cohesion and solidarity, generate access to property and wealth, build inclusive business models, support education as a tool for development, and promote a sense of belonging to the opportunities (Indupalma 2013).

All these areas of work are materialized, some with more emphasis than others, in El Palmar and El Horizonte. These two initiatives gain more relevance today for the company as can be considered as showcases of the impacts their CSR strategies can generate in specific local communities.

## **Concluding remarks.**

As could be observed throughout this Chapter, it appears that both the selection and construction of the analytical tools as well as the choices about the PB to be studied seems to have been adequate for the purposes of the research. The data gathered offered the opportunity to compare, contrast and expose in the light of the variables and theories how in practice exist points in common between the PB two initiatives led by this private actors, but also allowed me to find the points in which the two projects differ substantially. The information contained in this section will be the input for the formulation of the analytical findings, presented in the last Chapter.

## **Chapter 5 : Findings, analytical conclusions and the need for further investigation.**

The present Chapter will be devoted to the analysis of commons grounds and differences among the two PB projects. One main finding in terms of significant commonalities between the two organizations is fully addressed: both initiatives could be placed under the umbrella of what is known as 'liberal peace' for development(See Chapter 2, section 2.2). I designate this as a *Developmental Liberal Peacebuilding* approach.

Nevertheless, it has become clear that in practice each project is motivated by different reasons, took distinctive forms, and worked in singular ways with local communities. I will link this second finding with theoretical perspectives around CSR that were presented at the end of Chapter 2(See section 2.4).

I will argue that the reconstruction process of El Salado is an example of a 'social investment' type of CSR with broader ambitions in terms of integrated human development, cultural relevance and local peacebuilding. In contrast, the two projects of El Palmar and El Horizonte can be understood as examples of a 'business integration model', which has much narrower objectives and focuses mainly on economic development and education as the main bases for peacebuilding.

### **5.1 Common ground: Corporate engagement with a Liberal Developmental PB Approach.**

The concept of PB corporate engagement basically is understood as 'all activities by business actors that *actively* contribute to conflict prevention, conflict settlement or conflict transformation/peacebuilding'(Joras 2009, 7). Even if it looks like an obvious definition, it is important to note the active component. Coping strategies that are just oriented to minimize the negative effects of violence over the company operations without trying to influence the conflict, its dynamics and causes, cannot be considered as such(Joras 2009, 8.)

The way chosen by the two private actors to address transformations from conflictive scenarios to peaceful ones was the implementation of the specific projects considered in this research. The issues of peace *and* development are tried to be solved simultaneously through a liberal perspective of both key concepts.

As a global trend after the Cold War, new methods to conflict management and security emerged trying to embrace social, economic and institutional needs concurrently. As mentioned in Chapter 2, a liberal peacebuilding approach was consolidated, basically advocating for the promotion of liberal economies and democratic regimes as the vehicles to guarantee stability between and within the countries(Newman et al 2009, 7). This broadened the scope of what is considered as PB activities nowadays.

According to the findings of this research, this dominant global trend is reflected locally in the way both projects were conceived by the private actors. This brings implications for the kind of activities implemented in the field.

Following Newman(2009, 8) a profile of each initiative was constructed, as presented in Table 1<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 1. Liberal Developmental PB activities in the cases under study.**

	SF	IND.
<b>SECURITY</b>		
Supporting a ceasefire and peace processes		
Demobilization and disarmament of former combatants, and their reintegration into society		
Collecting and destroying weapons and de-mining		
Withdrawal of foreign forces		
Addressing regional sources of instability and conflict	✓	✓
Achieving security (security sector reform, police enforcement, capacity building)	✓	
<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Addressing property and land ownership disputes and reaching settlements	✓ ✓	✓
Stabilizing the economy (controlling hyperinflation, addressing exchange rates crises, establishing currency stability)		
Securing natural resources against illegal predation		
Addressing inequality among ethnic groups in society		
Employment creation, economic development, securing livelihoods	✓	✓ ✓
Attracting skilled expatriots back to the country to contribute the recovery		
Basic welfare provision	✓ ✓	✓
<b>HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE</b>		
Repatriation (or resettlement) of refugees and internally displaced persons, finding durable solutions to "protracted refugee situations"		
Responding to food insecurity		
Responding to acute health concerns		
<b>GOVERNANCE AND THE RULE OF LAW</b>		
Strengthening law and order	✓	
Democracy assistance (electoral assistance and observation, party regulation, developing civil society and media)	✓ ✓	✓
Governance assistance (strengthening governance at both national and local levels, strengthening institutions of justice and legislation, addressing corruption)	✓	
Resuming and strengthening public service delivery (health service, education, infrastructure, transportation, energy)	✓ ✓	✓
Human Rights, reconciliation, truth, "transitional justice"	✓ ✓	✓
Addressing land reform claims	✓	✓
Constitutional drafting or amendments		

Source: Based on Newman, Paris and Richmond(2009, 8), with data collected by the author.

As can be seen, they are implementing activities in the majority of the categories, mainly focusing their efforts in the components labelled as 'Development' and 'Governance and the Rule of Law'.

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<sup>1</sup> Starting from a qualitative evaluation exercise, each category has been marked with an arrow or two, depending on how strongly each project is working on such activities.

As shown in Chapter 3, the issues of land property and ownership, economic development and recovery, income generation (through agro industrial activities, i.e., La Quimera, la Conquista in SF and El Palmar and El Horizonte in Indupalma), provision of basic services and enhancement of state institutions are present in both initiatives. Equally the topics of promoting attitudes and democratic principles among the beneficiaries of the projects are addressed. The prioritization of this elements can be seen as a sign of the developmental and liberal character of both PB initiatives.

But the emphasis given to each one varies as analysed below. This differences will be explained by the different frames on CSR and corporate engagement in which the PB projects are subscribed.

## **5.2 Differentiating Hallmarks: Emphasis and scope of the initiatives.**

As detailed in Chapter 2, broadly speaking there are two kinds of activities in CSR in general: Corporate Social Investment and Business Integration. When an enterprise decide to engage in peacebuilding initiatives while framing the projects as CSR, is expected that their strategies exposes particular features as found in the cases studied(See Appendix 6).

On the one side, the findings suggests that the reconstruction process of El Salado started by Semana Foundation is an example of the first type, but I will add the adjective of Corporate Social Investment for '*broader*' peace, due to four main reasons.

To start, is an initiative working with communities external to the organization that cannot be considered neither as shareholder nor stakeholders in the core business of Semana Publications. As shown in Chapter 4, the operations of the enterprise were not affected by the realities this community was facing. Nonetheless, they took the initiative and started to work.

As a second point, the alliance pretends to radically transform life conditions of the beneficiaries by intervening in different fronts with activities prioritized by the same community, as showed in Figure 1. In that sense, it looks like a more ambitious project, also because the area intervened was in worst conditions than the one in which Indupalma is working on.

That fact leads to the third point. The historical abandonment of the State that motivated the project also implied that everything was to be done there. The relation between a conception of development consisting on multiple dimensions and the many social processes required to build peace in the area was clearer.

From their perspective development is conceived as the sufficient conditions that do not let communities to fall into poverty traps and allows them to dig out of those cycles by creating opportunities and support for the communities in process of self-management and empowerment. This require actions on infrastructure, health, education, etc.(Interviewee #2) beyond promoting economic growth and income generation. Those two elements are just one part of the strategy of intervention.

Finally, peace is also discursively conceived in a broader perspective, equating reconciliation with peace. It includes aspects of equality, access to justice and historical memory to heal wounds and ruptures generated by the violence, in line of the positive peace conceptions mentioned in Chapter 2 (Interviewee #2). At the same time, in practice, grassroots leaderships are promoted and strengthened as a way to guarantee the sustainability of the process, tracing features of a bottom-up approach to the PB project, using the concept of Lederach also exposed in Chapter 2.

On the other side, the outcomes of this research suggest that the projects of El Palmar and El Horizonte initiated by Indupalma are an example of the second category, as being a strategy of business integration *by inclusive models*. Equally, four elements are indicative of this.

Firstly, as described in Chapter 3, the projects are designed to benefit communities present in the company's area of influence and directly involved in its operations, namely, identifiable stakeholders. According to the testimonies collected, the enterprise took the initiative, designed technically and financially the projects and once they were constructed, peasants participating through the cooperatives of associative work were invited to take part in El Palmar and El Horizonte projects, to participate in the chain business as suppliers of raw materials through long-term contracts(Interviewee #4).

Even if they are portrayed as 'strategic partners', the specific needs of the community were not previously consulted in depth (it is argued that in the aim of practicality). Henceforth, participation of local grassroots was not so predominant in the process.

Secondly, from a narrow perspective, the projects aim to improve living conditions of the participants mainly by fostering land and capital access that at the end should be reflected in higher income generation and wealth creation. There are no clear references of a multiplicity of work fronts beyond what is needed to minimally guarantee the success of the projects. The social needs addressed are also less than in the case of SF, maybe because the living conditions faced by the beneficiaries were also less severe.

Thirdly, the enterprise recognizes that providing basic services as education has been historically one of its main duties, sometimes substituting the local state(Interviewee #4). However, in this process of knowledge transference via the Indupalma School and informal education activities, there is always emphasis on issues related with the particular economic activity of palm oil production. Aspects like reconciliation or pacific resolution of conflicts are seen as supportive and collateral.

Finally, and as an outcome of the fact that the projects are conceived as a strategy to guarantee the stability (in terms of security issues but also in supply of inputs for the production) required for its business operations, the visions of development and peace are also 'business-restricted'.

In terms of development, it is mainly conceived as 'business development' reflected on entrepreneurship promotion. When asking for the meanings of peace, the person interviewed reflected on the fact that is a 'really capitalist vision'. In their philosophy, there is no peace when there is poverty, and when there are no opportunities to work in a legal activity that can maintain local

populations away from participate in illegal armed groups, drug trafficking and coca crops(Interviewee #4). As can be seen, is a vision of peace sustained by economic arguments that corresponds with the role generally assigned to the PS in post-conflict scenarios, as described in Chapter 2.

### 5.3 Overall Conclusions

As a way of conclusion, it is important to reflect on how the different sections of the research have been constructed. First, theory was reviewed to locate the two PB initiatives amidst conceptual and analytical debates not only about peace and development but on CSR.

Subsequently, through the study cases was shown that in practice both private actors decided to play a role in peacebuilding processes fostering development processed in war-affected specific local communities. In doing so they fulfilled some of the roles that have been assigned in theory to PS, as seen in Chapter 2, like job generation, promotion of entrepreneurship, recovery of economies or providing managerial experience. However, the scope and intentionality of its interventions vary.

As a result, the contributions to peace construction have been wider in the case of Semana Foundation, or limited, in the case of Indupalma. In that sense, what the results suggests in general is that the role of the PS in 'Developmental Liberal peacebuilding' might better be understood in future.

To start, it is important to reflect in the fact that the PS can act with a sense of shared responsibility in solving social problems, but will mainly do it since a limited perspective, assuming just the responsibilities that identifies and internalize as their own and according with equally restricted capacities(as evidenced in Chapter 4).

It would be too much, even naive, to pretend that the majority of the PS does not implement PB initiatives from a vision that promotes a deepening of liberal and free market economies. Profit is the main driver of businesses, and that's what they do best.

Thus, this research paper agree with voices that are calling for realistic perspectives about what the PS can and pretend to do in development issues. This to avoid excessive optimism conductive to disappointment between other actors in the field like the State, the academia and non-profits organizations as highlighted by Knorrtinga and Helmsing (2008, 1059) and Rettberg (2013, 306).

In overall, the investigation evidenced that at the end it was not a question of if the PS was contributing in constructing peace or not by helping communities to re-develop after suffering from violence. Both initiatives are undoubtedly fostering social transformations, but the possible impacts and scope of this interventions is mediated by how they are engaging those process, using which tools and it what degree.

By tools, I am understanding here the organizational arrangements made for working in the PB initiatives. In the case of Semana Publications, they decided to *outsource* this interest and created the foundation; an external entity financially dependent but autonomous in their decision-making processes. The foundation

became the main tool to attract the greatest number possible of allies as shown in Chapter 3, and the catalyst of the biggest PPP in Colombia in terms of post-conflict reconstruction.

In the case of Indupalma, the degree of importance of PB process seems to be lesser, more as a result, than as a prime motivator. The company has decided to handle these issues through its CSR department which is an internal part of the organization and as such, does not only pay attention to these peacebuilding projects but also to other elements of CSR policies as environmental sustainability and labour rights. In this sense, it is understandable that the energy that devoted to projects is not majoritarian nor going beyond what was required for the design, and current implementation and evaluation of El Palmar and El Horizonte projects.

This practice of 'organizational institutionalization' of peace initiatives from the PS can be considered and promoted by other actors in the development field, exploring the potential compatibilities between profitable activities and comprehensive social transformations. When trying to engage critically but constructively with businesses, other Colombian actors can promote processes that broaden the visions of peace and development that in general have private actors.

Recognizing the validity of the criticism the liberal PB approach has faced (See for example, Newman 2009), is also important to acknowledge that the straightforward way to take advantage of the resources that the PS has is assigning it partial but long term responsibilities in contributing with resources to create, coordinate and maintain a PB infrastructure. In so, new schemes of local governance like the one fostered by SF can be explored, considering the importance of clearly defining responsibilities and roles in the processes.

A reflexive State on these issues should develop capabilities to regulate the activities the PS decide to implement, while cooperative environments between private companies enticed to participate in this field should be fostered. Equally, moderate NGOs could follow up on these initiatives, identifying strengths and weaknesses to improve their objectives and impacts.

## **5.4 Further research suggested.**

Based on the results the research yielded, but also considering its major limitations in terms of scope, methodology and resources, subsequent priority research can be conducted in the following three aspects.

First, it would be relevant to extend this kind of analysis to a larger number of cases. Further evaluation and improvement of the explanatory frameworks that have been built so far in terms of motivations and meanings of corporate engagement in PB considering the particularities of the Colombian context is needed.

This will allow to formulate stronger generalizations, which may be used as input in designing process of effective public policies, contributing in the direction indicated in the previous section.

Secondly, the relations established between the private actors and public authorities at the different levels of the public administration can be deeply explored. As both cases suggested, the companies identified as a more effective strategy to coordinate or engage with the national level to achieve its main objectives.

This can imply in practice private actors, in the aim of practicality and effectiveness, could be overriding local authorities that should be directly responsible for improving the living conditions of local populations. In this sense, it is important to analyse how the strategies adopted by companies in the name of PB and development weaken or strengthen the State, and if they do to a greater or lesser extent depending on whether their efforts are focused on the local, the departmental or national level.

Finally, if the aim is to assign to the PS a long term role in peacebuilding processes, research that identifies the issues affecting the sustainability of the initiatives started by companies should be conducted. In this regard, the internal dynamics, organizational structures and accountability mechanisms to enhance local ownership involved in CSR framed as PB strategies appear to be some key elements to be explored.

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# **Appendices.**

## **Appendix 1. List of primary documents consulted.**

### **1. Related with El Salado Project:**

- Sustainability Report 2009- 2011 of Semana Publications.
- First Report (2010) 'This is how the Salado is reconstructed'.
- Second Report (2011) 'Looking forward with El Salado'
- Third Report (2012). 'The future is in the Land'.

### **2. Related with El Palmar and El Horizonte Projects.**

- Emprender Paz prize nomination form El Palmar 2009.
- Emprender Paz prize nomination form El Horizonte 2012.
- Internal Consultancy Report, produced by Andrés Murcia Navarro.
- Managerial Model Internal Report, produced by Andrés Prieto.
- Project Profile, produced by UNDP.

## **Appendix 2. List of Interviews conducted.**

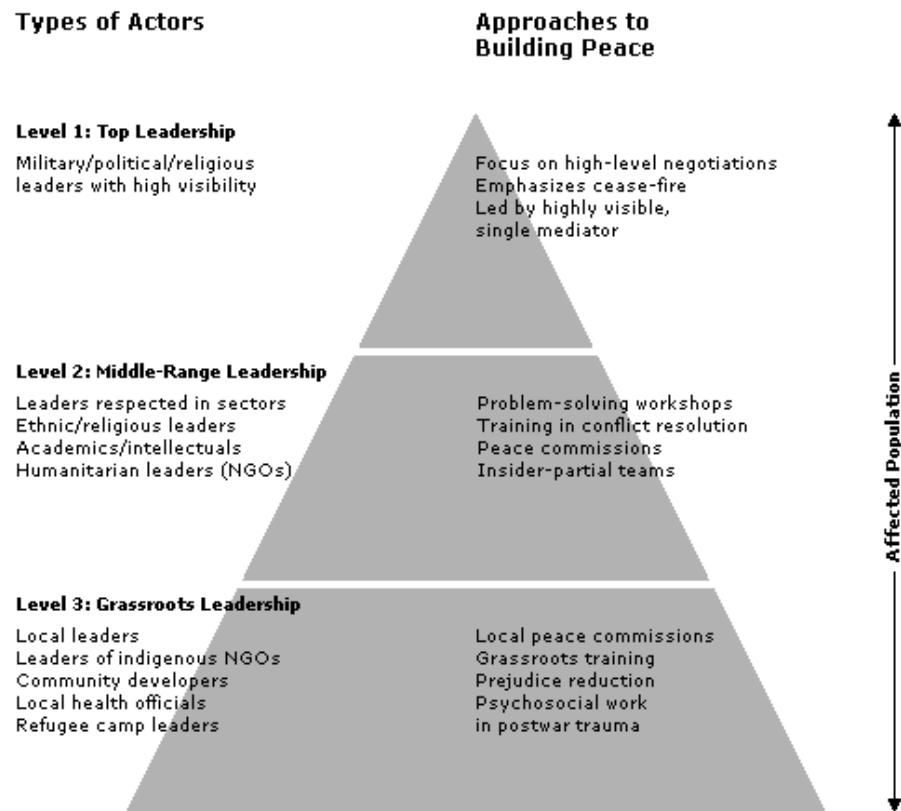
### **1. Related with El Salado Project.**

- Interviewee #1: María Alejandra Cabal: Semana Foundation General Manager (2 interviews)
- Interviewee #2: María Luisa Montalvo: Administrative and Financial area in Semana Fundation.
- Interviewee #3: Mónica de Núbbila: Member of the Sustainability Team in Semana Publications.

### **2. Related with Indupalma.**

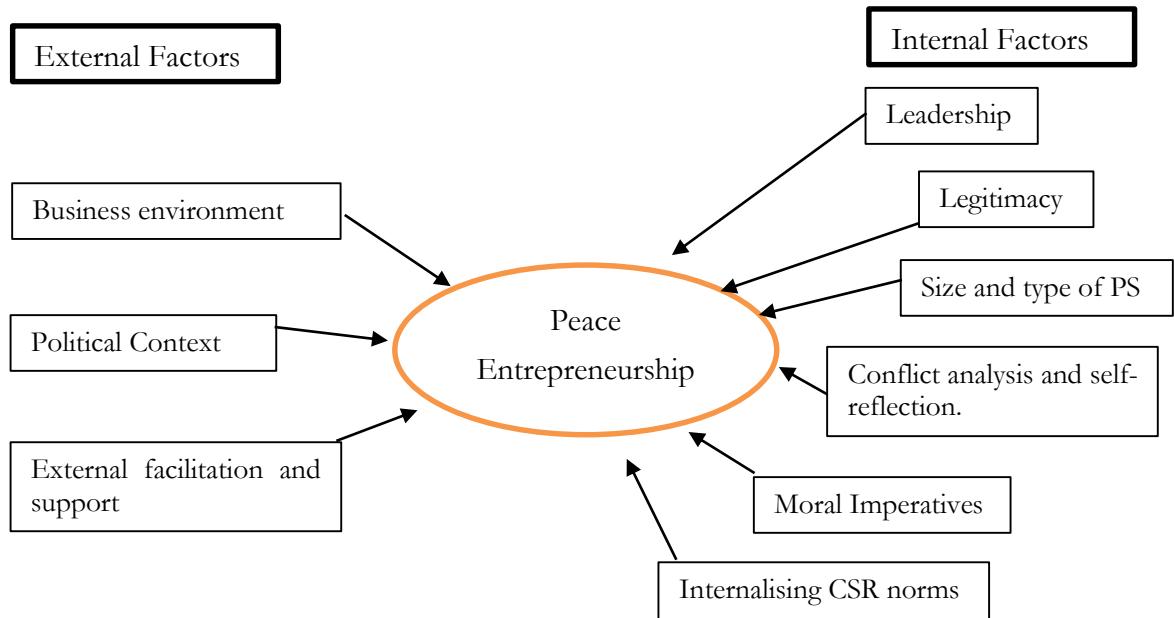
- Interviewee #4: Luisa Fernanda González: Head of CSR Department (2 interviews)
- Interviewee #5: Tatiana Ángel: Manager Assistant.

### Appendix 3. Lederach's Peacebuilding Pyramid.



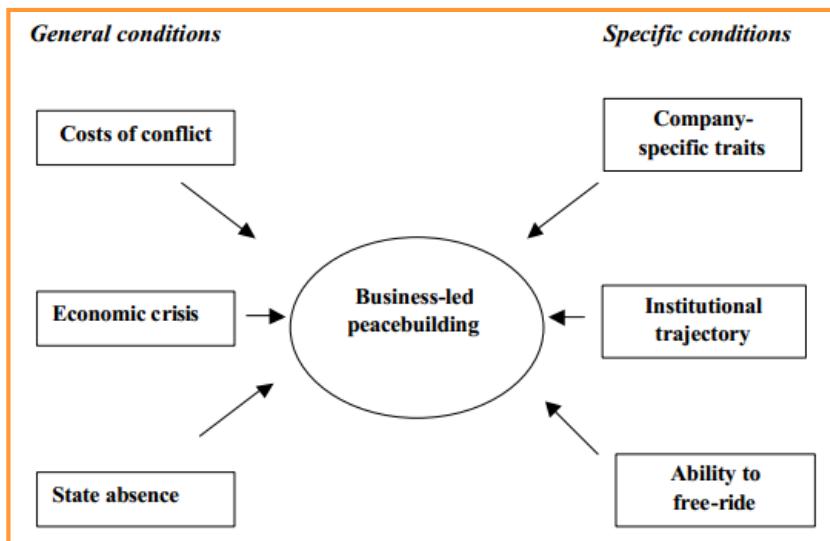
Source: Lederach (1997). Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies.

#### Appendix 4. Drivers of Peace Entrepreneurship according to IA.



Source: Based on IA (2006, 11-13).

## Appendix 5. Variables shaping preferences for business-led PB according to Rettberg.



Source: Rettberg, A. (2004, 17).

## Appendix 6.Types of Peacebuilding Corporate Engagement.

### CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT

- 1. Core business:** as corporate activities aimed principally at generating profits. This includes operations located at the company's own premises, branches, subsidiaries and/or joint ventures, as well as trading and procurement links with suppliers.
- 2. Advocacy:** as initiatives in which companies collaborate with the United Nations, peer companies or other public entities to advance a specific cause or promote dialogue on important issues.
- 3. Strategic Social Investment:** as the contributions by companies to help local communities where they operate and refers to wide array of in-kind donations to support social projects.

Source: Based on Global Compact Office (2010, 8): Doing business while advancing peace and development