

The emergence and fortunes of peace communities

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Declaration

I, Jennifer Hodge, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, this has been indicated in this dissertation.

Abstract

In this dissertation I seek to answer three questions about peace communities; groups of civilians that seek to limit physical violence in the places they live using collective nonviolent methods of civil resistance. Under what conditions do peace communities emerge in conflict-affected territories? How do civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities? Under what conditions do peace communities attain success?

First, I contend that peace communities are more likely to form in territories that experience the threat of collective violence, and in places where at least one peace community already exists. I use a new dataset on peace communities to test the argument in Colombia.

Despite this, not all populations possess the capacity to initiate collective action under these conditions. I therefore suggest that nonviolent first movers are crucial to explaining this outcome, as their actions trigger a sorting process in their communities which leads to a selection bias for nonviolence in the remaining population. I test the argument in the case of the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare, drawing on interview and archival data.

The final argument is the about the fortunes of peace communities. I argue that whether or not peace communities achieve success is largely explained by the consistency of NGO support. I test this argument in Colombia using the new dataset that I developed. Theoretically, I expected to find that conflict-related violence would be lower in municipalities where peace communities that enjoy consistent NGO support are present compared to those with no peace communities. However, what I find is that conflict-related violence is greater in municipalities with peace communities compared to those without them, regardless of the consistency of NGO support. Given data limitations, this part of the argument is difficult to test, but preliminary results are not supportive.

Impact statement

My doctoral research focuses on seeking a better understanding of the conditions under which peace communities emerge in conflict-affected territories, how certain civilian groups and not others develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to mobilize into peace communities, and the conditions under which peace communities attain success. The impact of this study is four-fold. Firstly, this study can offer insights to practitioners and policymakers concerned with supporting vulnerable communities dealing with the most severe conditions of conflict where they live. This dissertation suggests that in territories where nonviolent first movers possess influence, civilians may have a greater aptitude to form peace communities in response to collective threats, despite significant risks. This study also indicates that the hopes of proponents and supporters of peace communities may have been overly optimistic, though the results should be treated with caution and further research is necessary to confirm or disconfirm these findings. Taken as a whole, the thesis can help policymakers and practitioners better identify the territories in which civilians are likely to have the aptitude to form peace communities, as well as a better understanding of the risks involved for those that do so.

Secondly, to conduct this research, I developed the first comprehensive cross-national dataset of peace communities, which I plan to make publicly available following completion of the dissertation. The new dataset I compiled contains detailed information on 69 peace communities in five of the ten countries I conducted searches in from around the globe. To create this dataset I developed novel and reproducible search criteria to systematically identify candidate cases around the world. Beyond the research findings outlined in this dissertation from analysis of the dataset, this new resource will also open up a significant number of research questions to quantitative analysis by scholars for the first time, for example, investigation of the conditions under which peace communities are durable, and the types of external support that can help or hinder local community efforts for peace. Secondly, the thesis clarifies and refines the meaning of peace communities by outlining the core attributes necessary for conceptual membership, building upon existing literature on peace communities, zones of peace and the broader literature of civil resistance. Better conceptual clarity

of what peace communities are, and are not, will support further theoretical and empirical development in this field of scholarly research. Thirdly, I develop a qualitative threshold for first movers, which may be used by scholars across a wide range of literatures, to systematically identify first movers across differing contexts of collective action.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“We have made the great decision to wield the weapon of reason and union in order to defend ourselves... The Peasant Organization does not intend to arm itself to create more violence: it intends to continue forward with folded arms, fighting through unity and reason against the great dangers that beset us every day. The Organization wants to make a call to all peasants in the region and throughout Colombia to restore peace in our country. We all want together to protest, repudiate and assert ourselves before any armed group that violates our rights, with the flag of peace raised, without firing a single weapon.”

Meeting minutes with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC)

11.06.1987, ATCC Archives.

1.1. Introduction

In February 1987, village leaders from the Carare region in Colombia met to secretly discuss an ultimatum issued to their communities by multiple armed groups operating in the area. Those present understood the risks they faced by meeting and knew each other well (Kaplan 2017). Their villages lay along a strategic corridor in the Colombian war, first occupied by the FARC and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) in 1975, and later joined by paramilitary groups in 1983 (Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación [CNRR] 2011, 131; ATCC#3 1989). Compared to their neighbours, Carare villages faced a significantly higher homicide rate, and as many as 10% of the region’s population had been killed in the twelve years prior (Kaplan 2017, 183-184). In its bloodiest year approximately 550 civilians were killed locally; 60% by paramilitaries and 40% by guerrillas (Restrepo 2006, 72; CNRR 2009). Now local armed actors had presented community leaders with a stark choice between forging an alliance with one of them, leaving the area, or facing death (A028 2020; ATCC#1 and ATCC#2 1998; ATCC#3 1999, Sanz de Santamaria 1998). After much debate and discussion the leaders decided to try something bold and new: to opt out of the conflict and refuse to take any side.

The actions of several individuals played an important role in influencing this decision. Throughout the 1980s, local Adventist Church leaders had consistently advocated for nonviolent action. Since around 35% of residents were Adventists, their

ideas enjoyed considerable support (A112 2019; CNRR 2011, 322; Masullo 2021). More recently, a village leader with particular local credibility and legitimacy, José Vargas, had been the first to stand up to the FARC over their plans to split up residents land.¹ Although José was threatened for his audacity, he refused to back down (ATCC#1 1989; CNRR 2011). At a public trial Vidal, the FARC leader, pressured José to accept the plan, or to face death. Another local leader, Salomón Blandón, intervened. Salomón boldly stated that if Vidal killed José, he would also have to kill everyone else there (ATCC#1 1989; CNRR 2011, 310-311). The plan was scrapped, and no blood was shed.

To deliver their decision to opt out of the conflict, the community leaders travelled down the river in motor canoes (Kaplan 2017). Somewhat to their surprise, and after many months of discussions, all armed actors agreed and the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare (ATCC) was born (A028 2020; ATCC#1 and ATCC#2 1998, Sanz de Santamaria 1998; Kaplan 2017). Aiming to reduce local conflict-related violence through the sustained coordination of civilians, the ATCC was to become one of Colombia's first peace communities.² The organization remains active to the present day and successfully reduced local violence over the following 13 years (Kaplan 2017). This outcome was by no means guaranteed.³

Existing research indicates that some peace communities, and not others, are successful in limiting local conflict-related violence where they live (Alther 2006; Gray 2012; Kaplan 2017; Hernández Delgado 2012; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Valenzuela 2010). Comparison of the cases of the Communities of Self Determination, Life and Dignity from Cacarica (CAVIDA) and the Community of Life and Work of Balsita de Dabeiba (CLWBD) illuminate how vastly the fortunes of peace communities can contrast. In both cases, groups of civilians set up humanitarian zones in Colombia

¹ The FARC are the largest rebel group active in the Colombian civil war.

² The ATCC do not describe themselves as a peace community. However, the group meet the five core attributes of peace communities that I consider necessary for conceptual membership. For further detail refer to section 2.2.3. of chapter 2.

³ As the seventh largest peace community in Colombia, with 37 villages under its area of influence, the ATCC enjoyed a particularly large population of members. The peace community's relatively large pool of participants may have contributed to its success, as greater levels of participation has been found to improve the chances of success across the civil resistance, civil wars and peace communities literature (Allouche and Jackson 2019; Anderson and Wallace 2013; Chenoweth and Stephen 2011; DeNardo 2014; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Lichbach 1994; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Mouly 2021; Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Sta. Maria 2000; Weinstein 2007; Wickham-Crowley 1992).

soon after being forcibly displaced (Amnesty International 2000; Peace Brigades International [PBI] Colombia 2014).⁴ Both communities enjoyed the support of NGOs. CAVIDA was accompanied by PBI Colombia, whilst several NGOs – PBI Colombia, the Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz (CIJP), and Amnesty International had publicised the plight and objectives of CLWBD (Amnesty International 2000; CIJP 2020; Ortiz 2014; PBI Colombia 2017). Yet the fate of these two peace communities could not be starker. Whilst local violent events diminished to nil over the five years following the initiation of CAVIDA, almost 400 violent events were documented over the same period following the formation of CLWBD (Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Observatory [HRIHLO] 2006). What explains this variation?

This dissertation is about the emergence and fortunes of peace communities; groups of unarmed civilians that seek to opt out of conflict and reduce local violence where they live (Mouly 2021). When facing armed groups, civilians encounter a dilemma: whether to flee their communities to safer settings elsewhere, to join a fighting side, to seek the protection of one armed actor or another, to collectively mobilize and compel combatants to leave, or to simply avoid the attention of local armed actors. Amidst the immense uncertainty of changing conflict environments, the decision to form a peace community is not immediately apparent.⁵ Prospects of success are uncertain, and the task of challenging violent groups is fraught with great risk. Potential consequences include kidnappings, arrests, torture, as well as the murder of family, and friends. Fear of the serious risk to life and limb from failure may immobilize some civilians, whilst others may derive selective benefits from aiding or joining a fighting side (cf. Lichbach 1998; Popkin 1979).⁶ Yet despite these significant obstacles to collective action, peace communities have been documented in conflicts spanning Asia, Africa and Latin America (Anderson and Wallace 2013; Avruch and Jose 2007; Baines and Paddon 2012; Burnyeat 2018; Garcia 1997; Macaspac 2018;

⁴ Many humanitarian zones, such as CAVIDA and CLWBD, meet my definition of a peace community. Humanitarian zones were set up in the 1990s in Colombia as means of distinguishing territories where civilians are located (PASC 2006). Both CAVIDA and CLWBD are observations in the peace communities dataset I develop for this thesis.

⁵ As a leader of the ATCC disclosed of their choices at the time, “the least risky option is to displace... Or the least risky option is to ally with an armed group. So, this one is a risky option” (A112 2019).

⁶ Others still may be unconvinced by nonviolent tactics, preferring to use violence to counter combatants or else move to safer territories. For example, Abbey Steele has investigated the decision of civilians to engage in individual and collective displacement when facing collective threats, whilst Livia Schubiger has explored the conditions under which community-based armed mobilization emerges (Schubiger 2021; Steele 2017).

Paddon Rhoads and Sutton 2020; Perlez 1990; Santos 2005; Wilson 1991, 1992). What explains this outcome? Under what conditions do peace communities emerge in conflict-affected territories? How do conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities? Under what conditions do peace communities attain success? It is the task of this thesis to answer each of these questions in turn.

1.2. Dissertation overview

In the remainder of this chapter I first provide an overview of the dissertation and summarise the main findings. Next, I indicate the empirical, conceptual and theoretical contributions of the thesis. I then situate this thesis within the relevant literature and conclude with an overview of the argument and contributions. In chapter 2, I provide the definitional, conceptual, and theoretical foundations for the thesis, and outline the theoretical argument and associated hypotheses. Next, I describe the research design and present the new dataset of peace communities that I developed for this thesis (chapter 3). In turn, I then test my theory of peace community emergence (chapter 4), nonviolent capacity (chapter 5), and peace community success (chapter 6). Finally, in chapter 7, I review the dissertation findings, discuss their implications for policymakers, and recommend fruitful avenues for further research. I expand upon each of the three empirical chapters (chapters 4, 5 and 6) in the paragraphs that follow.

Turning first to chapter 4, I ask and then answer the first research question of the thesis: Under what conditions do peace communities emerge? Overall, I argue that peace communities are more likely to form in territories where civilians experience the threat of collective targeting with violence. Though some individually targeted threats – such as the killing of a beloved leader – may also generate the mass moral outrage which often underpins the initiation of collective action under high risk, I expect that collectively targeted threats of violence are more likely than individually targeted threats to do so (cf. Steele 2017; Wood 2003).⁷ A fundamental hypothesis of social movement theory is that collective action may follow threats as the costs of inaction come to outweigh those of action (Alimi 2007; Almeida 2008; Einwohner and Maher

⁷ There are some exceptions to this general rule. For example, when a high-status individual within a community is threatened with selective violence by local armed groups, the threat targets the group as a whole and may also generate mass outrage capable of triggering mobilization.

2011; Goldstone and Tilly 2001; Tilly 1977). When civilians are collectively targeted with threats of violence, the costs of inaction are likely to be similar, and outweigh those of action, for a sizeable portion of the group. As each individual faces similar risks that rely on the decisions of others in their community, collectively framed threats are likely to lead civilians to seek collective courses of action (cf. Steele 2017).⁸ One option is to create a peace community.

Furthermore, as collectively opting out of war is rarely an obvious pathway to conflict-affected civilians, I also argue that peace communities tend to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists due to a process of diffusion. The emergence of a successful peace community in one location can signal that a similar approach might also be suitable nearby. Where possible, civilians – and the external actors that often support them – are likely to seek to emulate successful models to respond to similar conditions of conflict. Doing so is intuitive since the response of armed actors to a peace community in one location is likely to influence the behaviour of armed actors to another potential peace community nearby (cf. Raleigh and Choi 2017). This overall expectation builds on a variety of literatures that examine processes of diffusion (Earl 2010; Elkins and Simmons 2005; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Myers 2000; Shipan and Volden 2008). In chapter 4, I test these arguments by estimating a binary logistic regression in a sample of 8,298 observations of municipality-years in Colombia between 1998 and 2006. To do so, I draw on the new dataset of peace communities that I developed, data from the Human Rights and International Law Observatory in Colombia, the Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE), and the 1993 census.⁹ The analysis supports the argument that peace communities are likely to emerge in response to collective threats of violence, and in places where at least one other peace community already exists.

Motivated by the observation that not all communities have the aptitude to initiate peace communities under these conditions, the second part of the dissertation

⁸ My argument builds on insights from Abbey Steele's work on displacement in the Colombian conflict (2017). Steele suggests that whilst selective targeting is likely to lead individuals to displace, since their personal risk is very high whereas the risk to others in their community is not, instead, "the risk members of collectively targeted groups face is interdependent" (2017, 27). The more people leave the greater the risk, on average, to those that remain. However, I suggest that collective targeting not only also increases the likelihood of collective displacement vis a vie individual displacement, but also other collective community actions over and above other individual actions, including the creation of a peace community.

⁹ These data are available in Steele's article, *IDP resettlement and collective targeting during civil wars: Evidence from Colombia* (2018).

examines how certain communities, and not others, develop the nonviolent capacity they need to form peace communities when facing collective threats. In chapter 5, I argue that nonviolent first movers are crucial to explaining this outcome. By visibly opposing armed actors, nonviolent first movers can trigger a sorting process in their communities which leads to a selection bias for nonviolence in the population that remains. Civilians in the territory that do not agree with the objectives and strategies of the peace community exit, other civilians living elsewhere with a strong preference for nonviolent resistance arrive.¹⁰ Key determinants of the capacity to collectively resist – social cohesion and overlapping interpersonal networks of reciprocity and trust – must be developed if those that remain (or who join) can hope to endure (cf. Aspinall 2009, 16; Lawrence 2017; McAdam 1986, 700; Tilly and Tarrow 2015). In chapter 5, I test this argument against alternative explanations in the single case study of the ATCC. Using process tracing methods, I draw on qualitative data acquired from 28 semi-structured fieldwork-based interviews, five historical interviews with founders of the ATCC, 14 documents from the community archive, historical accounts, media reporting and NGO reports.

In the concluding part of the dissertation I ask and then answer the final research question of the thesis: Under what conditions do peace communities attain success? Overall, I expected to find that the ability of peace communities to achieve their primary stated goal of reducing local conflict-related violence would largely be explained by the consistency of NGO support to the communities. This expectation derives from the observation that various forms of NGO support, such as accompaniment or publicity, can deter local violence by increasing costs to armed actors (Bob 2005; Jo and Thomson 2014; Jo 2015; Zartman 1995). For example, if violence is publicised, or if community outsiders are caught in the crossfire, armed actors may risk their political legitimacy on the international stage. Increasing the time horizon over which armed actors can expect such raised costs through consistent support may therefore lead armed actors to move their battles to other locations where NGOs are not present. In addition, consistent NGO support may also boost confidence in peace community members, thereby promoting the sustained mass participation which is important for collective action to be effective (cf. Chenoweth and Stephen

¹⁰ The sorting process has parallels with Albert Hirschman's classic typology of consumer choice in *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* (1970).

2011, 39). Steadfast support by NGOs may also signal stability in the community's commitments to nonviolence and neutrality, which can be crucial to convincing armed actors that peace communities are not secretly aiding or abetting one fighting side (Kaplan 2017). In chapter 6, I test the expectation by estimating a negative binomial regression over eight municipality-years in Colombia (1998-2006). To do so, I draw on a new dataset of peace communities, the HRIHLO, the CEDE, and the 1993 census (Steele 2018). I expected to find that incidents of violence by the FARC and paramilitaries would be lower in municipalities where peace communities with consistent NGO support were present, but what I find is that conflict-related violence tends to be greater in municipalities where peace communities are present, regardless of the consistency with which they enjoy NGO support.¹¹ Although the evidence does not support my hypothesis, these results should be interpreted cautiously. Given the data limitations that I set out in chapter 6, this part of the argument is difficult to test, however preliminary results are not supportive of my expectation. As the research design is a tough test of the theory, further research is necessary to confirm or disconfirm the preliminary finding. Next, I describe the empirical, conceptual, and theoretical contributions of the dissertation.

1.3. Contributions of the thesis

1.3.1. Empirical contributions

The main empirical contribution of the thesis is my development of the first comprehensive cross-national dataset of peace communities. The new dataset contains detailed information on 69 peace communities in five of the ten countries I conducted searches in from around the globe. Most civil war datasets collect information on armed state and nonstate conflict actors, and focus on explaining the behaviour of violent groups, such as rebel groups or the state and their relationship to civil war outcomes (e.g. Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; Carey, Mitchell and Lowe 2013; Carey, Mitchell and Paula 2022; Cunningham, Gleditsch and Salehyan 2013; Zelina 2022). These data have allowed scholars to develop a wealth of insights about

¹¹ I measure conflict-related violence with a count of the number of violent events attributed to the FARC or paramilitaries in that municipality in that year, using data from the office of the Vice President (Steele 2018). Refer to chapter 6 for discussion of operationalisation of the dependent variable.

the variety, formation, and termination of security actors, and how their differing strategies affect conflict dynamics and civil war outcomes. Though there are also many existing datasets on nonviolent actors and their actions, the majority catalogue unarmed uprisings against repressive regimes during times of peace, rather than the local mobilization of civilians in the context of war (e.g. Chenoweth 2008; Chenoweth and Lewis 2013; Chenoweth, Pinckney, and Lewis 2018).¹² The new dataset I developed for this thesis helps to fill this gap by collecting systematic data on groups of civilians that seek to reduce local violence in conflict-affected territories.

Peace communities have been documented in Colombia (Alther 2006; Burnyeat 2018; Masullo 2015), the Philippines (Avruch and Jose 2007; Garcia 1997; Macaspac 2018; Santos 2005), Afghanistan, (Anderson and Wallace 2013), and South Sudan (Paddon Rhoads and Sutton 2020) amongst others. Yet to date no attempt has been made to collect the information we have on these communities in a systematic and comparable way. As a first step, the new group-level dataset that I developed records information on the origins, geolocation, characteristics and fortunes of peace communities that emerged between 1985 and 2021 in Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.¹³ As well as allowing for in depth subnational analysis, the dataset can also help scholars investigate new research questions about variation in the emergence and fortunes of peace communities cross-nationally through small n case comparison, and across varying conflict types. I outline information on the construction of this dataset and the key variables I collected in chapter 3.

This dissertation also contributes empirically through the collection of novel interview data from a six week field trip to Colombia in November and December 2019. All in all I conducted 28 semi-structured interviews, as well as 18 informal discussions and 3 informal group discussions, with a wide range of individuals involved in peacebuilding in Colombia, as well as former FARC members and members of the Mennonite and Catholic Church. I outline further information on the collection and analysis of these interviews in chapter 3.

¹² As part of my discussion of how I contribute to the civil resistance literature, I provide an overview of existing cross-national datasets on unarmed civilian collective action in table 1.1.

¹³ The country sample also includes Guatemala, Ivory Coast, Mozambique, Syria, and Iraq, though no positive cases were identified. Similarly, no further cases were identified from a pilot study that included Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Ireland, and India.

1.3.2. Conceptual contributions

The main conceptual contribution of the thesis is my clarification and refinement of the meaning of peace communities by outlining the core attributes necessary for conceptual membership. To do so, I build upon existing literature on peace communities, zones of peace and the broader literature of civil resistance (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013; Masullo 2021; Mouly 2021; Mitchell and Nan 1997). I outline five inclusion criteria in chapter 2. I propose that peace communities involve the (i) community-based mobilization of civilians where they live; (ii) in the midst of war; that involves the (ii) sustained and organized coordination of civilians engaged in (iv) nonviolent activities. Activities are (v) purposively aimed at ending or preventing conflict locally, but which may aspire beyond their village or municipality. This definition refines existing conceptualisation by specifying which actors can create and sustain peace communities (civilian groups), where (in the conflict-affected territories where civilians live), and under what conditions (in the midst of violent conflict). The definition also introduces a temporal dimension by requiring that the activities of peace communities sustain over time.

Conceptually, I also contribute to the literature on first movers by developing a qualitative threshold for four dimensions of first movers. This novel qualitative threshold may be used by scholars to systematically identify first movers across differing contexts of collective action. To develop this threshold I draw on the social movements, civil wars, civil resistance, and social psychological literatures (Costalli and Ruggeri 2015; Crocker, Fiske and Taylor 1984; Lawrence 2017; Leenders and Heydeman 2012; Leenders 2013; Masullo 2020; Opp and Gern 1993; Paluck and Shepherd 2012; Shepherd and Paluck 2015; Tankard and Paluck 2016). The four dimensions of the threshold are: (i) the timing of first mover action; (ii) their social position; (iii) the visibility of their action; and (iv) their expressing nonviolent preferences. Refer to chapter 2 for discussion of this threshold.

1.3.3. Theoretical contributions

The main theoretical contribution of the thesis is the development of a causal mechanism which explains how some communities, and not others, develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities in conflict environments. Unlike most scholars of nonviolent resistance during conflict – who focus on the link

between pre-existing institutional capacity of communities and successful mobilization (e.g. Kaplan 2017; Masullo 2015, 2020) – I instead seek to explain how communities develop capacity in conflict environments at all. An existing explanation in the peace communities and civil resistance literature is that NGOs can bolster a community's nonviolent capacity by making repression costly to armed actors or by supplanting a community's lack of knowledge or experience (Chenoweth and Stephen 2011; Masullo 2015).¹⁴ Yet my explanation, while complementary, focuses on an earlier stage in the process, and the crucial role that first movers can play in developing a community's nonviolent capacity without external support.

Moreover, I also developed the theoretical expectation that the ability of peace communities to achieve their primary aim of reducing conflict-related is largely explained by the consistency of NGO support. In doing so I had hoped to identify a potential solution to existing research which identifies mixed findings from NGO involvement (Gray 2012; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015). I identify three main pathways through which consistent NGO support may improve peace community success: by (i) increasing the time horizon over which armed actors can expect raised costs from attacking the community; (ii) increasing the likelihood of the sustained mass participation important to effective collective action; and (iii) signalling stability in the commitments of its members to the rules of neutrality and nonviolence it sets for itself (cf. Chenoweth and Stephen 2011, 39; Kaplan 2017). These arguments are further described in chapter 2. However, the evidence in chapter 6 does not support my overall expectation that conflict-related violence is lower in municipalities where peace communities that enjoy consistent support are present compared to those with no peace communities. I next outline the contribution of the dissertation to existing scholarship.

1.3.4. Contributions to relevant literatures

Studies of peace communities

This thesis offers several contributions to the literature on peace communities. A challenge to the theoretical development of the literature on peace communities is that existing research is primarily descriptive and tends to be written in an anthropological

¹⁴ As I set out in chapter 2, nonviolent capacity is comprised of mobilizational capacity – the capacity of a community to mobilize into collective action – and nonviolent preferences.

or activist tradition (Alther 2006; Amnesty International 2000; Bouvier 2006; Hancock and Mitchell 2007; Herández Delgado 2004a, 2004b; Lederach 1997, 2005; Sanford 2003). Therefore, there is a rich and significant volume of empirical work which details the histories and experiences of peace communities and their members, but less theoretical work from which to build.

An exception is Juan Masullo's case study of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó. Drawing on interview and archival data collected during fieldwork, Masullo identifies two community attributes that are key for peace community emergence: (i) a preference in the civilian group for nonviolence; and (ii) the capacity of the community to resist (2015). For Masullo, prior experiences of collective action and the support of external actors, such as NGOs, together shape a community's capacity for resistance. In this thesis I build upon his study to theorise the process by which the preference for nonviolence and the capacity to resist are achieved as outcomes in certain communities and not others – which I term nonviolent capacity. Moreover, with my theory I propose a pathway that does not rely on external support.

Much has been written in the peace communities literature about their role in reducing physical violence where they live (Alther 2006; Anderson and Wallace 2013; García-Durán 2005; Hancock and Mitchell 2007; Macaspac 2018; Valenzuela 2010). For example, in her discussion of Colombia peace communities, Gretchen Alther reports that although attacks continued after the village of El Congal in southwest Colombia declared itself a peace community, the frequency of the attacks thereafter decreased (2006).¹⁵ Similarly, in his investigation of the independent effect of wartime social organization on civilian victimization, Oliver Kaplan finds that the creation of the ATCC led to a decrease in observed violence in the territory (2013b; 2017).¹⁶ In this case, only three conflict-related deaths were reported in the ten years after the peace community was established, whereas approximately 10% of the local population were killed in the ten years leading to its initiation (2017, 187-188). Peace communities have also reportedly been successful in persuading armed actors to stop holding summary trials against civilians suspected of collaborating with armed groups' enemies, and in

¹⁵ This article explores the factors that generate and sustain peace communities. The cases vary in size, ethnicity and organization, and have not been selected to minimise cross-case variation. Three of the four cases are observations in my peace communities dataset.

¹⁶ Kaplan does not define the ATCC as a peace community, yet the institution meets the inclusion criteria that I set out in chapter 2 of the thesis.

reducing acts of aggression that are more deadly in nature, such as assassinations and forced displacement, in their territories (Hernández Delgado 2012; Valenzuela 2010, 26). Such examples offer hope that peace communities may afford their members protection.

Existing scholarship identifies several community-level attributes that contribute to the success of peace communities in reducing local violence. Firstly, there is a consensus that broad participation and unity amongst peace community members are crucial to their success (Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Anderson and Wallace 2013; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Mouly 2021; Allouche and Jackson 2019; Sta. Maria 2000). For example, in their comparison of two borderland territories in Colombia, Annette Idler, María Belén Garrido and Cécile Mouly noted the successful peace territory, Samaniego enjoyed strong collective leadership, whereby the whole community supported or participated in the initiative (2015). This differed to the unsuccessful peace community, Las Mercedes, which was very divided, where most of the community was not involved. Their conclusion coheres with findings in the civil resistance literature which suggest the importance of mass participation for a campaign's success and Oliver Kaplan's argument that social cohesion is vital to effective social mobilization during war (Chenoweth and Stephen 2011; Kaplan 2017). Through setting rules with warring parties – be they through official declaration or informal negotiation – peace communities are able to establish their noncooperation with all armed actors (Hernández Delgado 2012; Masullo 2015; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Mouly 2021).¹⁷ Cohesive populations are more likely to follow the rules set with armed groups, thereby reducing suspicion, which may have a protective effect.

Two further features for peace communities success are identified in existing literature: (i) a positive relationship with armed actors; and (ii) external actor support (Alther 2006; Gray 2012; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Mitchell and Hancock 2007). Idler, Garrido and Mouly found that many residents of the successful peace community, Samaniego, had relatives involved in local armed groups. They suggest that these links helped the residents to set the peace community up with the consent

¹⁷ Doing so is one means of emphasizing the neutrality or impartiality of civilians and affirming their rights under International Humanitarian Law to protection from attacks (UN 2011). That neutrality might confer differing treatment by warring parties has long been discussed in the context of inter-state war (Pyke 1915)

of local warring parties. The authors also find that NGO involvement had an ambiguous effect on the two peace territories under study, and that the effect changed over time (Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015).¹⁸ Their findings differ to the positive role identified by Vanessa Gray for NGOs in her examination of five communities in Colombia. Drawing on 20 interviews with community residents and members of supportive external organizations, she finds that external support provides, “visibility, financial support, legal aid, physical accompaniment, strategic advice” (2012, 58).¹⁹ Existing research on the effect of external actors on peace community success is therefore mixed. With this thesis I contribute to the literature by theorising (chapter 2) and then testing (chapter 6) the conditions under which NGOs may help peace communities to achieve success. To do so, I argue that the consistency of their support is key. However, the results of chapter 6 do not support this expectation. In fact, I find that the presence of peace communities in municipalities is associated with increased, rather than decreased, conflict-related violence, compared to municipalities without peace communities, regardless of patterns of NGO involvement. The preliminary thesis finding could indicate that the existing literature may have been overly optimistic about the prospects of peace communities to attain success, although further research is necessary to confirm or disconfirm this finding.

A feature of the peace communities literature which has challenged theoretical and empirical progress is the lack of agreed conceptualisation of the term, “peace community” – a challenge I face head on in chapter 2. Recent work by Cécile Mouly has sought to improve the conceptual specificity of peace communities by identifying three key attributes from her review of the literature: (i) impartiality; (ii) collective participation and cohesion; and (iii) the use of nonviolent action (2021). Yet, Mouly does not specify the objective of peace communities (to reduce local conflict-related physical violence) nor their location within conflict-affected territories, as core attributes.²⁰ I suggest that doing so is important to prevent conceptual stretching of the

¹⁸ Many peace territories also meet the definition of a peace community which I develop in detail in chapter 2. Indeed both peace territories are included in my dataset as observations. These cases were selected to minimise cross-case variation: with high rates of poverty, reach state reach, and poor infrastructure (Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015).

¹⁹ Three of the five cases that Vanessa Gray comparison are peace communities that are included in my dataset. The cases vary in size, ethnicity and organization, and have not been selected to minimise cross-case variation.

²⁰ In Mouly’s discussion she states that in conflict-affected societies, peace communities try, “to find their own ways to reduce violence,” however she does not specify this objective or the context of a conflict location as core attributes in her conceptualisation (2021, 1170).

term and provide my own definition and operationalisation of the peace communities in section 2.2.3. of chapter 2. The lack of agreed criteria for conceptual membership has stymied progress in this field of research, since the starting point for theoretical and empirical development is that research on peace communities is conducted on a comparable set of cases.

An important issue that follows from the lack of agreed conceptualisation in the literature is a lack of available data on peace communities amenable to subnational or cross-national analysis, despite the wealth of descriptive work. Peace communities have been identified in case literatures in Latin America, Asia and Africa (Anderson and Wallace 2013; Avruch and Jose 2007; Autesserre 2021; Baines and Paddon 2012; Burnyeat 2018; Garcia 1997; Macaspac 2018; Paddon Rhoads and Sutton 2020; Perlez 1990; Santos 2005; Wilson 1991, 1992). Seminal works by Landon Hancock and Christopher Mitchell (2007; 2012; 2018) and Mary Anderson and Marshall Wallace (2013) catalogue candidate cases from around the world. Christopher Mitchell also compiled an impressive open access database of zones of peace, some of which overlap with peace communities.²¹ This database is a truly valuable resource of empirical material; however the information is compiled inconsistently across cases and is not amenable to quantitative analysis given its rich narrative format. The cases compiled have also not been methodically chosen, potentially leading to selection bias for the “most interesting”, “most puzzling” or “most successful” cases. Until now no attempt has been made to collect the information we have on these communities in a systematic and comparable way.

Though no group-level dataset of peace communities had been compiled prior to this thesis, the actions of peace communities are contained in some existing data collection efforts. For example, most recently, Juan Masullo compiled a dataset of civilian campaigns of noncooperation in Colombia (2017, 2021). This dataset covers 50 cases of civilian noncooperation campaigns – including some peace communities – between 1987 and 2010 in over a third of Colombia’s departments. Key variables are geographic location, the date the campaign emerged, the strategic value of the territory, the presence of armed actors, and external actor support. Cases were not identified systematically, rather they are included in the dataset if Masullo, “learned about the campaign first-hand or was able to visit the location of a campaign identified

²¹ I discuss the distinction between zones of peace and peace communities in chapter 2.

in secondary sources” (2021, 19). This reduces the replicability of the data, which has also not been released, and was not available to review at the thesis completion date. Mauricio García-Duran compiles collective actions for peace 1978-2005 within Colombia in his Datapaz dataset (2005). Though containing neutral communities, peace communities and peace territories, less than 5% of total events are attributable to sustained civilian campaigns against armed groups (García-Duran 2006, 9; Masullo 2021). Since my definition requires that the actions of its members be sustained and coordinated over time, Datapaz contains only a small number of peace communities.²² Both datasets are limited by their subnational scope.

Similarly, for his doctoral research, Alejandro Carvajal-Pardol compiled a dataset of local neutral actions in Colombia, which he kindly shared with me as it is not yet published (2020). In this dataset, Carvajal-Pardol draws from Datapaz (2005), Rettberg (2006) and Kaplan (2017). Analysis of Carvajal-Pardol’s dataset reveals that out of a total 211 local neutral actions recorded between 1995 and 2013, 45 actions related to 30 peace communities. The actions of 32 further Colombian peace communities in my dataset are missing, though my dataset extends over a longer time period: from 1985 to 2021. The Global Nonviolent Action Database (GNAD) at Swarthmore also contains some peace communities within its global cases of nonviolent movements and campaigns, though its lack of inclusion criteria limits its use for quantitative analyses (2011).²³

I offer a further review of the literature on peace communities, and their close conceptual neighbours, in the chapter that follows, as part of the work of this thesis to refine and clarify their conceptualisation.

Studies of wartime civilian agency

As peace communities form from the collective choices of conflict-affected civilians, this thesis also contributes to studies of civilian agency during conflict. Wartime civilian agency refers to the ability of civilians to exercise agency, or act with purpose and intention, even within the significant constraints of war (Barter 2014). Initial studies that sought to engage with civilian choice did so by considering civilian contributions

²² Refer to section 2.2.3. for a detailed discussion of my definition and operationalisation of peace communities.

²³ This database is available online at <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/>

to violence. For example, in his theory of selective violence, Stathis Kalyvas argues that civilians co-produce violence with armed actors through denunciation of others and providing other target-relevant information (2006). Other initial studies of civilian choice focus on explaining why civilians join or support rebel groups (Azam 2006; Ginges and Atran 2009; Goodwin 2001; Kalyvas and Kocher 2008; Peters and Richards 1998; Mason and Krane 1989; Muana 1997; Richards 1996; Subedi 2013; Wood 2003).²⁴ However, scholarly attention has increasingly broadened to explore a much wider repertoire of possible actions available to civilians (Barter 2012, 2014, 2017).²⁵ This expanded research agenda better reflects the reality of civilian lives in conflict-affected areas, since the majority do not actively support or join armed groups.²⁶

Indeed, a significant body of research also focuses on how civilians can exercise their agency to reduce violence or protect themselves (Baines and Paddon 2012; Hallward, Masullo and Mouly 2017; Kaplan 2017; Krause 2018; Suarez 2017). For example, in her book, *Resilient Communities: Non-Violence and Civilian Agency in Communal War*, Jana Krause finds that vulnerable communities can adapt to communal conflict and prevent violence when they enjoy strong leadership and collective agency (2018).²⁷ Using cross-case and within-case paired comparisons in Indonesia and Nigeria, Krause draws on over two hundred interviews to illustrate how community leaders were able to prevent violence by strengthening their authority and institutionalizing conflict prevention measures.²⁸ Similarly to Krause, I argue that influential first movers play a crucial role in peace community emergence – another means by which civilians seek to reduce local violence through the development of rules and collective agency. However, differently to Krause, I emphasize the important role that NGOs may play in influencing peace community success.

²⁴ A separate strand investigates how civilians exercise their agency to mobilize into violent defence (Blocq 2014; Jentzsch, Kalyvas, and Schubiger 2015; Schubiger 2021).

²⁵ For example, studies of forced displacement have shown that civilians exercise choice in whether or not to flee violence, even in highly dangerous circumstances (Adhikari 2013; Davenport, Moore and Poe 2003; Moore and Shellman 2004; Todd 2010).

²⁶ Estimates of active participants range from as little as 5% of the population (Lichbach 1995, 8) to 13% of the Abkhaz in the Georgian-Abkhaz war (Shesterinina 2016).

²⁷ With the term “collective agency”, Krause refers to the collective mobilization of civilians against violence.

²⁸ Prevention measures used by the successful communities involved violent punishment of men who wanted to use violence or had fought elsewhere.

Oliver Kaplan's book, *Resisting War: How Communities Protect Themselves*, is also highly relevant. Using a mixture of statistical analysis and fieldwork interviews, Kaplan's core finding is that social organization has an independent effect on levels of violence against civilians during civil wars (2017). Specifically, Kaplan argues that when communities enjoy high levels of social cohesion – social capital and the capacity to cooperate – they are better able to implement collective strategies for protection such as developing norms of noncollaboration with armed actors. Building on his research findings, I investigate the efficacy of peace communities – one form of civilian-led social organization that emerges during conflict, and that has norms of noncollaboration with armed actors at its core.²⁹ However, differently to Kaplan, I also investigate the conditions under which this form of social organization emerges during conflict. In doing so, I emphasize the important role that nonviolent first movers play in influencing which communities develop nonviolent capacity.

Other existing studies reveal further repertoires of action that civilians can draw upon to protect themselves during conflict. For example, in her research in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Carla Suarez finds that civilians were able to protect themselves through negotiation with, and in some cases the deception of, local armed actors (2017). Relatedly, in their case study of northern Uganda, Erin Baines and Emily Paddon identify three pathways through which civilians exercise their agency to protect themselves: (i) seeking to appear neutral; (ii) avoiding interactions with armed actors; and (iii) complying with the wishes of armed actors (2012). The first two pathways map neatly onto strategies that peace communities often employ, since these civilian groups seek to opt out of conflict and, where possible, expel armed actors from their territories. Overall, with civilians, and the collective actions they take during conflict, the main focus of this project, the thesis contributes to a growing literature in which civilian choice, agency and power is examined, theorised, and tested.

Studies of civil resistance

When civilians choose to exercise their agency to reduce violence or protect themselves, they often draw on the methods of civil resistance. Thus, this thesis also

²⁹ The main unit of social organization that Kaplan examines are local community councils. The state encouraged the formation of community councils after the brutal La Violencia conflict (1948-1958) (Kaplan 2017).

builds upon a long tradition of research on nonviolent action by examining one form of civil resistance that arises amidst violent conflict (Chenoweth 2011; Helvey 2004; Roberts 2009; Schock 2005; Sharp 1973, 2005).³⁰ Civil resistance is a method of unarmed contention, in which civilians draw upon a range of different nonviolent methods (such as strikes, protests, and demonstrations) in pursuit of one or more specified goals, without physically harming or threatening to physically harm their opponents (Chenoweth 2021). Overall, this literature is concerned with identifying the mechanisms through which, and the conditions under which civil resistance can work, as well as the tactics that associated movements and groups can draw on to achieve success. Similarly, while chapter 5 is concerned with the mechanisms through which peace communities emerge, chapter 6 is concerned with the conditions under which the peace communities that do emerge attain success. This growing research agenda has tended to focus on mass campaigns waged during peacetime (Chenoweth, Hendrix and Hunter 2019; Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Chenoweth and Cunningham 2013; Schock and Demetriou 2018). Yet, localized forms of nonviolent resistance are more typical in conflict environments (e.g. Krause 2018).

A relevant strand of this literature focuses on the use of nonviolent tactics by civilians to challenge and resist the control of armed groups over their communities (Arjona 2015; Barter 2014; Hallward, Masullo and Mouly 2017; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Jentsch and Masullo 2022; Kaplan 2017; van Baalen 2021). This literature suggests that civil resistance to rebel governance is both more common than generally assumed and can influence rebel behaviour (Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017; Rubin 2020).³¹ In this context, civil resistance refers to the collective opposition of civilians to the rule and violence of local armed actors through the use of nonviolent methods, such as protesting or refusing to collaborate with combatants (Masullo 2021). Whilst this literature has advanced scholarly understanding of the conditions under which conflict-affected civilians engage in nonviolent resistance, the question of *how communities attain the nonviolent capacity necessary to do so* remains less explored (Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017; Masullo 2015, 2020). An existing explanation is that communities draw capacity from local institutions (Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017).

³⁰ The terms civil resistance and nonviolent resistance are used interchangeable in the literature.

³¹ Though civil resistance may not always appear practical in conflict environments, civilians have done so even against some of the most repressive armed groups, such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (Bamber and Svensson 2022; Svensson, et al. 2022).

Though helpful in explaining one source of mobilizational capacity for communities, the preference for nonviolent action – a necessary facet of civil resistance – is not clarified by this account (Petersen 2001; Pinchotti and Verwimp 2007; Wood 2003). A further explanation is that NGOs bolster a community’s capacity by reducing the costs of mobilization, making repression costly to armed actors or by supplanting a community’s lack of knowledge or experience (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Masullo 2015; Moreno León 2021). This work is helpful in that it identifies the mechanisms through which war torn communities attain nonviolent capacity with the help of outside actors. Yet many communities initiate wartime civil resistance on their own. For example, analysis of my new cross-national dataset of peace communities – a sustained form of wartime civil resistance – reveals that only 25% of the sample enjoyed NGO support at their initiation. I address this theoretical gap in chapter 5 by developing and testing a causal mechanism that explains how communities can develop nonviolent capacity in the absence of external support.

The two-part causal mechanism I develop explains how first movers develop nonviolent capacity of their communities by (i) constraining the bounds of community contention to nonviolent forms; and (ii) by increasing the mobilizational capacity of communities over time due to population sorting. The first part of this casual mechanism coheres with recent research by Corinna Jentsch and Juan Masullo (2022). Using within-case and cross-case comparisons during the Mozambican and Colombian civil wars, the authors find that when deciding whether to engage in violent or nonviolent resistance, political entrepreneurs choose from a set of possibilities that are influenced by prior experiences of collective action and local norms.³² The argument that they test is similar to the first part of my causal mechanism, in that they emphasize the important role of first movers in the onset of nonviolent collective action. However, missing from their account is the role first movers may themselves play in shaping local norms around the permissibility of violence. Their research also excludes consideration of the role that first movers may play in developing mobilizational capacity over time, such that collective action of any kind is possible. This thesis thus offers further theoretical development to these recent findings.

³² The terms “political entrepreneur” and “first mover” are used interchangeably across a range of literatures.

Empirically, the thesis also contributes to the civil resistance literature by developing the first group-level dataset of civil resistance aimed at creating local peace in conflict environments. Though civilian agency, strategies, and campaigns of collective nonviolence have been taken more seriously in the last ten years, systematic cross-national data on community-level campaigns for peace do not yet extend to conflict contexts.

Existing datasets of civil resistance are summarised as follows (table 1.1). The first global dataset of civil resistance can be found in the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) dataset 1.0, which catalogues campaign-level information on violent and nonviolent campaigns with maximalist objectives (such as secession, regime change, and antioccupation) from 1990 to 2006 (Chenoweth 2008). Campaign-year information is contained in NAVCO 2.0, whilst event-day information is covered by NAVCO 3.0 (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013; Chenoweth, Pinckney, and Lewis 2018). Though incredibly useful for the study of civil resistance forged for maximalist goals in peacetime, a different set of opportunities and constraints face civilians concerned with local issues during violent conflict.

Several existing datasets catalogue the actions of civilians in conflict contexts. Firstly, Non-Violent Action During Civil Wars In Africa (NVAVC) dataset compiles event-level data in Africa from 1990 to 2012 on the nonviolent actions of unarmed civilians, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), International Governmental Organizations (IGOs), local and transnational businesses, political parties, media, unions, academic institutions, and religious organizations in violent contexts. However, of the 3,663 actions recorded, only 162 are classified as unarmed community actions directed against domestic war. In addition, NVAVC records one off events, rather than collecting information on the sustained organization of communities over time.

Other relevant datasets include the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED), the Social Conflict Analysis Database (SCAD), and Integrated Conflict Early Warning System (ICEWS). These three event-level datasets catalogue the actions of a wide range of actors, including civilians, in both conflict and peacetime contexts and around the world (Raleigh and Dowd 2016; Salehyan et al. 2012; Boschee et al. 2015). Unlike ACLED and ICEWS, SCAD is not a global dataset, instead focusing on Africa, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. Since ACLED and ICEWS do not identify the objectives of the events held, it is not possible to easily identify potential peace

communities from these sources. SCAD does code the issue identified as the source of the event, with a category for “domestic war, violence, terrorism” (Salehyan et al. 2012). Thus, future research could seek to extend the observations in the dataset through a review of all events thus coded to identify potential cases of peace communities.

The PA-X Local dataset also fills part of the gap on civilian actions during conflict with its collation of all written, formally agreed and publicly available local peace agreements from 1990 onwards (Bell et al. 2020). However, though civilians are often signatories to local agreements, these processes are not necessarily civilian led, and many more informal and unwritten agreements – including those between peace communities and armed conflict actors – are missing. The peace communities dataset thus complements and expands existing datasets of unarmed civilian collective action during conflict.

Table 1.1. Overview of cross-national datasets of unarmed civilian collective action

	Level of analysis	Peacetime or conflict	Local or national objectives	Actors	Time coverage	Location	Coding procedures
NAVCO 1.0	Campaign	Peacetime	National	Nonviolent and violent mass movements	1990-2013	Global	Hand coded
NAVCO 2.0	Campaign-year	Peacetime and conflict	National	Nonviolent and violent mass movements	1945-2013	Global	Hand coded
NAVCO 3.0	Event-day	Peacetime and conflict	National	nonviolent and violent anti-government actors	1991-2012	21 countries	Hand coded
NVAVC	Event	Conflict	Local and national	Unarmed civilians, NGOs, IGOs, commercial enterprises, political parties, media, unions, academic institutions, religious organizations	1990-2012	Africa	Hand coded
ACLED	Event	Peacetime and conflict	Objectives unspecified	State forces, rebel forces, political militias, identity militias, rioters, protesters, civilians, external/other forces	Varies across countries	Global	Hand coded
SCAD	Event	Peacetime and conflict	National and local (orientation unspecified)	Government, political parties, militant organizations, press, labour, business, education, criminal, ethnic/religious, NGO/Activist, foreign actors, citizens	1990-2015	Africa, Mexico, Central America, Caribbean	Hand coded
ICEWS	Event	Peacetime and conflict	Objectives unspecified	Broad range of domestic actors including military, police, rebel groups, and civilians	1991-present day	Global	Machine coded
PA-X Local	Local peace agreement	Conflict	Local	State actors, local armed group actor, religious organization, community/civilian group(s)/ civil society, international or transnational actor	1990-2021	Global	Hand coded

Studies of civilian agency, nonviolence and civilian self-protection

Sociologists have defined civilian agency as the, “existential capacity for exerting influence on our environments” (Hitlin and Elder Jr 2007), whilst social anthropologists have described agency as a form of “social navigation” through which civilians navigate complex changing environments (Utas 2005). Research on civilian agency began with studies that sought to explain rescue behaviour during the Holocaust (OLiner 1992; Tec 1995; Monroe 1998, 2011). For example, Kristen Monroe argued that the options individuals believe are available to them is determined by their “social perspective” and identity (2011). Others conceptualise civilian agency as fluid, ranging from rescue behaviour to participating in killing (Fujii 2009). Civilian agency is key to the concept and theory of peace communities, which are formed by civilians exerting their agency to act together, using methods of nonviolence, for collective goals – that include self-protection – under the most severe conditions of war.

In their forthcoming volume *Civilian Protective Agency in Violent Settings: A Comparative Perspective*, Jana Krause, Juan Masullo, Jennifer Welsh and Emily Rhoads define civilian protective agency as, “actions carried out by individuals and communities to protect themselves and/or others in violent settings” (Forthcoming, 2). The authors identify four core attributes of the term: “the agent (civilians), the goal and action (protection), the beneficiary of the action (either the agents themselves or others), and the context in which the action takes place (violent settings)” (Krause, Masullo, Welsh and Rhoads Forthcoming, 4). Thus, peace communities are specifically a nonviolent form of civilian protective agency. As well as “evasion”, “rescue” and “adaptation”, one of the forms of civilian protective agency that the authors identify in their volume is “resistance”, which closely maps to the actions of civilians that form peace communities, and which they define as “the refusal to act according to implicit and explicit demands by armed groups” (Ibid., 8).

Much of the research on peace communities addresses this civilian strategy through the lens of civilian self-protection because civilians seek to survive and protect themselves and their families (Baines and Paddon 2012; Jose and Medie 2015; Kaplan 2017; Krause 2018). Civilian (self)-protection is defined by Betsy Jose and Peace A. Medie as, “a) actions taken to protect against immediate, direct threats to physical integrity imposed by belligerents

or traditional protection actors; (b) primarily selected and employed by civilians; and (c) employed during an armed conflict” (2015). The authors distinguish between civilian self-protection based on non-engagement, nonviolent engagement, and violent engagement, and note that actions may be taken collectively or non-collectively. Conceptually, peace communities are thus a form of collective nonviolent civilian (self)-protection.

In contexts outside of Colombia, civilians have also engaged in self-protection strategies, using both nonviolent and violent strategies. For example, Erin Baines and Emily Paddon identify and discuss several forms of self-protection that civilians have used amidst civil war in northern Uganda 1986-2006, such as seeking to appear neutral, avoidance, and accommodation of armed actors (2012). In Sudan during the war in Darfur, some communities created militias to protect themselves and their communities, in a form of collective violent civilian self-protection (Jose and Medie 2015).

Outside of civil wars, the literature on communal conflict, genocide and ethnic cleansing are also relevant as the dynamics may be similar on the ground to those facing civilians forming peace communities. Indeed, several studies of communal conflict have demonstrated how violence can be effectively prevented from emerging and increasing by the actions of civilians (Varshney 2003; Berenschot 2011; Carpenter 2012; Krause 2018; Dhattiwala 2019; Klaus 2020). Similarly, the literature on genocide and ethnic cleansing has shown how even under conditions of extreme violence against civilians, when groups are targeted for complete eradication, such as during the Holocaust, the Rwandan Genocide, and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, civilians can still possess some agency (Braun 2020; Finkel 2017; Monroe 2012). Both individually, and collectively, civilians have acted under enormous risk in contexts of genocide and ethnic cleansing to protect those targeted from harm (Oliner 1992; Tec 1995; Fujii 2009; Maher 2010; Einwohner and Maher 2011; Monroe 2012; Luft 2015; Finkel 2017; Braun 2020). Taken together, these studies relate to the theory of peace communities in that the civilians that form peace communities also act collectively under significant conditions of risk to protect themselves and others in their community from targeting for violence.

Studies on first movers

“There always has to be someone in the community that stands up for the community,” FARC commander (cited in Kaplan 2017).

This thesis also has implications for scholars in the social movements, armed mobilization, and contentious politics literatures – in which first movers are either implicitly or explicitly theorised as leading changes to the status quo (Costalli and Ruggeri 2015, Kuran 1991; Granovetter 1978; Lawrence 2017; Leenders and Heydeman 2012; Leenders 2013; Lohmann 1994; Lynch 2011; Masullo 2020; Olson 1965; Popkin 1989; Schneider and Teske 1992; Tarrow 1994; Weyland 2012).³³ First movers are the people who first initiate varying forms of collective action (Lawrence 2017). In the context of peace communities, after first movers act, they are then joined by followers of their cause, whilst others may avoid involvement, flee, or instead join one of the armed actors that the first movers oppose. However, although first movers have been identified as key to the onset of collective action across many literatures, their role in the emergence of peace communities has rarely been studied.

One exception is Juan Masullo’s study of how ideational factors shape the collective responses of civilians to local armed actors (2020). In this study, Masullo argues that first movers, which he describes as “political entrepreneurs,” are key to activating and mobilising normative commitments in a population, which in turn restrict the mobilization of civilians to nonviolent rather than violent forms. His particular interest is with campaigns of civilian noncooperation, which he defines as, “a refusal to cooperate, either directly or indirectly, with armed organizations.” Most peace communities would meet his definition of a campaign of noncooperation, as a consequence of their neutrality, sustained organization, and the group’s vocal opposition to war. Indeed, two of the three cases that he compares, the ATCC and the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, are peace communities.

In his study, Masullo finds evidence to support his contention that first movers are key to mobilising strong norms against the use of violence, which in turn restrict the trajectories of groups of civilians into nonviolent mobilization. Different to my argument, he suggests that first movers are not a source of these normative

³³Across these literatures, first movers are also described as entrepreneurs, early risers, and early movers.

commitments in a community, but rather that first movers express pre-existing political ideas. This thesis thus extends his work in two ways. Like Masullo, my argument explains the role of first movers in shaping the form of collective action by civilians – namely nonviolence. However, I also identify how first movers develop the mobilizational capacity of their communities to resist over time. Secondly, whilst in his study, Masullo argues that first movers mobilize strong norms that *already exist in a community* against the use of violence, I instead suggest that first movers can themselves be the source of the prevalent norms of nonviolence, which they spread ahead of instigating collective action.

Few other studies have sought to directly tested how first movers influence the onset of collective action. Instead, much of the social movements literature and the armed resistance literature tend to presume the availability of latent first movers in a population who act when changing opportunity structures remove or reduce obstacles to collective action (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Meyer 2004; Meyer and Minkoff 2004; Tarrow 1994). As a result, “the “when” of social movement mobilization – when political opportunities open up – is argued to go a long way towards explaining the “why”” (Tarrow 1994, 17). In this perspective, changes in political opportunity structures – “dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure” (Ibid. 85) – are key to understanding why civilians may sometimes rise up to resist violent armed actors and opt out of ongoing war.

While I agree that structural changes are significant because they provide the opportunities needed for changes to the status quo, without first movers these opportunities will not be taken (Opp and Roehl 1990; Tarrow 1994). For example, Jana Krause finds that leaders distinguished the ability of otherwise similar communities to prevent violence in Ambon, Indonesia and Jos, Nigeria compared to contiguous communities that resorted to violence (2018). Relatedly, in her study of the Colombian conflict, Ana Arjona identified two communities which lost their capacity to resist when their leaders moved away (2016). The presence of first movers in a community cannot be presumed.

Some scholars explain the availability of first movers as a consequence of structural factors. For example, Oliver Kaplan has argued that certain communities are more likely to produce capable first movers to lead nonviolent resistance efforts (2017). Similarly, Roger Petersen attributes the high-risk actions of individuals to

strong communities which, “are able to drive individuals into these dangerous roles” (2001, 15). Yet although certain communities might be more likely to produce the first movers capable of sparking, framing and leading nonviolent resistance efforts, would-be first movers are not captives to the territories of their birth (Kaplan 2017). Mobile first movers have been widely documented, gaining conflict experience in one territory and then transposing their skills to lead peacebuilding efforts elsewhere (Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017; Krause 2018). Focus on structural conditions alone may therefore miss important variation in the availability of first movers in communities, who are willing to potentially die for their cause. In this thesis I accord an important role to these individuals in the emergence of peace communities and theorise a causal mechanism which details how their actions can lead to the inception of one form of collective action.

Other scholars examine the origins and agency of first movers. For example, Jana Krause has highlighted how first movers previous exposure to armed conflict can enable them to become first movers (2017). In Dadin Kowa, Indonesia, Krause notes that key leaders, particularly a Christian pastor Timothy, had the social knowledge needed to prevent escalation of violence through violence prevention networks, and that this social knowledge was developed through previous experience gained during Nigeria’s civil war. This prior experience informed the leaders how to deal with already mobilized youth and to strategically anticipate and prevent possible attacks (Ibid.). Existing research indicates that the presence of experienced leaders itself has important implications for conflict dynamics. For example, in the Colombia context, Ana Arjona has explored how the incidental clustering of former leaders within a certain village had a direct impact on local institutions, which subsequently led to the village to embrace aliocacy, “a social order in which armed groups do not intervene beyond the two most basic realms of rule: security... and taxation” (2016, 29). This occurrence sets the village apart from comparable villages lacking the same leadership structure, which instead were ruled by rebelocracy, “a social order in which armed groups intervene beyond security and taxation” (Ibid.) When local institutions are effective and legitimate, leaders enjoy influence over their communities, and thus armed actors are incentivised to convince leaders to offer their support, leading to aliocacy rather than rebelocracy.

First movers are often documented as assuming preceding roles of leadership in other organisations, such as the Church, or other left-wing movements (e.g. Kaplan

2017; Wood 2003). For example, Elizabeth Wood's research in El Salvador suggests that certain insurgent leaders who undertook considerable risks early on in the mobilizational cycle were influenced by liberation theology (2003). Such prior experiences offer first movers the knowledge and experience they need to lead fresh cycles of contention (Krause 2017). In a parallel vein, Kristen Monroe has theorized the high-risk agency of first movers, arguing that social perspective and identity shape the actions of civilians, with an interpretive narrative analysis of in-depth interviews with rescuers, bystanders, and Nazi supporters in World War II (2008; 2012). In her analysis, it is first movers' strong sense of human connection that determines their actions. She notes that those that engaged in high-risk agency, "deemed others' suffering directly relevant to them; this perception left them no option but to try to help strangers, even when doing so threatened the rescuers' own safety or well being" (2008, 700). Overall, the existing literature thus indicates that first movers may gain the capacity they need to initiate peace communities from prior experiences and knowledge of collective action and leadership, and that these experiences may themselves mould in first movers a certain identity and social capital capable of leading others, drawing on their high-risk agency.

1.4. Summary of the argument and contributions

The overall arguments of the dissertation are recapped in brief as follows. Overall, I expect that peace communities are more likely to emerge when civilians face threats of collective targeting by local armed actors, in territories where other peace communities already exist. Threats of collective violence create incentives for civilians to engage in collective action – such as the initiation of a peace community – as the costs of action are likely to be similar, and outweigh those of inaction, for a sizeable portion of the group. Moreover, I also expect that peace communities are more likely to emerge in territories where at least one peace community already exists due to a process of diffusion. I find that the evidence supports these arguments. I also argue that influential first movers are crucial to explaining how civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities in conflict environments. By visibly opposing armed actors, first movers can trigger a sorting process in their communities that leads to selection bias for nonviolence in the population that remains. Over time a larger proportion of the remaining population have a preference for

nonviolent resistance. The evidence also supports this argument. Finally, I also expected to find that conflict-related violence would be lower in territories where peace communities that enjoyed consistent NGO support were present, compared to those with no peace communities. Consistent NGO support may increase the time horizon over which armed actors can expect raised costs from attacking the community, increase the likelihood of sustained participation, and signal stability in its members to commitments to nonviolence and neutrality. However, I find that the evidence does not support the overall expectation.

The main contributions of the thesis are the following. Empirically, the key contribution of this thesis is the development of the first cross-national dataset of peace communities, which contains data on 69 peace communities in five of the ten countries in which I conducted searches. I also contribute empirically with the collection of 28 semi-structured interviews, 18 informal discussions and 3 informal group discussions, during a six week field trip to Colombia in November and December 2019. The thesis offers conceptual contributions by refining and clarifying the meaning of peace communities and first movers. Theoretically, the thesis develops a novel theory of first movers and nonviolent capacity to explain the longer term processes at play in the emergence of peace communities in the midst of war. I also theorise a novel argument for peace community success, though the results do not support this part of the argument.

In the next chapter I outline the theoretical and conceptual grounding of the thesis, starting with conceptualisation of the main focus of this thesis: peace communities.

Chapter 2: Theory and concepts

2.1. Introduction of the chapter

This chapter provides the definitional, conceptual, and theoretical foundation for the thesis, whilst I outline the research design in the chapter that follows. The first section defines key concepts to the dissertation and introduces the relevant actors to the theory. Thereafter, I introduce the theory in three steps.

Firstly, I seek to explain *under what conditions peace communities emerge*; their motivation, timing and location. Overall, I expect that peace communities form in territories that experience the threat of collective violence, as the costs of inaction come to outweigh those of participation for a large proportion of the civilian group. Furthermore, I expect that new peace communities are more likely to emerge in territories where at least one peace community already exists, through a process of diffusion, as news travels of a novel approach to avoiding displacement. Yet not all communities possess the aptitude to do so. For this, I argue that influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence are crucial to explaining *how conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities* when facing collective threats where they live. I suggest that by visibly opposing armed actors first movers trigger a sorting process in their communities that leads to selection bias for nonviolence in the population that remains. Sorting works simply because those that remain or join the community must adapt to survive.

Finally, I turn to the effectiveness of peace communities and examine *the conditions under which peace communities attain success* in conflict environments. Overall, I expect that peace communities that enjoy consistent support from NGOs, are also those that are more likely to attain success. Consistent support increases the time horizon over which armed actors can expect raised costs from attacking the community, engenders confidence in peace community members, thereby also increasing the likelihood of the sustained mass participation, and implies stability in the peace community's commitments to nonviolence and neutrality. Thus, armed actors may elect to move their battles to other locations nearby where NGOs are not present.

2.2. Definition of peace communities and actors relevant to the theory

2.2.1. Peace communities

The term “peace community” was first coined in the Colombian conflict, to describe local communities that sought to opt out of war and seek autonomy from local armed actors using nonviolent methods (e.g. Alther 2006; Sanford 2003). Famous Colombian examples include the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó and the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare (ATCC) (Burnyeat 2018; Masullo 2015; Kaplan 2017), though peace communities have also been identified in case literatures in Asia, Africa and other Latin American countries (Anderson and Wallace 2013; Avruch and Jose 2007; Baines and Paddon 2012; Burnyeat 2018; Garcia 1997; Macaspac 2018; Paddon Rhoads and Sutton 2020; Perlez 1990; Santos 2005; Wilson 1991, 1992). Peace communities seek to limit physical violence in the places they live and protect the lives of their members using collective nonviolent methods of civil resistance. Yet, a lack of clear inclusion and exclusion criteria in the existing literature, combined with multiple terms which may or may not describe the same phenomena, has made the systematic and comparative study of peace communities – and their close conceptual neighbours – challenging.

Indeed, as has been highlighted by Oliver Kaplan (2017) and Juan Masullo (2021), a multiplicity of terms are used by scholars to refer to similar, though not necessarily comparable, phenomena. Amongst others, terms in the academic literature include voice, resistance, and resilience. Communities that use strategies of civil resistance in the midst of conflict are also described by an abundance of terms in case literature and news reports. Common terms include populations in resistance, pacifist communities, neutral communities. Other labels include nonviolent communities, non-war communities, pacifist communities, unarmed communities, neutral communities, autonomous communities, humanitarian zones, biodiversity zones, peasant workers associations, peasant farmers associations, populations in resistance, peasants’ associations, and civilian self-protection groups. Both within and outside of the Colombian context, these and other terms have often been used to describe ostensibly similar phenomena without clarifying their conceptual distinctions. Existing research offers rich documentation of a variety of civilian strategies during conflict, yet the lack of consistent terminology risks the potential for theoretical and

empirical progress. I seek to offer some clarity on peace communities and conceptually similar phenomena in this section.

Peace territories

Within Colombia, a common term that is used to describe similar, yet separate, phenomenon is that of peace territories (Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016). The key distinction between a peace territory and a peace community is that peace territories emphasize the geographical area in which civilians live as a place of sanctuary to which others can join, whilst existing research on peace communities tend to emphasize the agency of the civilians that collectively choose the strategy of opting out of conflict together as a community (Mouly 2021). Peace territories are also often described as sanctuaries, places where, “certain individuals, communities or categories of people can go to be safe from those who would otherwise harm them, especially through the use of violence” (Hancock and Mitchell 2007, 2). By contrast, peace communities are primarily developed by and for a pre-existing community group that adopts the collective strategy of sustained nonviolence to reduce the physical effects of armed conflict violence. Another common term sometimes used to describe peace communities are “zones of peace,” yet this term encompasses a much wider repertoire of phenomena.

Zones of peace

The term “zone of peace” or “peace zone” was first introduced in a special issue of the journal *Peace Review* in 1997 edited by Christopher Mitchell and Susan Allen, that was later popularised by Landon Hancock and Christopher Mitchell’s book *Zones of Peace* (2007). Zones of peace are defined as, “an attempt to establish norms which limit the destructive effects of violent conflict within a particular area or during a particular time period or with regard to a particular category of people” (Mitchell and Allen Nan 1997, 3). This broad conceptualisation captures the multiple different ways states, societies and groups have sought to develop rules and behaviour which limit conduct during war, institutionalise the behaviour of armed conflict actors, and restrict who are legitimate targets for violence. In their book, Hancock and Mitchell elaborate upon a long tradition of designating safe spaces for civilians to shelter from prosecution throughout history (2007). In different places and times missionaries,

markets, and entire cities have been established as places where violence is forbidden, or people have been protected. This is therefore a useful starting point from which to consider a broader universe of cases to which peace communities may be part. Yet the term permits significant variation along axes of theoretical importance.

Two examples described in Hancock and Mitchell's book – a sanctuary in the Former Yugoslavia and a post-conflict peace zone in El Salvador – meet the definition of a zone of peace yet encompass quite different phenomena. Zones of peace in the former Yugoslavia, known as the United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs), were *set up and enforced by external actors* as protected areas for civilian populations during the conflict between 1992 and 1995 (Mitchell 2007). Conflict-affected communities played no part in the decision to create UNPAs, how they would function or where they would be located. First established in February 1992 by the United Nations (UN) secretary general's special representative, the UNPAs were fully demilitarized zones with a UN force supervising the withdrawal of armed units from the area. This example contrasts with the post-conflict "local peace zone" set up by La Coordinadora de Comunidades de Bajo Lempa y la Bahía de Juiquilisco – an association of eighty six communities in El Salvador (Hancock 2007). Different to the example in the former Yugoslavia, this zone was created by the communities it sought to protect. Yet, rather than being forged to reduce the physical effects of conflict violence on its inhabitants, instead its founding principles sought to create the basis for, "the free and full expression of rights, be they economic, social and cultural, as well as... civil and political rights" (Hayes 1998 cited in Hancock and Mitchell, 2007). Meeting Johan Galtung's definition of a "positive peace", the objective of the zone was thus to *reduce structural and cultural forms of violence* against its members, rather than avoiding a "negative peace" as in the example in Yugoslavia (1990). These two examples highlight the multiple sources of variation encompassed by the term "zone of peace" or "peace zone." Although most peace communities would meet the definition of zones of peace, not all zones of peace are peace communities.

Unarmed civilian protection

The literature on unarmed civilian protection and self-protection is also relevant. Unarmed civilian protection is, "the practice of civilians protecting other civilians in situations of imminent, ongoing, or recent violent conflict. It involves trained

international civilians protecting local civilians, local civilians protecting each other, and even local civilians protecting international or non-local civilians” (Oldenhuis et al. 2021, 5). Whilst unarmed civilian protection involves nonviolent strategies aimed to protect specific individuals or groups from physical harm, the strategy is both initiated and sustained by individuals from within the community and outside of it (Furnari, Bliesemann de Guevara and Julian 2021). Unarmed civilian protection actors thus includes numerous international organizations such as Nonviolent Peaceforce and Peace Brigades International whom implement and support nonviolent strategies in conflict-affected communities, as well as local organizations such as Cure Violence and DC Peace Team who offer training to citizens and deploy unarmed protection units in the United States of America (Cure Violence 2022; DC Peace Team 2022; Peace Brigades International 2022; Nonviolent Peaceforce 2022). Community-led initiatives such as peace communities, unarmed guards and weapon-free zones meet the definition of unarmed civilian self-protection (Furnari, Bliesemann de Guevara and Julian 2021). Unlike peace communities, unarmed civilian self-protection may thus include forms of resistance that do not require the mass participation of community members. For example, weapon-free zones tend to be declared, negotiated and enforced by international organizations such as Nonviolent Peaceforce rather than the community itself (Easthom 2015). Similar to the term “zone of peace”, “unarmed civilian protection” encompasses many phenomena.

Civilian noncooperation

Juan Masullo proposes a solution with his root concept of civilian noncooperation, which he defines as, “a set of actions that civilians living in conflict zones deploy to refuse to collaborate with each and every armed groups present in their territories” (2021, 2). There are three core attributes to conceptual membership. Firstly, the acts must fall outside the bounds of behaviour that armed groups would ordinarily deem permissible. Secondly, all armed groups in the civilians’ locality must be the target of their actions, and thirdly the civilians’ actions must disadvantage armed groups. The first two of these attributes neatly map to the function of peace communities, which target the behaviour of all armed actors through opposition to local violent conflict; actions which would not ordinarily be acceptable to its targets. However, I suggest that Masullo’s third inclusion criteria limits theoretical and empirical investigation of the

conditions under which peace communities are able to survive and attain success in conflict environments and should therefore be relaxed.³⁴ In less strategic territories, or where nearby strategic substitutes are available, the emergence and sustenance of peace communities may imply fewer governance costs to local armed actors. Peace communities may even work in armed actors' favour if local armed actors can trust that all are treated the same. For these reasons, I suggest that peace communities should not be limited to only those cases which cause local armed actors disadvantage. Doing so may preclude identification of the conditions under which peace communities are able to sustain.

Autonomy

Oliver Kaplan's concept of "autonomy" is also relevant. With this term Kaplan describes instances of civilian self-rule, where communities adopt a strategy of, "independence in decision-making and the freedom from violence required to sustain it" (2017, 46). Though instances of "autonomy" and "peace communities" overlap, a key distinction is that I suggest peace communities need not avoid armed actor violence to be counted. Instead, I assume that many peace communities persist despite continuing violence, and I consider their resilience over time despite these serious challenges could offer a fruitful alternative measure of their success.

2.2.2. Existing conceptualisation of peace communities

There have been some recent attempts to improve the conceptual specificity of peace communities. Cécile Mouly identifies three key attributes from her review of the literature: (i) impartiality; (ii) collective participation and cohesion; and (iii) the use of nonviolent action (2021). Impartiality is a principal which guides the behaviour and stated position of many peace communities subject to empirical study. This attribute is often considered to be a crucial explanation for why sometimes civilians are able to remain in their locality, seek to opt out of war, and survive (Masullo 2015; Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Sanford 2003). Without impartiality, local armed actors may suspect civilians of supporting another armed side, leading to accusations of disloyalty that are often accompanied by violence. Indeed, it is this intuition which underlies the logic of the civilian strategy.

³⁴ I define the success of peace communities in section 6.3.4. of chapter 6.

Collective participation and cohesion are further attributes. Peace communities are typically formed following a process of community deliberation, where a majority of residents decide to opt out of conflict and set rules with the intention of reducing violence where they live. The process of creating a peace community is often led by the communities themselves, though sometimes national authorities or external organizations offer support (Rojas 2004, 2007; Iyer and Hancock 2004). As Mouly argues, local ownership and direction of the process typically requires the broad support of residents for the strategy to attain success, whilst cohesive communities are more likely to comply with the rules they set for themselves (2021; Kaplan 2017). Broad compliance is necessary to convince armed actors that civilian consistently treat all local violent groups the same.

The use of nonviolent action is the final attribute identified by Mouly. Protests, rallies, marches, and the building of new institutions are all examples of activities that fall within nonviolent classification (Burnyeat 2018; Kaplan 2017). Peace communities may also engage in various forms of noncooperation such as refusing to provide information and other resources to all local armed actors, including the state (Masullo, Mouly and Garrido 2019). The adoption of nonviolent actions is crucial for the acceptance of peace communities by local armed actors. Indeed, if a community takes up arms, the group may instead meet the definition of a local militia or civil defence unit (Blocq 2014; Jentzsch, Kalyvas, and Schubiger 2015). Rather than acceptance, civilians that arm themselves are likely to be treated as new competition instead.

Much of the existing literature on peace communities has sought to examine how and whether peace communities reduce physical violence in their territories during armed conflict (Garcia 1997; Hernández Delgado 2012; Kaplan 2013a, 2013b, 2017; Masullo 2015; Masullo, Mouly and Garrido 2019; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Mouly and Hernández Delgado 2019; Mouly, Idler and Garrido 2015; Osorio Jiménez 2018). Though this literature is primarily descriptive, this does suggest scholarly consensus on the function, objective and context under which peace communities emerge. Yet, Mouly does not specify the objective of peace communities (to reduce conflict related physical violence) nor their location within conflict-affected territories as key attributes.³⁵ I suggest that doing so is important to prevent conceptual

³⁵ In Mouly's discussion she states that in conflict-affected societies, peace communities try, "to find their own ways to reduce violence," however she does not specify this objective or the context of a conflict location as core attributes in her conceptualisation (2021, 1170).

stretching of the term. For example, otherwise, the “local peace zone” set up in post conflict El Salvador (described above) counts as a peace community despite being organized to reduce structural, rather than physical, forms of violence for its inhabitants after conflict termination.

Other researchers suggest additional attributes peace communities. For example, Colombian scholar Pedro Valenzuela defines peace communities as resulting from the unilateral and independent decision of conflict-affected communities (2009). However, I suggest that this attribute instead offers a promising source of theoretical variation for scholars interested in the conditions under which peace communities attain success. Formation type (whether initiated unilaterally or by agreement with local armed actors) is better classified as an *optional* attribute of the concept that scholars may use to aid purposive case selection. Applying Valenzeula’s strict classification would also significantly restrict the universe of cases. Amongst other potential sources of variation, peace communities, may also differ from one another with regard to their geographical extent (village, municipality, national), and the source of their initiative to create them (grassroots or top down). I collect data on these and other optional characteristics as part of the dataset I construct in chapter 3. Next, I define and operationalise each element of my conceptualisation of peace communities.

2.2.3. My definition and operationalisation of peace communities

In this section I aim to further clarify and refine the meaning of peace communities by outlining the core attributes I consider necessary for conceptual membership, building upon the existing literature on peace communities, zones of peace and the broader literature of civil resistance. To do so, I outline five inclusion criteria. I propose that peace communities involve the (i) community-based mobilization of civilians where they live (ii) in the midst of war; that involves the (ii) sustained and organized coordination of civilians engaged in (iv) nonviolent activities. Activities are (v) purposively aimed at ending or preventing conflict locally, but which may aspire beyond the local village or municipality. In addition to these criteria, as has already been described, existing research also conceptualises peace communities as neutral or impartial (Masullo 2015; Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Mouly 2021; Sanford 2003; Valenzuela 2009). Yet neutrality and impartiality are challenging to empirically observe

via desk research, an unavoidable challenge that I faced as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. I therefore relax this criterion for the purposes of dataset compilation in chapter 3. I retain consistent conceptualisation throughout the thesis to ensure its uniformity.

(i) Local community-level mobilization

The civilians located within a conflict-affected territory must be the main activists. To be identified as a peace community, the civilian group must be active, involve collective participation of the community, and emerge in the conflict-affected territory in which participants live. Communities may have links to national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs and INGOs) or religious groups, yet such linked groups are themselves outside the scope for inclusion as a peace community and are instead considered supportive external actors. That peace communities are comprised of civilians, who collectively participate in community-level mobilization is observable in NGO and INGO reports, media reports, and academic literature written about the group.

This criterion distinguishes peace communities from zones of peace, which may be created entirely without community mobilization, as is the case with the UN Protected Areas set up during the conflict in the former Yugoslavia between 1992 and 1995 (Mitchell 2007, 123-136). This criterion builds upon Mouly's definition of the peace community attribute of participation and cohesion, adding additional specificity on which actors create and sustain peace communities (civilian groups) and where peace communities may be located (in the conflict-affected territory in which they live) (2021).

(ii) Conflict location

I only include peace communities that emerge within armed conflict in the dataset, using the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) definition of 25 annual battlefield deaths as the cut off for candidate communities (Gleditsch, et al. 2002; Pettersson et al. 2021; Pettersson 2021). This may be checked with reference to the UCDP conflict-year for each candidate community. To be counted and included in the dataset, the territory of a peace community need not be contained within a single conflict-affected state.

This criterion distinguishes peace communities from zones of peace, which may be created during times of war or peace, such as the post-conflict zone of peace in El Salvador (Hancock 2007, 105-122). This criterion also adds specificity to Mouly's definition of peace communities, which does not require an armed conflict location (2021).

(iii) Sustained and coordinated organization

There must be evidence of a series of sustained and coordinated collective activities in pursuit of peace, meeting Erica Chenoweth's definition of a "campaign" (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, 416). This does not mean that there needs to be an organization that represents the community, but there needs to be some sort of coordination between civilian collective actions over time, distinguishing events observed from a series of random mass gatherings or spontaneous protests within the community. For example, this may be observable through regular civilian meetings to purposively organize activities with the specific objective of local peace. That members engage in sustained and coordinated organization over time may be observable in NGO and INGO reports, media reports, academic literature.

This criterion adds specificity to Mouly's definition of peace communities, which does not require evidence of sustained and coordinated organization over time (2021).

(iv) Nonviolent methods

The actions of a peace community's members must be predominantly nonviolent and, where the information is available, leaders must espouse adherence to nonviolent methods. This may be observable in public speeches, NGO and INGO reports, media reports, academic literature. Some peace communities may commit members to nonviolence and may develop rules that expel members who use violence to settle disputes. This may be observable in membership documents, interview data regarding oaths or ceremony, and meeting minutes.

The actions of peace communities are nonviolent in that armed conflict actors are primarily challenged through methods of nonviolent action rather than through methods of violence. This is not to say that violence does not characterise the interactions between peace community members and the armed actors they seek to oppose. Civilians are often met with retaliatory violence and force and may even

themselves resort to violence. However, where violence is committed by peace community members it is likely carried out by individuals on the fringe of the community, not supported by its leaders, and may even be targeted at noncompliant participants themselves. That is to say, violence might be targeted at other civilians who threaten to undermine the legitimacy or the actions of the peace community as a whole. This might be against civilians who collaborate with armed actors, or who violate other standards of the group. Given these complex possibilities, I do not limit the scope of this project to only those peace communities that were completely nonviolent (i.e., such that no member committed any acts of physical violence either against other members or against armed actors that they oppose). It would severely limit the scope of this project to do so. Beyond that, it would be impractical and misleading to claim that through desk based research I have confirmed that all public and private actions of peace community members were nonviolent. This criterion is in line with Mouly's definition of peace community attributes (2021).

(v) Local peace objective

The community must aim to end or prevent physical violence locally, although they may also aspire beyond their village or municipality. This criterion distinguishes peace communities from zones of peace, which may organize in opposition to cultural or structural violence rather than physical violence from ongoing armed conflict (Hancock 2007, 105-122). Since the objective of local peace targets the behaviour of armed actors, and such defiance would not ordinarily be acceptable to its targets, peace communities neatly map to the first two attributes of Masullo's root concept of civilian noncooperation (2021). This criterion also adds specificity to Mouly's definition of peace communities, which does not require that communities organize with the objective of local peace in mind (2021). Peace communities may participate in national level peace movements, yet peace movements themselves are excluded as they operate at a higher level of aggregation.

That peace communities aim to achieve local peace may be observable in the public statements of community representatives, membership documents (if applicable), NGO and INGO reports, media reports, or academic literature.

2.3. Actors which aid or dissuade the emergence and success of peace communities

This section surveys the actors involved in aiding or dissuading the emergence of peace communities and their success. Local armed actors, including the state, might help or hinder peace communities depending on their objectives, beliefs, structure, and connections to local civilian groups. I summarise these expected effects in table 2.1. External actors, such as NGOs, might aim to help peace communities attain success by reducing the costs of negotiating with armed actors, imposing additional costs on armed actors for targeting civilians, or by enhancing nonviolent capacity. As later I argue in section 2.4.3., I anticipate that the consistency of external support is crucial for them to do so effectively.

2.3.1. Armed actors

Strategic objectives

When armed actors value their public image – be it due to an interest in cultivating local support or a desire to stake a place in the international system – toleration of a peace community may offer valuable publicity of their commitment to human rights. Indeed, research shows that rebel groups often spend significant resources on overseas political campaigns (Huang 2016). Rebel groups have also been found to be less likely to engage in terrorism when they rely on local support, and less likely to target civilians when they rely on broad support from a population (Fortna, Lotito and Rubin 2018; Polo and Gleditsch 2016; Stanton 2013, 2016). Public relations are often important to armed actors, especially for contending groups who seek to signal their credentials as governors in waiting.

A bad public image may also make it more difficult for armed actors to extract concessions through negotiations and bargaining to end conflict. State representatives who negotiate or offer concessions to groups that have a reputation for civilian cruelty risk public favour and are thus more likely to do so with groups that demonstrate restraint. Indeed, research shows that when insurgent groups use terrorist tactics they are less likely to achieve an overall victory or negotiated settlement (Fortna 2015).³⁶

³⁶ Conversely, some studies find that violence against civilians can be effective under certain conditions (Lyll 2009). Thomas finds that armed groups that target civilians are more likely to participate in negotiations and obtain political concessions (2014), whilst Wood and Kathman find armed groups that use violence against civilians are more likely to secure negotiated settlements (2014).

For these reasons armed actors that care about their national and international public image – or their capacity to extract concessions through negotiation – should be less likely to respond to the emergence of a peace community with severe punishment, compared to armed actors that do not share this concern.

However, not all armed actors seek a positive international public image. For example, rather than seeking to demonstrate the group’s compliance with Western norms of restraint against civilians, the religious fundamentalist group the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has instead sought to differentiate itself from the international community. ISIL publicise gruesome beheadings of Westerners on social media to spread fear and generate notoriety, and do not intend to join the international community. Instead, they seek to purge the world of anti-Islamic forces and establish a global Islamic Caliphate in its place (Siebert and Keeney 2017). Disinterest in cultivating a public image to endear the international community, combined with beliefs and objectives that conflict with the possibility of civilian autonomy and neutrality (as discussed further below), leaves little room for the possibility that such group might permit a peace community to carve out their own path.

Ideological orientation

A significant body of research focuses on the relationship between armed actor ideological orientation and civilian victimization (Hoover Green 2016, 2018; Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014; Leader Maynard 2019; Thaler 2012; Oppenheim and Weintraub 2017). Ideological orientation can impose restraints on who and who is not a target and what forms of violence can be used. For example, Stathis Kalyvas and Laia Balcells argue that Revolutionary Socialist (Marxist) groups are less likely to target civilians as doing so runs counter to their ideological underpinnings as being founded “for the people” (2010). Indeed, some studies show that Marxist groups are less likely to victimize civilians (Hoover Green 2016, 2018; Thaler 2012). For example, Elisabeth Wood describes how a left wing armed actor in EL Salvador, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), was “highly selective” in its use of violence in comparison to other armed actors (2009). Amelia Hoover Green also provides evidence that Marxist groups’ emphasis on political education reduces the chance for opportunistic violence (2016, 2018). Similarly, Kai Thaler finds that Marxist ideals

restrained violence against civilians by government actors in Angola and Mozambique (2012). Peace communities may therefore be more likely to emerge in territories contested by Marxist or left-orientated armed groups.

Yet, conversely, ideological orientation can impose restraints on armed actors whilst also increasing violence against civilians. For example, in his book *Agents of Atrocity: Leaders, Followers and the Violation of Human Rights*, Neil Mitchell documents how the Red Army showed no reluctance in victimizing civilians despite the strength of their ideological convictions (2004). Indeed, certain ideologies may specify certain civilian groups as legitimate targets. Continuing with the example of ISIL, the group abides by strict ideological and religious ideals that conflict with the idea of a neutral community. Within this framework, “infidels” – nonbelievers of the strict interpretation of Islam that the group promotes – should be offered no mercy (Siebert and Keeney 2017). Once consequence of a community expressing a desire not to be ruled by the group, regardless of their religious credentials, is their likely labelling as “infidels”, and by consequence, their brutal targeting. ISIL might be described as “ideologically genocidal” in that the group is willing to adopt a “final solution” such as ethnic cleansing to achieve their extreme objectives at all costs (Kaplan 2017; Valentino 2004). However, there are examples in the literature on ethnic cleansing and genocide that demonstrate how civilians have been able to protect themselves and others from violence from armed actors even under such severe conditions.

For example, during the Holocaust, recent research demonstrates that whilst Jewish populations themselves engaged in resistance in response, many brave individuals also sought to rescue Jews at great personal risk (Finkel 2017; Braun 2020; Monroe 2012). In his systematic analysis of all ghettos in pre-war Poland, Evelyne Finkel finds that the type of repression that Jewish leaders faced prior to the war shaped their capacity to organise resistance during the Holocaust in response to extreme violence and repression (2017). This relates to the theory of peace communities, which also emphasizes the importance of first movers to the community’s capacity for collective resistance. In Kristen Monroe’s analysis - compared to bystanders and collaborators - rescuers understand themselves to be part of a larger community, which constrains the moral choices individuals make (2012). By contrast, with his examination of Belgium and the Netherlands during the Holocaust, Robert Braun finds evidence for his group-level argument that, “local

religious minorities are more likely to protect victims of mass persecution” (2020, 25). Braun argues that this overall finding may be explained by two key factors, that local religious minorities are likely to both have greater empathy for Jews, compared to religious majorities, and a larger capacity to both build and sustain a network to rescue Jews from their plight, under serious conditions of threat and risk. The local internal dynamics of local religious minorities made it easier for them to form rescue networks, as small and close-knit communities were able to trust in each other, whilst in majority religious communities, attempts at building rescue networks tended to be undermined by pro-Nazi informants that attended the churches. The latter factor relates to the theory of the emergence of peace communities, in that it may be that peace communities are also more likely to emerge in communities that constitute local minorities; a fruitful subject for further research.³⁷

Civilians have resisted other episodes of ethnic cleansing and genocide. In Bosnia, during the Balkan war of 1992-1995, the city of Tuzla was able to avoid ethnic cleansing, even in the face of severe pressure (Wallace 2002). Tuzla was an ethnically mixed city, with Muslims, Croats and Serbs all living together prior to the initiation of the war, and interviews with its residents revealed that the municipality leadership, and the shared identity of its residents were key factors explaining their decisions to stay and resist (Ibid.). During the Rwandan genocide that occurred between April and July of 1994, evidence suggests that the majority of Muslims did not participate, instead often acting to protect both Muslim and non-Muslim Tutsis (Doughty and Ntambara 2005). In their case study of resistance and protection by the Muslim community during the Rwandan Genocide, in which they held meetings with 30-50 people in five different communities, Kristin Doughty and David Moussa Ntambara find that a large proportion of survivors were protected by hiding in Muslim communities. The authors highlight how prior to the genocide, Muslims made up approximately 10% of Rwanda’s population, and were discriminated against by Church and state leaders (Ibid.). Echoing Braun’s argument (2020), Muslims may therefore have had a greater sense of empathy for Tutsis compared to other Rwandan groups, in part explaining their rescue agency despite facing significant personal risk.

³⁷ In his book, Braun extends his argument to other types of local minorities, including political and ethnic minorities, and finds evidence to suggest the applicability of his findings more broadly beyond religious types (2020).

More recent literature on ethnic cleansing and genocide also offers a nuanced picture of the goals and unity of its perpetrators. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods at the local and regional level, Scott Straus demonstrates how the security considerations of state leaders during the Rwandan Genocide affected patterns of violence, and that ideology both motivated elites and was a mobilising force at the local level (2006). In his subsequent research, Straus argues that “founding narratives” – which define who is part of the political community of a state and who is not, and that emerge at critical junctures in a country’s history – account for variation in the actions of state leaders when confronted with security threats (2015). In cases where a “founding narrative” is multiethnic and inclusive, leaders can envision alternatives to genocide when faced with security challenges. Instead, in the context of a monoethnic and exclusive “founding narrative”, leaders are more inclined to resort to genocide under conditions of threat (Ibid.). According to this argument, the nature of the “founding narrative” determines the relative strength of tolerant or intolerant leaders, thereby influencing the likelihood of genocide. An alternative argument is presented by Zeynep Bulutgil. Using cross-national quantitative data and comparative historical case studies, Bulutgil tests her argument that nonethnic social cleavages (e.g. class, religion) within dominant ethnic groups shape the balance of power between tolerant and intolerant state leaders (2016, 2017, 2020). Bulutgil argues that leaders that prioritise non-ethnic issues are likely to be more inclusive and tolerant of ethnic minorities and would rather cooperate with ethnic others than pursuing a violent agenda. When such tolerant leaders enjoy organisational strength before war starts, they are better equipped to prevent intolerant leaders from implementing ethnic cleansing (2017, 2020). Bulutgil also shows how the balance of power between tolerant and intolerant leaders often changes over time, emphasising variation in state leader motives and goals and the transient nature of conflict dynamics (2016). As it relates to the theory of peace communities, such variation may open the possibility for the emergence of peace communities, at certain times, and in certain places, as armed actor leaders’ view of what constitutes a security threat, or the relative sway towards tolerance or intolerance towards certain groups, changes over time and across different locations.

Economic motivation

Armed actors whose motivations are strictly economic may have similar disregard for civilian preferences. Criminal cartels and private military contractors are unlikely to rely on civilian support and may have few incentives to stem retaliatory attacks for perceived disloyalty or restrain opportunistic violence against civilians (Humphreys and Weinstein 2006; Weinstein 2005, 2007). Civilians that face economically motivated armed actors may also adopt avoidance strategies to reduce the risk of targeting rather than initiate a peace community. The structure and organization of armed actors conditions whether and how each of these expectations function locally.

Table 2.1. Armed actor types and the emergence of peace communities

Armed actor type	Direction of relationship	Theoretical justification
Marxist or leftist armed actors	Positive	Marxist and leftist armed actors typically frame their fight as for the people, thus broad-based civilian support is a key objective
Armed actors who seek legitimacy	Positive	The actions of armed actors that seek international legitimacy is constrained by prevailing international norms against human rights violations. Local populations are unlikely to support civilian victimization
Non-ideological armed actors who do not seek legitimacy	Negative	Treatment of civilians and consideration of their preferences are not strategic objectives for these armed actors
Economically motivated armed actors	Negative	Treatment of civilians and consideration of their preferences are not strategic objectives for these armed actors

Armed actor (de)centralization

There is significant variation in how armed actors are controlled at the local level, with implications for whether and how the treatment of civilians is consistently applied across subunits. While centralised and hierarchical armed actors can influence the local behaviour of subunits through top-down discipline, the behaviour of decentralized actors is much more likely to be shaped by local relationships and external influences (McQuinn et al. 2021). For ideologically motivated armed actors and for armed actors motivated by their public image on the world stage, a centralised and controlled structure makes it more likely that associated local units abide by international norms of civilian protection, as the rules and standards are reinforced through hierarchy.

Peace communities should therefore be more likely to emerge and sustain in territories with centralised armed groups that are motivated by public image or Marxist ideology (as defined above). Conversely, for economically motivated armed actors, a decentralised and uncontrolled structure makes it more likely that associated local units tolerate peace communities as the overall actor's objectives are not controlled at the local level. When subgroup leaders can make their own decisions about how to engage with the local community rather than take instruction about all decisions from the top, the existing relationship between subgroup leaders and local communities may become a more important factor in local decisions than the group's overall strategic and ideational objectives. I discuss the role of supportive external actors next.

2.3.2. Supportive external actors

By subsidising some of the costs of collective action to a civilian group, and reducing some of the likely costs of doing so, external actors can tip the balance of costs in favour of mobilization into a peace community (Moreno León 2021). Several mechanisms explain how external actors support peace communities to emerge and attain success.

Mechanism: deterrence of civilian victimization

External actors such as NGOs can increase the cost to armed actors of using violence against civilians. These increased costs can affect the decisions of armed actors to use various tactics, and deter armed actors from using civilian victimization to avoid potential reputational damage on the local and international stage. Individual rebels or soldiers may also be deterred from killing civilians, if they have reason to believe they may face prosecution for their actions, under the Geneva Convention. There are two key forms of intervention from external actors which can deter civilian victimization by increasing the costs of doing so: (i) publicity of armed actor actions on the international stage; and (ii) holding a physical presence in the community, through accompaniment.

Publicity. Key to both the likelihood of the emergence of peace communities and their later success is the ability of its members to impose costs on armed actors if they are targeted. NGOs can play an important role in doing so through publicity of peace communities and, incursions of local armed actors into their territory. Peace

communities also raise awareness themselves through online publicization and documentation of abuses.³⁸

Publicity can impose significant costs to armed actors that seek political legitimacy at either a domestic or international level (Bob 2005; Jo and Thomson 2014; Jo 2015; Zartman 1995). Political legitimacy is a highly valued end for rebel groups that seek to be regarded as rightful rulers by local and international audiences. For example, Hyeran Jo finds that rebel groups that seek international legitimacy are more likely to comply with international humanitarian law barring the targeting of civilians (2015). When armed groups seek acceptance of their rule by local populations and as viable potential rulers, political legitimacy is a necessary step toward recognition on the international stage (Talmon 2011). The threat of violent actions being publicised can therefore act as a deterrent against civilian victimization when local armed seek to signal their potential as rulers in waiting.

Accompaniment. Accompaniment is an alternative means by which external actors can deter local violence in peace communities. This strategy has been employed by Peace Brigades International since it was formed in 1981 in response to invitations from civil society groups in Guatemala, El Salvador, Sri Lanka, Colombia, and the United States, to accompany individuals in danger of violence (Schirch 2006; Julian and Schweitzer 2015). Accompaniment is the practice of nonpartisan external actors holding a physical presence in a conflict-affected community, making threats visible and deterring them from being carried out (Furnari, Bliesemann de Guevara and Julian 2021). This practice can increase the costs to armed actors of attacking the community, or engaging in battles nearby, since they risk accidentally targeting community outsiders – which likely implies greater reputational costs – as well as general publicity of their behaviour.

Mechanism: Improving opportunities for dialogue and negotiation

Dialogue, discussion, and negotiation between armed and actors and local communities can be crucial to identifying alternatives to violence and resolving misunderstandings. However, not all local communities have strong ties and

³⁸ For example, the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó maintains a website at <https://cdpsanjose.org/>

relationships to local armed groups. Indeed, in many conflict-affected locations, the result of months or years of local violence may mean that the relationship between local communities and conflict actors has broken down entirely. External actors, whose independence is trusted and valued, can play an important role in bringing together and connecting these different groups, and sparking new opportunities to resolve differences without the use of threats and violence. Mediation is a key tool that external actors use to do this in conflict-affected communities.

Mediation. Armed actors are more likely to seek alternatives to violence when dialogue and mediation with civilians is an option. For this, external actors can play an important role – bridging civilian and armed actor networks by offering to mediate between the groups. Connections open the possibility that civilians can negotiate the establishment of a peace community with armed actors, making the outcome more likely and retaliation less so. When armed actors have trusted connections within a community, these key contacts can also allay some of their concerns before armed actors resort to violence. This relationship is all the more important when subgroup leaders have local decision-making autonomy. In the absence of trusted connections between the groups, external actors can seek to fill this gap.

Mechanism: Increasing nonviolent capacity

The final means by which external actors can affect the likelihood of the emergence and success of peace communities is through bolstering the nonviolent capacity of the civilian group through training and guidance or funding.

Training and guidance. Training and guidance can strengthen the aptitude of communities for collective action where it would otherwise be unlikely; in communities lacking experienced leaders or without prior involvement in collective nonviolent resistance. Similarly, in communities with limited social cohesion, the presence of supportive external actors can boost solidarity and increase participation due to improved expectations of success. Increased participation reduces individual risk and increases the credibility of the peace community, reducing armed actor targeting and improving the likelihood of success.

Funding. Funding can increase the nonviolent capacity of a community in a number of ways. Firstly funds may enable civilians to travel to other successful peace communities, to develop their knowledge of which forms of civil resistance to local armed actors have been effective elsewhere. Secondly, funds can be used for the development and maintenance of a community website, in which civilians can publicise the actions of local armed actors, and thereby increase costs of victimization to armed actors. Funds may also allow civilians to afford time to organize a peace community away from productive labour.

2.4. Theory

2.4.1 Theoretical argument: The conditions under which peace communities emerge in conflict-affected territories

In this section, I seek to explain *the conditions under which peace communities emerge*. Overall, I expect that peace communities form in territories where civilians experience the threat of collective violence, as the costs of inaction are raised for a significant portion of the group. Furthermore, I also expect that peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists, through diffusion, as news is likely to spread locally of a novel approach to avoiding displacement.

The first independent variable in the argument is the threat of collective violence by local armed actors.³⁹ I follow Abbey Steele's definition of collective violence as, "violence or threatened violence against members of a group because of membership in that group" (2017, 24). This distinguishes collective violence from indiscriminate violence, which may occur incidentally due to civilians being caught in the crossfire of armed groups in battle, and from selective targeting of individuals for disloyalty or defection (Ibid.). At times Stathis Kalyvas (2006) refers to "indiscriminate violence" when describing what Steele defines as "collective violence." For example, he states, "In indiscriminate violence.. the concept of individual guilt is replaced by the concept of guilt by association.... the specific rule of association varies and ranges from family

⁴⁰ There are some exceptions to this general rule. For example, when a high-status individual within a community – such as a beloved leader – is targeted for selective violence by local armed groups, individual-level violence targets the group as a whole. In this case, individual violence remains a threat to the broader collectivity, and may also generate mass outrage capable of triggering mobilization.

to village, region, and nation” (Kalyvas 2006, 142). However, he also often refers to indiscriminate violence as random (e.g. Kalyvas 2006, 143-172). Yet the definition of collective violence taken by this thesis is not random, and instead involves the purposive targeting of individuals on the basis of their holding membership of a specific community. When a civilian is targeted for collective violence, the likelihood of being targeted depends on their membership of a certain group, which may be a village that is considered to have allegiance to one conflict side or another.

Although armed actors are thought to prefer (at minimum the façade of) freely chosen loyalty by the civilians they seek to control, sometimes they issue ultimatums to expel groups of civilians from territory (Kalyvas 2006; Steele 2007; Stepputat 1999). Yet, these collective threats can be counterproductive if civilians risk loss of life regardless of the path they choose to take (cf. Eisinger 1973; McAdam 1999; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Skocpol 1979; Tarrow 1994; Tilly 1977). A fundamental hypothesis of social movement theory is that collective action may follow fresh threats as the costs of inaction come to outweigh those of participation (Alimi 2007; Almeida 2018; Einwohner and Maher 2011; Goldstone and Tilly 2001; Tilly 1977). The targeting of a well-loved or influential community member may also trigger collective action despite significant risks, yet overall I expect that the threat of collective violence is more likely than threat of individual violence to do so (Steele 2017).⁴⁰ Furthermore, though I also expect that other forms of violence, such as battles between armed actors or the targeting of individual civilians, also increases the likelihood that peace communities emerge, I expect that the collective targeting of civilian groups is key to predicting this outcome. When civilians face collective threats, the group as a whole is incentivised to adopt an alternative collective course of action to survive.

The argument builds on insights from Abbey Steele’s work on displacement and political cleansing in the Colombian conflict (2017). In her book *Democracy and Displacement in Colombian’s Civil War* Steele suggests that whilst selective targeting is likely to lead individuals to displace, since their personal risk is very high whereas the risk to others in their community is not, instead, “the risk members of collectively targeted groups face is interdependent” (2017, 27). Collective targeting is thus more

⁴⁰ There are some exceptions to this general rule. For example, when a high-status individual within a community – such as a beloved leader – is targeted for selective violence by local armed groups, individual-level violence targets the group as a whole. In this case, individual violence remains a threat to the broader collectivity, and may also generate mass outrage capable of triggering mobilization.

likely to lead to collective displacement as one individual's decision is tied to the decisions of others in the community. The more people leave the greater the risk, on average, to those that remain. However, I suggest that collective targeting not only increases the likelihood of collective displacement vis a vis individual displacement, but also other collective community actions over and above other individual actions.⁴¹ One alternative is to create a peace community.

The argument also builds on the work of Anastasia Shesterina who analysed the divergent mobilizational trajectories of civilians at the inception of the 1992-3 Georgian-Abkhaz war (2016). In analysing the processes leading to these divergent decisions, she found that the stronger an individual's perception that the threat was directed toward the group rather than individuals, the more likely civilians were to fight to defend their community (2016, 423). Individuals mobilized to fight, often spontaneously, and despite having limited chances of success. Yet those who perceived that the threat was directed primarily towards themselves, their close family, and friends instead, "hid, escaped, or defected to the other side" (Ibid.). Even if these individuals had the capacity they often did not fight, only doing so in defence of close family and friends.

My second expectation is that the presence of at least one peace community in a territory increases the likelihood that a new peace community forms nearby. If a successful peace community emerges in one location, this may signal that a similar method might also work in other territories nearby. Conflict-affected civilians, and their supporters, are likely to attempt to replicate successful models to respond to similar conditions of conflict where they live.⁴² Doing so is intuitive since the response of armed actors to a peace community in one location is likely to influence the behaviour of armed actors to another potential peace community nearby (cf. Raleigh and Choi 2017). Following Waldo Tobler's first law of geography that, "everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things," this influence should deteriorate with distance (1970). Neighbouring conflict-affected communities

⁴¹ In his doctoral thesis, Juan Masullo also finds that collective targeting is more likely than selective forms to lead to organized noncooperation with armed groups (2017)

⁴² NGOs can play an important role in spreading new civilian strategies. For example, Redepaz began the "100 municipalities of peace" initiative in Colombia during the 1990s leading to a significant uptick in observations during the decade (Bouvier 2006).

may face the same local armed actors, and a similar set of choices, where they live too.

This expectation also builds on a wide variety of disciplines that study diffusion. For example, scholars of social movements and protests have examined how movements spread from the local, to national, to supra-national levels (e.g. McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001), or the susceptibility of different cities to the spread of rioting (Myers 2000). Applied to the international system, there are several explanations for how and why states may adopt the same policies. Firstly, policy making may be coordinated by international organizations or through international collaboration (Elkins and Simmons 2005). Secondly, it may be coerced through international financial institutions or by donor countries, or states may simply adopt the same policies in response to similar conditions (Levi-Faur 2005). Thirdly, policy may also diffuse through the international system (i) as states adapt to the decisions of other states; and (ii) as states learn about the benefits and limitations of adoption (Elkins and Simmons 2005). Similarly, in their study of antismoking policy in 675 cities in the US between 1975 and 2000, Charles Shipan and Craig Volden found that latter policy adopters (i) learnt which policies were effective from earlier adopters; (ii) imitated others by copying their policies; as well as (iii) adopting policies due to state coercion (2008). Applied to the context of conflict-affected communities, some civilians may elect to form peace communities when they observe the policy achieve success nearby. Others may copy their neighbours, regardless of whether doing so is appropriate to local conditions. Finally, some peace communities may form on the persuasion of external supporters, such as NGOs, that promote the policy or offer contingent support. I therefore expect that peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one other peace community exists nearby. This discussion leads to the following hypotheses for my theory of peace community emergence, with these expectations summarised in table 2.2.

H1.1: Peace communities emerge in response to the threat of collective targeting of civilians with violence

H1.2: Peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists

Table 2.2. Summary of independent and dependent variables for emergence theory

Variables	Direction of relationship	Theoretical justification
Independent variables		
The threat of collective targeting of civilians	Positive	When civilians face collective threats, the group as a whole is incentivised to adopt an alternative collective course of action to survive
Diffusion: the presence of an existing peace community nearby	Positive	News travels locally of new approaches to avoiding displacement
Dependent variable		
The emergence of a new peace community	N/A	Peace communities involve the (i) community-based mobilization of civilians where they live (ii) in the midst of war that involves the (ii) sustained and organized coordination of civilians engaged in (iv) nonviolent activities. Activities are (v) purposively aimed at ending or preventing conflict locally, but which may aspire beyond the local village or municipality

There are a number of complementary explanations for why and under what conditions peace communities emerge. These are set out elsewhere in the thesis. Structural features of the conflict environment, including state strength and geography, are relevant controls to the large-n empirical analyses I use to test the theory of emergence in chapter 4.

The theoretical innovation of the dissertation to the peace communities literature lies in my explanation not only of the conditions under which peace communities emerge, but also in my explanation of how conflict-affected communities attain the nonviolent capacity they need to initiate a peace community. I expand upon this theory next.

2.4.2. Theoretical argument: How conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities

The great majority of armed actor-civilian interactions proceed without the organized and wholesale rejection of violence by civilian populations. Even in zones of war where civilians are the targets of violent oppression, most people most of the time are not involved in organized opposition to armed conflict actors. Yet civilians can

mobilize; those once loyal to armed actors can revolt, people can find the strength to resist, protest, speak up, organize themselves to exercise their voice – sometimes.

In this section, I seek to explain *how conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities*. The significance of answering this question lies in the necessity of nonviolent capacity to the peaceful mobilization of communities when facing collective threats (Kaplan 2017). Community-level threats only lead to the outcome of interest when the community has sufficient nonviolent aptitude to resist. Yet unlike most scholars of nonviolent resistance during conflict – who focus on the link between pre-existing institutional capacity of communities and successful mobilization (e.g. Kaplan 2017; Masullo 2015, 2020) – I instead seek to explain how communities develop this capacity in conflict environments at all. An existing explanation in the peace communities and civil resistance literature is that NGOs can bolster a community's nonviolent capacity by making repression costly to armed actors or by supplanting a community's lack of knowledge or experience⁴³ (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Masullo 2015). Yet my theory focuses on how peace communities can still emerge in the absence of supportive external ties.

Overall, I argue that when collective threats are issued by armed actors to a community at time t , they have a higher chance of being met with peace community onset at $t+1$ when influential first movers frame nonviolent contention as the appropriate community response at $t-1$.¹² I suggest that first movers can trigger a population sorting mechanism in their community when they act. This mechanism primes those that remain in the community for nonviolent resistance and also increases local mobilizational capacity for collective action. I argue that that capacity is itself the outcome of prior contentious experience, developed after first movers exhibit high risk behaviour. An assumption of the theory is that the actions of first movers lead to a feedback loop of nonviolent resistance and armed actor attacks. Whilst some civilians exit the community thereafter, civilians living elsewhere with a strong preference for nonviolent resistance arrive. The sorting mechanism repeats several times over the course of the entire process of peace community onset and shapes the behaviour of those that remain in two productive ways.

⁴³ Refer to section 2.3.2. for a summary of how external actors can bolster nonviolent capacity.

Firstly, sorting leads to a sort of selection bias for nonviolent resistance in those who have the option to exit yet remain. Sorting sees those who wish to flee (and can) do so to do so, those that wish to join armed actors do so, and those that initiate armed resistance to defend their community likely being outgunned or co-opted over time.⁴⁴ Fleeing or joining a fighting side are exit options taken by those who believe these choices make them safer, and also prioritise their own security over that of the group (Kalyvas 2006). Thus, over time a larger proportion of remaining residents are on the other-regarding end of the spectrum. As Sanín and Wood write, “Mobilization in high-risk circumstances despite the opportunity to free ride . . . [is] difficult to explain with self-regarding, material preferences” (2014, 221). Over time sorting leads to a selection bias against such preferences in the communities that remain. Civilians in the territory that do not agree with the objectives and strategies of the peace community leave, whilst civilians with a preference for nonviolent resistance seek to join. Thus, over time a larger proportion of remaining residents have a preference for nonviolence, and occupy the other-regarding end of the spectrum.

Secondly, key determinants of the capacity to collectively resist – social cohesion and overlapping interpersonal networks of reciprocity and trust – must be developed if the civilians that stay can hope to endure (Aspinall 2009, 16; Lawrence 2017; McAdam 1986, 700; Tilly and Tarrow 2015). Sorting works because those that remain (or who join) must develop knowledge and experience of nonviolent resistance and learn to survive.

Social cohesion also provides the basis for frames to become aligned across a community, allowing ideas around peaceful mobilization as an appropriate solution to collective threats to spread (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001, 16). Tight-knit communities characterized by patterns of reciprocal obligations inherent to trusted relationships are likely to share norms of behaviour which together can motivate individuals to undertake collective high-risks (Elster 1990, 864; Petersen 2001, 22). Social cohesion allows information to spread within communities about the intentions of others to participate, helping individuals overcome the barriers to high-risk behaviour by offering social rewards and punishments (Petersen 2001; Fujii 2008). Civilians may participate due to the support of their social network, because they judge

⁴⁴ The sorting mechanism has parallels with Albert Hirschman’s classic typology of consumer choice in *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* (1970).

that others will join, or out of familial or moral commitments to other members of the group (Aspinall 2009, 91). A strong sense of belonging, social identification with the community, and shared interests may make the reputational costs of nonparticipation for individuals within a community extremely high (Jost et al. 2012; Klandermans 1997). Civilians living in communities with high levels of social cohesion may also be more likely to participate in new collective strategies where they live.

However, social cohesion might predict which communities have the capacity for collective action, but not their commitment to nonviolence. Cohesion may facilitate the outbreak or renewal of violence if civilians seek to protect themselves with arms instead (Petersen 2001; Pinchotti and Verwimp 2007; Wood 2003). This is why I suggest that the causal mechanism is initiated when first movers shape community mobilization towards peaceful forms. I argue that the actions of first movers can lead to path dependence if communities come to depend upon familiar nonviolent network structures when facing changing collective threats. However, not all those that might seek to sway the collective destiny of a community are likely to be successful. As I set out in section 2.4.2.1. of this chapter, the social position of first movers determines whether the framing activities they initiate become reproduced over time, shaping the contours of their community's capacity to act.

In summary, I argue that influential first movers can trigger a sorting mechanism in their communities which leads residents to develop the nonviolent capacity they need to form peace communities when civilians are faced with collective threats.⁴⁵ The overall hypothesis is thus:

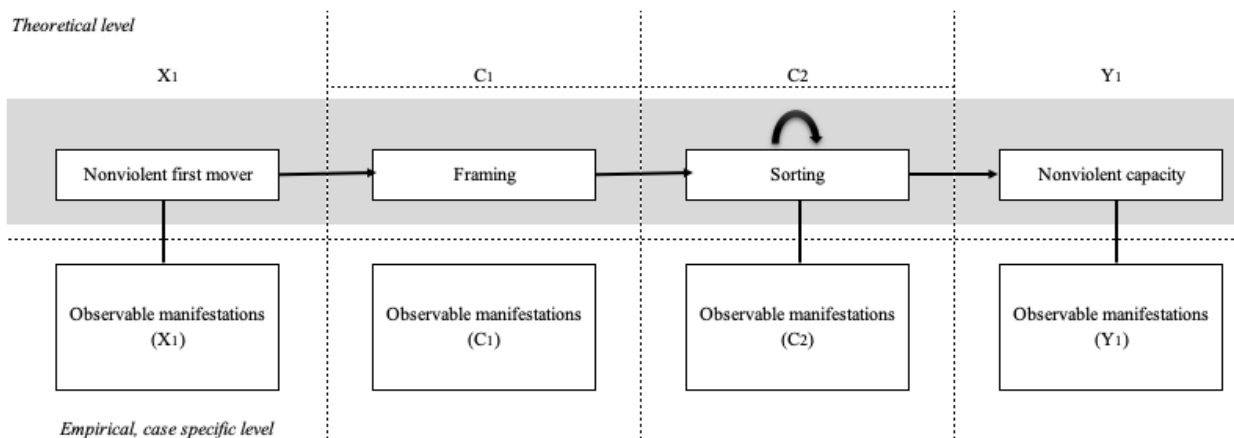
H2: *Influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence increase the likelihood that civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities in response to collective targeting*

The causal mechanism is expected to function in all conflict-affected communities where influential first movers embedded in dense and overlapping networks are present, and in communities with a history of threats and oppression by all armed actors in the region. The mechanism is not expected to function in territories where genocidal or solely economically motivated armed actors are present.

⁴⁵ Or other acts that cause mass outrage in the community, such as massacres (Wood 2003).

In the remainder of this section, I provide a step by step argument of how first movers increase the nonviolent capacity of their communities by triggering the sorting mechanism. First, I draw on the social movements, civil wars, civil resistance, and social psychological literatures to determine a qualitative threshold for four dimensions of first movers. These are the timing of first mover action, their social position, the visibility of their action, and their expressing nonviolent preferences. I then set out exactly which observable manifestations I expect to find if the mechanism is present in the case and for alternative explanations. If the evidence for each part of the mechanism is found in chapter 4, it can be established that the causal mechanism was present and functioned as expected. The process is summarised in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Casual mechanism of nonviolent capacity, Y_1



Adapted from Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p. 15

2.4.2.1. Cause: nonviolent first mover, X_1

Timing

By definition, first movers are the people who first “plan, publicize and initiate” a community’s response to the collective threats that they face (cf. Lawrence 2017). First movers act before the outcomes of their actions are knowable, and before others are willing to do so. Across a range of literatures, first movers (Lawrence 2017, Weyland 2012) have also been described as “entrepreneurs” (e.g. Costalli and Ruggeri 2015; Masullo 2020; Popkin 1989; Schneider and Teske 1992), “early risers” (e.g. Leenders and Heydeman 2012; Leenders 2013) and “early movers” (Lynch 2011) by scholars describing those leading shifts to the status quo. First movers are typically mobilized before the observable onset of a peace community where they live.

Social position

In the context of social movements first movers are thought to be well integrated in their communities prior to onset and tend to already occupy leadership positions in the context of community mobilization against conflict dynamics (Masullo 2020; McAdam 1999; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Oberschall 1973; Opp and Roehl 1990; Staggenborg 1991; Tarrow 1994). Indeed, it is the standing and position of first movers within their community that is key to the plausibility of their activating the causal mechanism, with an initial public statement, in which their resolve for nonviolent resistance to armed aggression is made clear.

As first movers occupy a prominent social position, their influence operates at both the individual and collective level of analysis. At the individual level, first movers can directly persuade individuals of the necessity of taking action by altering their personal beliefs. Persuasion might operate due to the content of a first movers' messages (informational / logical reasoning) or due to the trust the individual commands in the community (emotional / social reasoning). However, first movers may still affect the political behaviour of those in their community, regardless of whether or not they successfully alter their personal beliefs about the merits of community action. First movers can also alter the perception that individuals have about the likelihood that others in their community will take the collective actions they espouse, since it is conceivable that other people might be influenced by their ideas (even if the individual is not). These perceptions are important to behavioural outcomes.

Firstly, although participation in any form of collective action can be costly, abstention from participation can be more so. Network and shaming models (e.g. Gerber, Green and Larimer 2010; Gould 1993), where a person runs the risk of being shunned if they do not join in, demonstrate how individuals can be motivated into participation regardless of their personal beliefs, while contributors to collective action tend to earn high status by taking part (Willer 2009). Indeed, personal beliefs are only one piece of the puzzle that explains participation in community mobilization. Individuals not only consider the costs and benefits of doing so in terms of their own personal time and effort, but also consider how successful the actions will be in achieving desired goals and anticipate the social costs of not participating. Each individual is thought to have their own "revolutionary threshold" which can be overcome when individuals believe the actions are likely to lead to success (Kuran

1997). Social contexts and personal networks are also key to mobilizational capacity, since individual decisions about participating in collective action are interdependent and community mobilization is a social phenomenon (Opp and Gern 1993). Given this, first mover influence on mobilization is likely to vary depending on their social position where they live.

Perceptions of norms are also important drivers of individual behaviour in group settings. To identify group norms, people often take cognitive shortcuts to estimate the behaviour of others, for example by generalizing the behaviour of one easy to recall community member and extrapolating it to the general behaviour of the community as a whole (Crocker, Fiske and Taylor 1984). However, despite the limitations of individuals' perceptions of others' behaviour, identifying community norms is highly desired so as to avoid social sanctions from noncompliance. Indeed, norm adherence is a strong predictor of many actual behaviours, regardless of accuracy (e.g. Asch 1952; Sherif 1936).

Visibility

The behaviour of other group members is a key source of information that individuals rely on when estimating community norms of behaviour, yet not all members of the community are equally influential on perceptions of group norms. Existing research in the field of psychology identifies certain individuals, known as social referents, as having particular influence over others' perceptions of group norms (Rogers 1962; Tankard and Paluck 2016). Social referents have a greater influence on individual perceptions of group norms compared to the average person in the group. These influential individuals tend to either be widely known across a group's social network or within a certain subset of the group (Paluck and Shepherd 2012; Shepherd and Paluck 2015; Tankard and Paluck 2016). The concept of social referents closely maps to theoretically relevant dimensions of first movers, who I suggest should enjoy broad social ties across a community of interest if they are likely to achieve success. By visibly opposing armed actors, and offering an alternative vision based on nonviolent resistance, first movers can thus influence the norms of their group.

Nonviolent preferences

This thesis follows a tradition of social movement theories that highlight the importance of social cohesion and networks to mobilizational capacity, and the likelihood that groups take action to resist collective threats (Pinard 1968; Tilly 1977; McAdam 1986). When communities are issued with collective threats (such as displacement, violence, or enforced alliance with armed actors), dense social ties make individual-level responses less likely and collectively decided responses more likely, as staying together as a community tends to be highly valued by members in such communities. Collective exit options, such as community displacement, are also less likely since people have more reason to stay where they live. However, dense social ties alone are insufficient in explaining the formation of peace communities and may instead facilitate the outbreak or renewal of violence if influential first movers argue that the community should protect themselves with arms. Social cohesion might predict which communities have the capacity for collective action, but not their commitment to nonviolence. This is why first mover preference for nonviolence is key to shaping community mobilization towards peaceful forms. Based on this qualitative threshold I expect to find the observable manifestations reflected in table 2.3 for the case study in chapter 3.

This qualitative threshold has at least one limitation. To trigger the sorting mechanism in the theory first mover actions must be visible and their social position high. The concept thus likely reflects pre-existing structural inequalities of communities. In Jana Krause's work on nonviolent communities in Indonesia and Nigeria, she found that male community leaders led violence prevention efforts, negotiated the rules of peaceful coexistence, and punished rule breakers (2018). They were the visible leaders of peace efforts, yet women's contributions were also important. Women's groups supported violence prevention through advocating for peace among male leaders, shaming men for behaviour that transgressed community norms, and upholding a social identity that integrated both religious groups. Women's efforts were less visible, but did not necessarily emerge after the public actions of their community's male leader (Ibid.). Indeed, it would be difficult to prove whether a male leader acted first, or whether a woman did – in persuading him to act.

Table 2.3. Qualitative threshold for nonviolent first mover X_1

Dimension	Definition	Qualitative threshold	Observable manifestations
Timing	Early in mobilizational cycle	First mover acts before others	First mover acts before widespread nonviolent resistance
Social position	High or low position	First mover occupies prominent social position	References in interview and archive data that first mover is influential in community
Visibility	Public or covert action	Action taken publicly	Reference to public action by first mover in interview data and community meeting minutes
Nonviolent preferences	Nonviolent or violent	Speech acts frame nonviolent resistance as preferable	References in interview and archive data that first mover expresses preference for nonviolent resistance

2.4.2.2. First mover frames bounds of community collective action, C_1

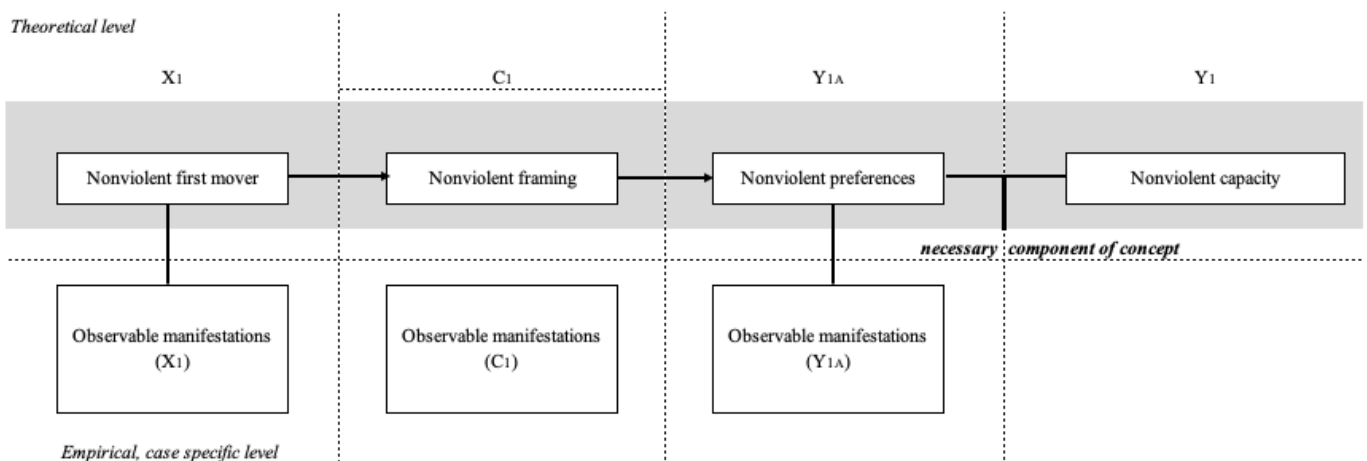
The argument starts from the assumption that the preference of first movers for violent or nonviolent contention is key to determining the onward bounds of community contention to armed actor incursions. Those that act first – and with influence – shape a community’s preference for nonviolent mobilization, as the collective frames they initiate become reproduced over time. By framing nonviolent contention as preferable, first movers shape the contours of a community’s capacity to act.

Scholars of social movements have long argued that, “participants in public claim-making adopt scripts they have performed, or at least observed, before,” (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001, 138) and that initiators of collective action make use of collective, “repertoires of contention” (Tilly 1977). Similarly, scholars of discursive framing processes have described how initiators of collective action draw on prior forms of contentious politics, thereby embedding collective frames in familiar or pretested actions (Benford and Snow 2000; Noakes and Johnston 2005). Once nonviolent mobilizational networks have been established within a given locality there are good empirical grounds to believe that they hold a latent structure that is sticky. At the movement level, Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephen find that only 20% of nonviolent movements that emerged globally between 1945 and 2006 escalated to violence as a primary tactic at some point during their campaign (2011). This stickiness

has found to hold in regional mobilizational structures. For example, Sarah Zuckerman Daly finds that rebellion is six times more likely in regions of Colombia, “plagued by the organizational legacies of past violence” (2012, 474). Collective action repeats because once mobilized it holds a latent structure that can be reactivated, as organizations become receptacles of collective action for future use (Zukerman Daly 2012). Early forms of nonviolent resistance are thus crucial to shaping the longer-term features of civilian opposition observed.

The argument then is that the early decisions of first movers are key to longer term patterns of mobilization that communities come to depend on over time as new threats present. The relationship between first movers and nonviolent preferences – one of two necessary components of nonviolent capacity – is summarised in figure 2.2. Observable manifestations for nonviolent framing C_1 and nonviolent preferences Y_{1A} are outlined in table 2.4.

Figure 2.2. Nonviolent framing C_1 and nonviolent preferences Y_{1A}



Adapted from Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p. 15

Table 2.4. Observable implications for C₁, Y_{1A}, and alternative explanations, A₁

Nonviolent framing C₁	
1	References in historical accounts and interview data to first mover speech acts, demonstrating resolve to resist armed actor demands and conflict dynamics with nonviolent action
2	References in historical accounts and interview data to first mover framing peaceful repertoires of contention as preferable to combat armed actor incursions within their communities
Nonviolent preferences, Y_{1A}	
1	Community speeches and meeting minutes reference greater commitment to nonviolence after first mover
2	Development of community rules requiring adherence to nonviolence after first mover
3	Community does not increase weaponry or weapons training after first mover
4	Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover, framing and nonviolent preferences

2.4.2.3. Sorting C₂ as a coping mechanism that develops mobilizational capacity Y_{1B}

An assumption of the theory is that the actions of the first mover trigger a repressive response from local armed actors in a feedback loop of intensification. By potentially risking their lives and demonstrating their willingness and capacity to resist, first movers inspire others that another path is possible, triggering a community’s capacity for collective action in a “tipping” process that scholars have described as a cascade (Granovetter 1978; Krause 2018; Kuran 1995; Lohmann 1994; Pearlman 2013, 2016). When first movers start to resist they create a punishment dilemma for armed actors.

On the one hand, if armed actors do not respond to first movers, their communities may increase confidence of their capacity. On the other, if armed actors punish first movers they can provoke a backlash (Davenport 2007). One implication of backlash dynamics are newly emerged costs of inaction for civilians, who must adapt. Although theories of regime dynamics tend to assume that coercive repression makes people less likely to protest or rebel (Acemoglu and Robinson 2001, 2006; Besley and Persson 2011; Boix 2003; Svobik 2013), there are many examples of the overt repression of small-scale protests escalating opposition (Beissinger 2002; Lawrence 2017; Opp and Roehl 1990; Opp 1994; Davenport 2007). Several theories explain how backlash works.

Information-oriented theories argue that coercive repression changes people’s factual beliefs – such as the character of the group responsible for repression – and

that this new information encourages participation (Lohmann 1994). Applied to the information poor context of conflict settings, it is plausible that repression of first movers may lead loyal civilians to sever ties with armed actors. However, this explanation appears incomplete as in many cases civilians already have a good idea about whether an armed actor is a “good” or “bad” type before first movers act. Alternatively, social-psychological theories argue that backlash results from the mobilizing collective emotional reactions that repression provokes (Aytaç, Schiumerini and Stokes 2018; Collins 2001; Jasper 1998, 2011; Pearlman 2016; Young 2019). The moral costs of not acting in line with private beliefs and the reputational consequences of not participating are other complementary explanations (Kuran 1995; Pearlman 2016, 878; Humphreys and Weinstein 2008; Weinstein 2007).

But, while informational and emotional mechanisms are productive to backlash dynamics, they are not only productive for peace communities in particular to emerge. I suggest that framing (C_1) determines how sorting (C_2) functions, and the specific nonviolent outcome that it produces. Without first mover framing of nonviolent preferences the sorting process may increase local mobilizational capacity for collective action, but not their commitment to nonviolence (Petersen 2001; Pinchotti and Verwimp 2007; Wood 2003). This is why the two-part causal mechanism is initiated when first movers shape community mobilization towards peaceful forms. This is summarised in figure 2.2. The relationship between first movers and mobilizational capacity – the second necessary component of nonviolent capacity – is summarised in figure 2.3. Observable manifestations for the sorting mechanism C_2 and mobilizational capacity Y_{1B} are outlined in table 2.5.

Chapter 5 will establish whether the expected empirical manifestations for each part of the causal mechanism were present in the case of the ATCC. I will also examine the empirical record for evidence that supports alternative explanations to my theory. I discuss these alternative explanations and their observable implications in chapter 5. In the next section I theorise the conditions under which peace communities that do emerge attain success.

Figure 2.3. First movers X_1 and mobilizational capacity Y_{1B}

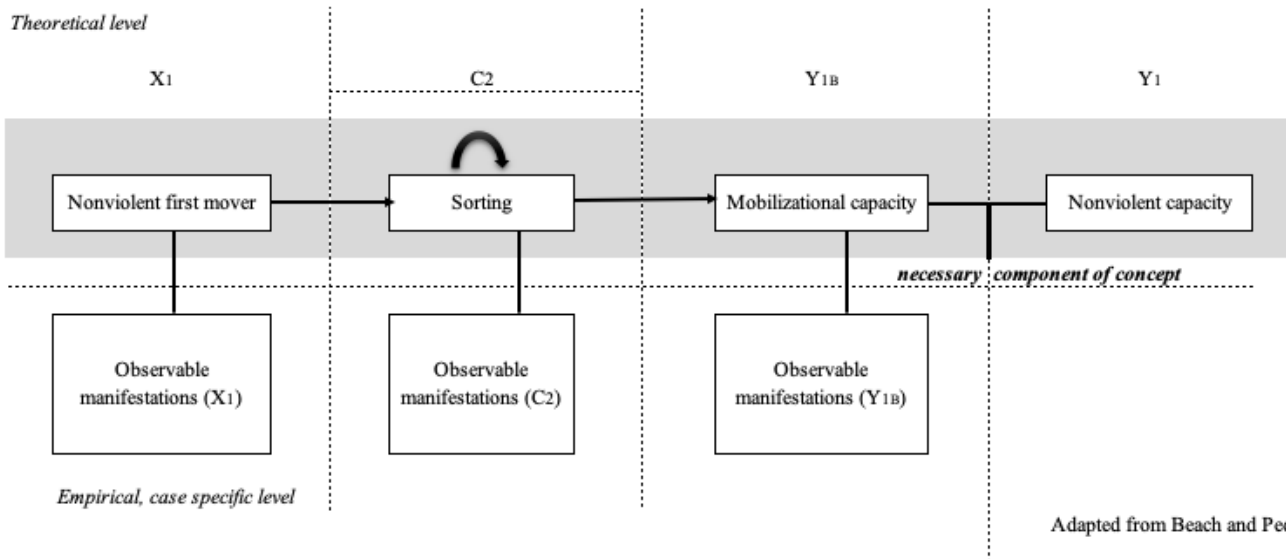


Table 2.5. Observable implications for C_2 , Y_{1B} and alternative explanations A_2

Sorting, C_2	
1	Armed actor responds with coercive repression after first mover action
2	Some civilians flee after first mover if they have the resources and networks to do so
3	Some civilians join the armed actor after the first mover action
4	Civilians with exit options remain after the first mover action
5	Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover action and selection bias for nonviolent resistance in population that remains over time
Mobilizational capacity, Y_{1B}	
1	Increased frequency of meetings and community projects across distinct within-community groups
2	New economic ties emerge across within-community groups after first mover
3	References in interviews to an increase in trust between within-community groups after first mover
4	Development of ties to NGOs offering solidarity after first mover
5	Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover and increased mobilizational capacity in the population that remains

2.4.3. Theoretical argument: The conditions for peace community success

In this section I seek to explain *under what conditions peace communities attain success in conflict environments*. Overall, I argue that whether or not peace

communities achieve the primary goal they set for themselves – reducing local conflict-related violence – is largely explained by patterns of support by NGOs; in particular whether such support to peace communities is supplied consistently throughout their life cycle.⁴⁶

The main independent variable in the argument is thus the presence of at least one peace community in a municipality that enjoys consistent support from NGOs.⁴⁷ While peace communities constitute groups of civilians, many are indirectly or directly affiliated with NGOs, who often help to publicize their plight. For example, Colombian NGO Redepaz has direct ties to tens of peace communities as a result of their campaign for “100 peace communities” (Alther 2006). However, other peace communities, such as the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare (ATCC) in Colombia are formed exclusively by civilians themselves and only attracted the support of NGOs later on (Kaplan 2017). As I have already described in section 2.3.2. of this chapter, external actors can support the emergence of peace communities through several mechanisms: (1) deterring civilian victimization by increasing costs to armed actors; (2) improving opportunities for dialogue between civilian groups and armed actors; and (3) bolstering nonviolent capacity. Though these mechanisms all encourage the successful initiation of peace communities, if and when external actors depart civilians may be vulnerable to revenge attacks from armed actors that perceive them to be disloyal. As a result, assistance may be more likely to reduce conflict-related violence in peace communities where support is consistent rather than variable. There are three further pathways through which consistent support by NGOs may improve the chances of peace community success.

Firstly, consistent support of peace communities by NGOs increases the time horizon over which armed actors – as a group, and as individuals – can expect raised costs from attacking the community. Various forms of NGO support, such as accompaniment or publicity, can deter local violence by increasing costs to armed actors (Bob 2005; Jo and Thomson 2014; Jo 2015; Zartman 1995). The practice of

⁴⁶ Refer to section 6.3.4. of chapter 6 for a discussion of the conceptualisation and measurement of peace community success.

⁴⁷ As I have elaborated in further detail in section 2.2.3. of chapter 2, there are five core attributes of peace communities that I consider necessary for conceptual membership. Peace communities involve the (i) community-based mobilization of civilians where they live (ii) in the midst of war; that involves the (ii) sustained and organized coordination of civilians engaged in (iv) nonviolent activities. Activities are (v) purposively aimed at ending or preventing conflict locally, but which may involve aspirations beyond the local village or municipality.

accompaniment, for example, involves nonpartisan external actors holding a physical presence in the community (Furnari, Bliesemann de Guevara and Julian 2021; Eguren and Mahony 1997). If armed actors attack accompanied communities, they risk accidentally targeting community outsiders, which implies substantial reputational costs. This is important, because when armed groups seek acceptance of their rule by local populations and as viable potential rulers, political legitimacy is a necessary step toward recognition on the international stage (Talmon 2011). Moreover, under the Geneva Convention, individual soldiers or rebels can be prosecuted as war criminals if they kill civilians, regardless of whether they are following orders. As a result, individual soldiers or rebels may be less willing to use lethal force if they believe they could be identified (DeMeritt 2015). In the short term, individual troops may shirk orders to kill if they believe they could be made accountable, due to the presence of NGOs willing to publicise their actions, or whom otherwise pose a risk of being caught in the crossfire, which may trigger an international response. Over the longer term, armed groups may decide to move their troops to other locations if NGO support to a community persists.

Consistent NGO support is also likely to boost confidence in peace community members and promote sustained mass participation, which is known to be important for collective action to be effective (Chenoweth and Stephen 2011). When civilians can convincingly demonstrate their commitment to sustaining a peace community through mass participation, armed actors anticipate greater costs from ignoring their plea for a local neutral space. Indeed, a consistent finding in the literature on peace communities and their close conceptual neighbours is the importance of broad and cohesive participation to their sustenance (Allouche and Jackson 2019; Anderson and Wallace 2013; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Sta. Maria 2000; Mitchell and Hancock 2007). Given the costs and risks that can be involved in failed forms of resistance, individuals are less likely to participate when they do not expect that others will join. For this reason, perceptions of others' anticipated behaviour given the consistent involvement of a supportive external actor – such as an NGO – are important to individuals' calculations of participation. Moreover, where peace communities enjoy consistent support from NGOs, these organizations are also likely to bring insight about what does and does not work, based on their experiences with other peace communities, further boosting the nonviolent

capacity of the community, and increasing individuals' calculations of continued success.

Finally, when NGOs offer steadfast support, their doing so implies stability in the peace community's commitments to nonviolence and neutrality. This is important, since the consistency by which a peace community follows the rules developed to protect their members is often key to persuading armed actors of their commitment to neutrality (cf. Kaplan 2017). When armed actors are persuaded that the group is not secretly supporting one side or another, its members attract less suspicion and fewer attacks.

Moreover, I expect that when NGO support is inconsistent, civilians risk increased local violence in the territories in which peace communities form. The support of external actors at onset is a key explanation in the existing literature for how peace communities are able to emerge under severe conditions of conflict (Masullo 2015; Moreno León 2021). However, although support from NGOs might enable peace communities to emerge in territories where populations would otherwise struggle to do, this can leave civilians vulnerable since it is uncertain whether such groups have the resilience to survive on their own. If and when NGOs depart, armed actors may take revenge on civilians that sought neutrality yet are perceived to be disloyal, leading to increased local violence.

The presence of NGOs may also dampen the appetite of armed groups to do battle with each other, due to the potential reputational risks from publicity of their actions (Bob 2005; Jo and Thomson 2014; Jo 2015; Zartman 1995). Thus, if NGOs leave once a peace community has been set up there may also be an uptick in violence between local armed actors, as well as increased civilian targeting for perceived disloyalties.

Other civilians may only seek NGO support later on, after the peace community has already been established. Although local violence may be dampened whilst NGOs step in, their need to do so may indicate a miscalculation by civilians: rather than decreasing violence in their territory, the formation of a peace community has led to increased violence instead. This discussion leads to the following hypotheses for my theory of peace community fortunes, which is summarised in table 2.6.

H3: *Peace communities' ability to reduce local conflict-related violence is mitigated by whether NGO support is consistent or inconsistent: When NGO support is consistent, peace communities are more likely to reduce conflict-related violence. When NGO support is inconsistent, peace communities are less likely to reduce conflict-related violence.*

Table 2.6. Summary of independent and dependent variables for fortunes theory

Variable	Direction of relationship	Theoretical justification
Independent variable		
Peace community with consistent NGO support	Negative	Consistent NGO support increases costs to armed actors from violence over longer time horizon
Dependent variable		
Conflict-related violence	N/A	The success of peace communities is best evaluated with reference to the primary objective that peace communities set for themselves: reducing local levels of conflict related violence

2.5. Summary of the theoretical argument

This thesis contains three interlinking theoretical arguments. The first argument is about the conditions under which peace communities emerge. Overall, I expect that peace communities form in territories that in which civilians face the threat of collective targeting, as the costs of inaction come to outweigh those of participation for a large proportion of the civilian group. Furthermore, as collectively opting out of war is unlikely an obvious option to conflict-affected civilians, I expect that peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists, in a process of diffusion, as news travels of a fresh and potentially fruitful approach to avoiding displacement.

The second argument is about how communities attain the capacity they need to mobilize for peace in conflict environments. I argue that when collective threats are issued by armed actors to a community at time t , they have a higher chance of being met with peace community onset at $t + 1$ when influential first movers have framed nonviolent contention as the appropriate community response at $t - 1$. My hypothesis

holds that when first movers visibly oppose armed actors they trigger a sorting process in their communities, as both civilians and armed actors increase their opposition to each other. I suggest that this leads to selection bias for nonviolent resistance in the population that remains, as sorting sees those who wish to flee (and can) do so to do so, those that wish to join armed actors do so, and those that seek armed resistance being outgunned or co-opted over time. Key determinants of the capacity to collectively resist – social cohesion, knowledge and experience with strategies of nonviolence – must be developed for the civilians that stay to survive.

The third argument is about the fortunes of peace communities that do emerge and the role of external actors. Overall, I expect that peace communities offer greater protection from violence where civilians enjoy sustained support from NGOs. Consistency increases the time horizon over which armed actors can expect raised costs from attacking the community, engenders confidence in civilians leading to mass sustained participation, and signals stability in the commitment of the peace community to neutrality and nonviolence. A summary of the thesis hypotheses and where I test each of these can be found in table 2.7. In the next chapter, I turn to the research design of the dissertation.

Table 2.7. Where the hypotheses are tested in the thesis

Research question	Hypothesis	Where tested
Emergence theory		
RQ1. Under what conditions do peace communities emerge in conflict-affected territories?	H1.1: Peace communities emerge in response to the threat of collective targeting of civilians with violence	Chapter 4
	H1.2: Peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists	Chapter 4
Nonviolent capacity theory		
RQ2. How do conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities in conflict-affected territories?	H2: Influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence increase the likelihood that civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities in response to collective targeting	Chapter 5
Fortunes theory		
RQ3. Under what conditions do peace communities attain success in conflict-affected territories?	H3: Peace communities' ability to reduce local conflict-related violence is mitigated by whether NGO support is consistent or inconsistent: When NGO support is consistent, peace communities are more likely to reduce conflict-related violence. When NGO support is inconsistent, peace communities are less likely to reduce conflict-related violence	Chapter 6

Chapter 3: Research design

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter I outlined three interlinking theoretical arguments about the conditions under which peace communities emerge, how communities attain the capacity they need to mobilize for peace in conflict environments, and the fortunes of peace communities that do emerge. In this chapter I outline the overall research design of the thesis. This chapter thus provides the methodological set up to empirical chapters 4, 5 and 6 that follow on from this one.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. First, I describe the thesis research design, and discuss the focus of the dissertation on Colombia. Then, I introduce the dataset I constructed for the thesis and explain how the collected variables are coded, using examples for clarification, as well as offering some initial descriptive analysis of a selection of variables. I conclude with an overview of this chapter and an outline of the remaining chapters.

3.2. Overall research design

This multimethod doctoral study has three sequential phases: (i) an initial large-n phase to test key independent variables that explain the emergence of peace communities; (ii) a qualitative case study to examine how these associations work; and (iii) finally a further large-n analysis that investigates variation in the success of peace communities that do emerge.

There are several strengths of this multi-method approach. Firstly, while phase 1 enables assessment of the magnitude of the association between the threat of collective targeting of civilians and the emergence of peace communities, phase 2 sheds light on how these overall relationships actually play out in a particular case (Beach and Pederson 2019). Together phase 1 and 2 of the research design are complementary in that these chapters provide evidence not only of the average effect of independent variables on the emergence of peace communities but also the mechanisms: how these relationships work in practice. Finally, phase 3 of the research design offers further advantages, by examining variation in the success of peace communities across the observations under study in part 1. The presence of at least one peace community in a municipality is the dependent variable for the empirical tests

I conduct in phase 1 and 2, and an independent variable in the empirical analysis in phase 3. Each empirical test is conducted in Colombia. I discuss the implications of this next.

3.2.1. Colombia focus

I did not set out to conduct a single-country thesis. Indeed, I expended significant hours and efforts searching for and cataloguing peace communities elsewhere although a large literature on peace communities already exists in Colombia. Despite these efforts I did not identify a sufficient number of peace communities necessary for large-n analysis outside of the country. Of the 69 peace communities in the dataset I developed, 62 were identified in Colombia, whereas I identified a range of one to four observations in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. Though I include the full sample in descriptive cross-national analysis in this chapter, Colombia remains the focus of the thesis for reasons of data availability.

A potential concern with the focus on Colombia is whether the case is unique, which has implications for the generalisability of the findings of the dissertation. In some regards Colombia is relatively unique in that its conflict is particularly long lasting at over 50 years and the country has received relatively high levels of foreign aid (World Bank 2023). Yet in other regards Colombian conditions have similarities to many other conflicted-affected countries in the world. Though the Colombian state is a relatively capable bureaucracy, it has only a weak reach into the country's periphery. Some areas of the country receive few state services and suffer a high incidence of poverty. As in many other conflict-affected countries the law is applied inconsistently across Colombia, since some areas are controlled by non-state armed groups, with their own rules and forms of governance, rather than the state (Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2017; O'Donnell 1999; Palacios 2006). When these factors are considered, Colombia may appear less of an outlier.

The focus of the thesis on Colombia does also offer several advantages. For one, peace communities emerged in different locations and at different times during the long conflict, and civilians have also organized into forms of collective violence as well as other forms of collective nonviolence (Alther 2006; Levy 2002; Masullo 2015). In some places and not in others, and in some times and not in others, Colombians have engaged in a wide variety of responses to conflict dynamics – be they

displacement, loyalty to one armed actor or another, or armed resistance (Steele 2017). The Colombian conflict thus provides the opportunity to systematically examine the conditions under which civilians collectively organize into peace communities in particular, rather than pursue alternative forms of collective action or inaction. Since peace communities are a well-documented phenomenon in Colombia, the country also offers a promising location from which to generate systematic subnational data. Indeed, Colombia enjoys a rich, detailed, and high quality data environment. The country has long been the subject of media and academic interest, and many researchers have recently published, or are currently undertaking research, investigating the nonviolent actions of civilians, with a focus on Colombia in particular (e.g. Arjona 2016; Kaplan 2013a, 2013b, 2017; Masullo 2015, 2021). A vast array of rich subnational data is available from the Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) and the Colombian Open Data project amongst many others (2022).⁴⁸ In addition, several NGOs such as Redepaz (National Network of Initiatives for Peace and Against War) and CINEP (Center for Research and Popular Education Program for Peace) promoted and campaigned for the development of peace communities in the 1990s in Colombia, resulting in the availability of rich empirical data from which the dataset I developed draws. Within the Colombian context there is a significant and increasing volume of secondary research materials and high quality subnational data to draw on.

Finally, as regards the practicalities of completion of a thesis project, I developed a number of Colombian contacts with links to peace communities who offered their support to my project prior to my field trip. These links provided a useful starting point to set up semi-structured interviews for the field work I undertook as part of phase 2 of the project. In the next section, I describe how I constructed the peace communities dataset, that I use in both phase 1 and 3 of the dissertation.

3.3. Peace communities dataset construction

In this section, I introduce the dataset that I constructed for the thesis, and which I hope to make publicly available for use by other scholars after the thesis is finalised. Although the dissertation has a Colombia focus, the dataset also records cross-

⁴⁸ Much available data is at the municipality level.

national information on the group-level attributes of peace communities that emerged between 1985 and 2021 in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone as well. To allow for small n cross-national analysis, the dataset records information on the country, conflict, and PRIO-Grid cell in which each peace community emerges to allow easy integration with the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), Correlates of War (COW), and PRIO-Grid datasets.

3.3.1. Inclusion criteria

Within each country, the dataset compiles information on communities that are identified through the search protocol (appendix 5) and meet five inclusion criteria that map to the conceptualisation and operationalisation of peace communities in section 2.2.3 of chapter 2. To recap these inclusion criteria; the dataset compiles information on the (i) community-based mobilization of civilians where they live (ii) in the midst of war; that involves the (ii) sustained and organized coordination of civilians engaged in (iv) nonviolent activities. Activities are (v) purposively aimed at ending or preventing local conflict, but which may aspire beyond the local village or municipality. In addition to these criteria, existing research also conceptualises peace communities as neutral or impartial (Masullo 2015; Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Mouly 2021; Sanford 2003), yet neutrality and impartiality are challenging to empirically observe via desk research. I therefore relax this criterion for the purposes of dataset compilation.

The dataset has three levels: each village that joins a peace community, the peace community itself, and each coalition of peace communities. In total there are 1,125 villages mapped to 69 peace communities. There are 32 cases of single village peace communities as well as 1,093 villages that act together in coalitions of villages of peace communities. Villages that create a peace community are identified from source documents. Each village in the dataset is geolocated, with longitude and latitude provided, which allows me to map each observation to local administrative boundaries. To my knowledge, this is the first attempt to compile a comparable and geolocated population of such communities.

3.3.2. Sample selection criteria for the dataset

I selected geographically diverse countries which vary on theoretically important variables to better establish the scope conditions for the emergence and success of

peace communities. These are conflict duration, armed actor motivation and fragmentation, state strength, conflict type (ideological/ethnic), and geography.⁴⁹ With these selection criteria in mind, I searched for peace communities in Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Nigeria, Mozambique, Iraq, Syria, Sierra Leone, and Ivory Coast. The sample includes all of the major world regions, though no observations were identified in Europe or Asia. Though the main analysis for the thesis is within Colombia, I also identified peace communities elsewhere that emerged in very diverse contexts. I next outline how I collected the data.

3.3.3. Sources

To identify candidate observations, coders follow a specified search protocol for each country and determine whether candidates satisfy the inclusion criteria for being included in the dataset.⁵⁰ The search procedure involves a detailed and systematic review of INGO reports and academic literature using keywords to identify potential cases. For each country in the dataset, I review all annual reports for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention, and the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. I identify special reports on peace communities by conducting a systematic search of the UNDP and United States Institute for Peace (USIP) websites. To supplement the INGO reports, I also conduct a systematic academic literature search in Google Scholar and Google Books using keywords and consult three seminal volumes on peace communities (Anderson and Wallace 2013, Kaplan 2017; Hancock and Landon 2007). The full search procedure is included in appendix 5.

This final search procedure results from a pilot study, in which I conducted searches of a variety of news sources. I describe the pilot in more detail in section 3.3.4.2.

⁴⁹ I discuss the importance of armed actor motivation in chapter 2, whilst the remaining complementary explanations are outlined in section 4.3.5. of chapter 4. I also sought to search in countries where we do not have a literature on peace communities, but where theory predicts that they might exist.

⁵⁰ Refer to section 2.2.3 of chapter 2 for my operationalisation of the five inclusion criteria (i) community-level mobilization; (ii) conflict location; (iii) sustained organization; (iv) nonviolent methods; (v) local peace objective.

3.3.4. The data collection process

I constructed the dataset with the help of ten research assistants over the course of six months. The first three months were spent on training and the pilot study, and a further three months entailed intensive data collection. Two sources of assistance made this possible.

The first was the UCL Connect.Ed Learning Mentorship Scheme. I advertised my peace communities mentorship to UCL students seeking to gain research skills, and with an interest in peace and conflict studies. To my surprise the scheme received a large number of applicants, and I selected ten UCL students through a competitive interview process. The mentorship involved weekly tutorials on peace communities, dataset construction, and research skills and methods. I also conducted the pilot study during this period. The UCL Grand Challenges Fund was the second generous source of support for data collection, enabling me to hire four research assistants for intensive data collection for the main study over the following three months.

Keyword searches were conducted in English for all cases. In addition, searches were conducted in Spanish in Colombia and Guatemala, in Portuguese in Mozambique, and in French in Democratic Republic of Congo and Ivory Coast. No additional language searches were conducted in Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq due to a lack of relevant language skills within the research team. The official language of Nigeria and Sierra Leone is English.

3.3.4.1. Data accuracy and consistency

During the data collection process I conducted three key procedures to ensure maximum consistency and accuracy of the data. Firstly, prior to hiring the research assistants I wrote a highly detailed codebook and search procedure to share with the assistants ahead of data collection. For each country in the dataset, research assistants follow the highly specified search protocol to identify and collect primary and secondary data on as many instances of peace communities as possible.⁵¹ To improve completeness of data collection, research assistants regularly compare their findings. To improve transparency of the coding process, each coding decision

⁵¹ The full codebook can be found at appendix 1 of the thesis and the full search procedure is at appendix 5.

requires one piece of evidence to support it.⁵² Each coder pastes the specific text from the source document that supports their decision into a separate cell. For disputed information, coders rely on the most cited and/or most common estimates. Coders also list all sources that were used to come to their decision within the dataset, with links to the sources consulted provided in a separate cell for each source.

3.3.4.2. Pilot study

I conducted a pilot study over several weeks to test the codebook and search procedures prior to embarking on the main study. During the pilot I trained research assistants on what is and is not a peace community, and also made improvements to both the search procedures and the codebook based on pilot data collection attempts. As well as conducting searches in the sources I rely on in the main study, I also searched in a number of news sources.

I first tested the keywords in Lexis Nexis, a global news database. Each keyword returned many hundreds of results, yet none related to peace communities. Then I conducted keyword searches of international news media. I searched BBC Monitoring: International Reports, Associated Press, Associated Press International, Associated Press online, Agence France Press, and Xinhua. I found no peace communities at all using this search procedure. This is unsurprising, given that peace communities are highly localised phenomena. However, I also found that a systematic search of local media outlets in Colombia only returned famous cases of peace communities during the pilot. The search procedures for these pilot searches are contained in appendix 6.

Overall, the pilot revealed that searches of news sources were significantly less efficient than searches of Google Books, Google Scholar, UNDP-DPPA and UNDP BCPR annual reports, and the USIP and UNDP websites. News sources returned a much larger number of irrelevant results by comparison, which required significant time to sift through. Due to the constraints of a doctoral thesis, I thus decided to abandon news sources as a means of identifying candidate cases of peace communities.

⁵² Each coder records information in their own data collection document, and copies a link to the source document for each coding decision in a separate column of the database.

During the pilot, I conducted searches in Afghanistan, the Philippines, Guatemala, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Northern Ireland as part of this preliminary work. No observations were identified in India, Northern Ireland or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although multiple positive observations were identified during the pilot in the Philippines (e.g. as contained within Barter 2014), I was not able to code the observations in this country within time constraints. I therefore excluded this country from the main study despite the likely existence of more than 200 observations.

3.3.4.3. Intercoder reliability checks

Finally, once data collection had been completed, I devised a set of intercoder reliability checks across the research team to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the variables. Over 10% of cases in the dataset were randomly selected for intercoder reliability checks via independent coding, whilst also ensuring that all coders were selected for at least one observation. Inter-coder reliability exceeded 89% across all coders, with an average rate of 91.2%. This exceeds the 80% threshold that McHugh (2012) suggest is an acceptable inter-coder agreement rate. I also reviewed all coding decisions in the dataset to confirm compliance with coding rules. Refer to table 3.1. for a summary of these checks.

Table 3.1. Intercoder reliability checks

Reviewer initials	Original coder initials	ICR %	
DD	BV	0.89	
LG	MP	0.90	
VA	DD	0.90	
HV	LG	0.95	
BV	VA	0.92	
LG	DD	0.90	
		0.91	Average ICR %

3.3.5. Limitations of the dataset

The main limitation of the cross-national data is the number of countries I was able to code within the time constraints of a doctoral project. I completed searches in ten countries, of which I found peace communities in five. I identified and coded the

maximum number of countries I could, whilst paying close attention to the reproducibility, transparency, and quality of the data I collected.

The current sample in the dataset also has at least two main sources of bias. Because this is the first attempt to create a cross-national dataset of peace communities, and my aim was, in part, to understand the fortunes of peace communities that successfully emerged, I purposively included Colombia in the sample as the most famous peace communities are located there. Indeed around 90% of observations in the dataset are located in Colombia. A range of one to four peace communities were identified in four countries in the sample outside of Colombia, and nil observations identified in five further countries searched during the main study. Overall, the sample likely has a greater prevalence of positive observations than the average conflict-affected country over this time period due to the inclusion of Colombia.

The cross-national dataset has at least one further source of bias. Only “loud”, accessible, or well-connected communities are likely to be identified with the dataset search procedures. It is possible – indeed likely – that many more “silent” cases exist, and that systematic differences exist between cases that are and are not identified. I do not claim to a complete list, and neither do I consider the broader and multiple patterns of resistance that individuals and communities engage in during war less important than the particular phenomenon of peace communities. For many cases, there is a sparsity of information available through desk research. I include a list of all such cases in the codebook. This is unsurprising as the factors that might “push” civilians to create a peace community include geographic isolation, the threat of serious violence and weak state presence: the same factors that diminish the likelihood of research ethics approval. However, underreporting bias is not unique to this dataset. It is also present in existing studies and data collection efforts of both violent and nonviolent mobilization. I next describe some of the variables I collected in the dataset and provide some initial descriptive analysis.

3.3.6. Collected variables and descriptive analysis

The dataset provides information on the origins, geolocation, characteristics, and fortunes of peace communities that emerge in conflict-affected territories. Variables include the start and end date of each peace community, their duration, and who its

members are. The first set of variables are dichotomous indicators for each of the five inclusion criteria. The second set of variables measure characteristics of the community and its fortunes. I briefly discuss a selection of variables in the dataset below, together with some descriptive analysis. A complete description of all variables in the dataset can be found in the codebook in appendix 1.

3.3.6.1. *Prior noncooperation with armed actors*

Peace communities represent one organizational expression in a continuum of ongoing civilian resistance and strategic interaction with armed actors, involving diverging forms of collective action spanning the pre-conflict, wartime, and post-conflict phases. In a longer term process of civilian opposition to violence, everyday forms of resistance to conflict actors and other forms of political contention that take place prior to the wholesale organization of a community shape how people understand the meaning of threats that are posed and their possible responses to them. Thus, a facet of mobilization capacity I collect is a community's prior experience with acts of commission, omission, or both (Chenoweth and Stephen 2011; Masullo 2020, 2021).

One of the most important tasks of peace communities is developing and sustaining the mobilizational capacity necessary to withstand pressure from armed actors. But how do communities attain and sustain such capacity amidst the immense uncertainty of changing conflict environments? There are several variables in the dataset that relate to communities' ability to do so. Firstly, I collect data on prior acts of noncooperation, that, "circumvent the explicit and/or implicit conventional channels established by armed groups and/or push the boundaries of what they consider permissible" (Masullo 2021, 8). I code eight possible types: (i) none; (ii) everyday resistance protest; (iii) social noncooperation; (iv) public denunciation; (v) none, as prior to the peace community emerging, there is no interaction with armed actors; (vi) prior cooperation; (vii) prior violent noncooperation; (viii) previous attempt at creating a peace community. Only two peace communities in the dataset were found to have cooperated with armed groups, whilst 48 engaged in prior noncooperation. In line with the theory of nonviolent capacity that I test in chapter 5, this suggests that civilians may build upon prior knowledge and experience with other forms of noncooperation when seeking to create peace communities.

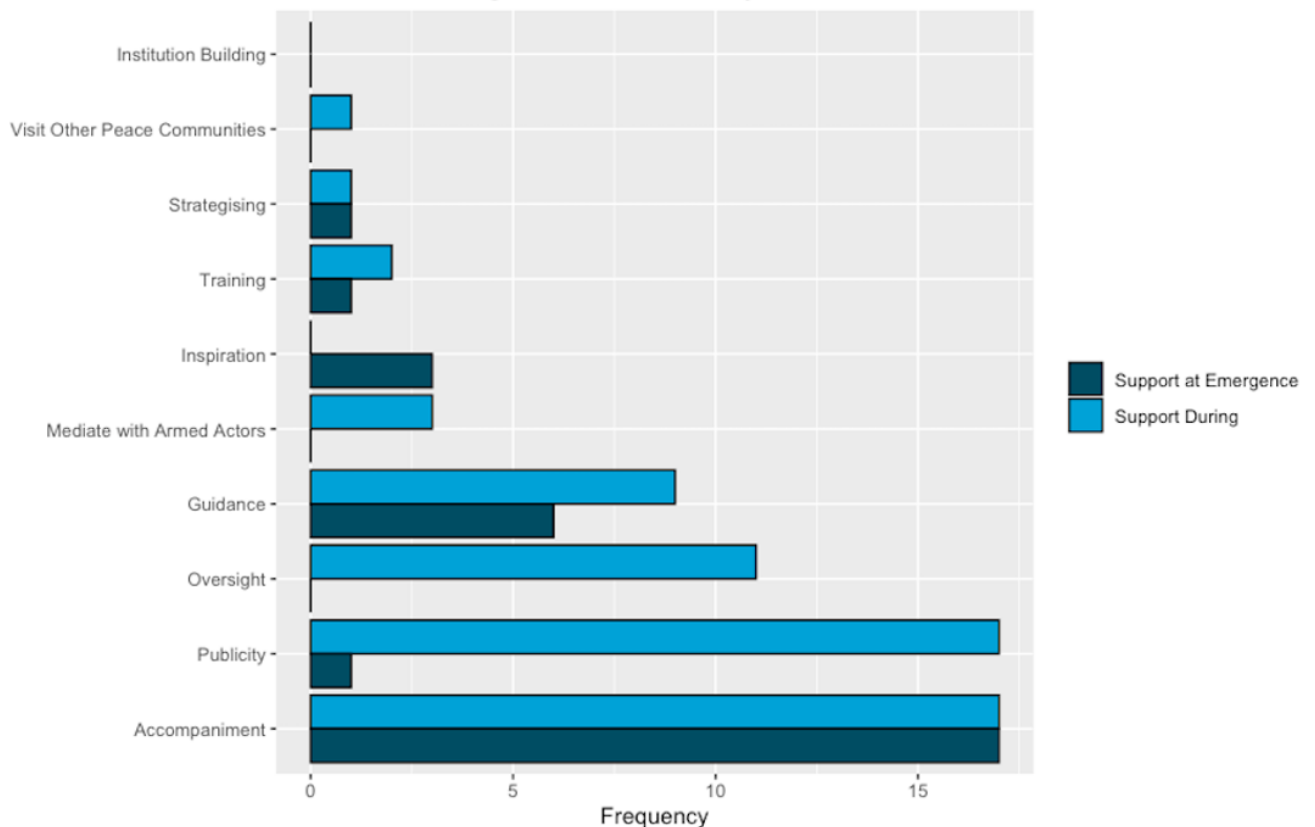
3.3.6.2. External support of NGOs

A further form of variation amongst peace communities is that some are affiliated to supportive external actors that can bolster organizational capacity and make repression costly, and others are not (cf. Chenoweth and Stephen 2011). For example, Colombian NGO Redepaz has direct ties to tens of peace communities as a result of their campaign for “100 peace communities” (Alther 2006). However, other peace communities, such as the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare (ATCC) in Colombia are formed exclusively by civilians themselves (Kaplan 2017). This dataset codes several variables that measure the extent to which peace communities are supported by NGOs. I construct the independent variables chapter 6 from these data.

The first relevant variable are dummies for whether the peace community had NGO support when the peace community emerged (within one year of start date) or during its lifetime (more than one year after the start date). Further variables provide information on the types of support provided to peace communities by NGOs. Overall, NGO support was received by 57% of peace communities in the cross-national dataset: two solely enjoyed support during the formation of the peace community, 15 enjoyed some form of support thereafter and 22 enjoyed support in both phases.⁵³ Analysis of the dataset thus reveals that NGOs tend to provide more support to peace communities after they are established. The predominant form of support by NGOs is the publicity of the community or behaviour of armed groups – identified for 25% of peace communities in this dataset. NGOs also accompanied seven peace communities during their initiation, and seven peace communities during their lifetime, with a further ten peace communities enjoying accompaniment during both phases. The other forms of support recorded are (i) institution-building; (ii) visiting other peace communities; (iii) strategizing; (iv) training; (v) suggesting the idea to create the peace community; (vi) mediation with armed actors; (v) guidance; (vi) oversight of the community; (vii) Publicity; and (viii) Accompaniment (Figure 4.1). Refer to the codebook for a detailed description of each category and their operationalisation.

⁵³ The descriptive statistics of the full cross-national dataset are broadly similar to those for Colombia sub-nationally. Refer to chapter 6 for a breakdown of the patterns of NGO support for Colombian peace communities.

Figure 3.1. NGO support at emergence vs. during a peace community's existence

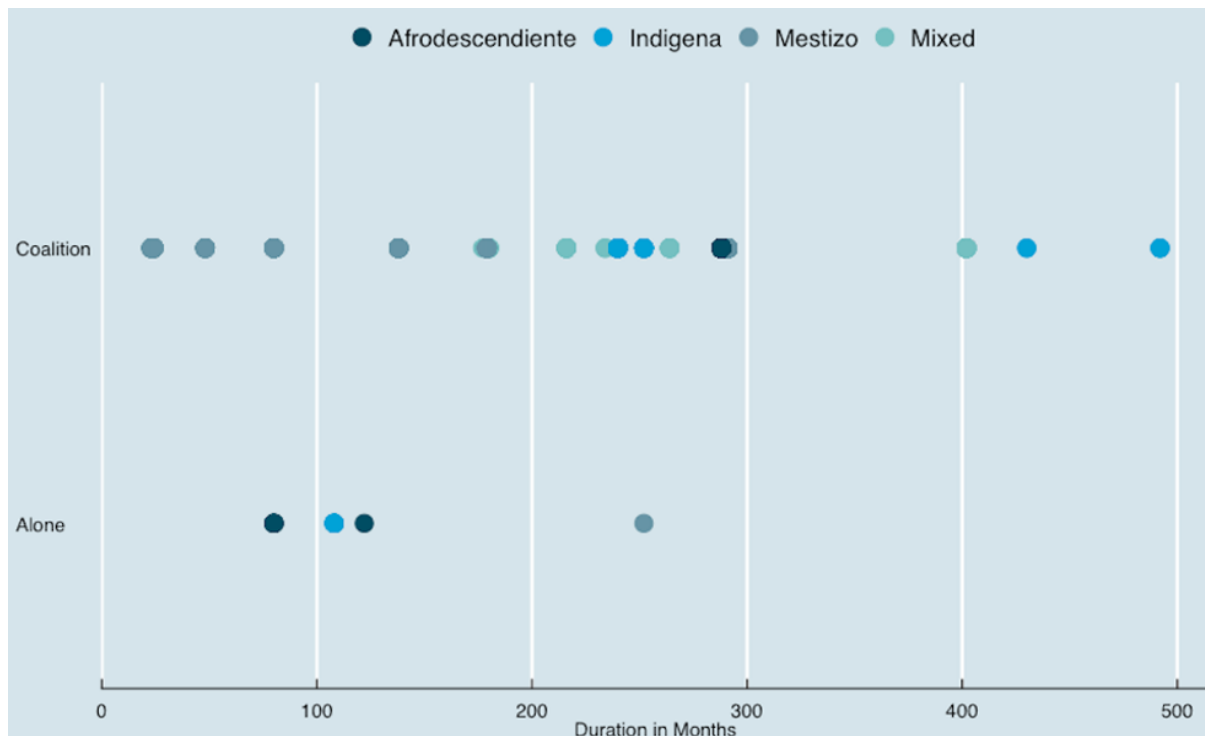


3.3.6.3. Membership

Do certain membership types lend themselves to the overlapping interpersonal networks of reciprocity and trust necessary if civilians that resist can hope to survive (cf. Lawrence 2017; McAdam 1986, 700; Tilly and Tarrow 2015)? Tight-knit communities characterized by patterns of reciprocal obligations inherent to trusted relationships are likely to share norms of behaviour which together can motivate individuals to undertake collective high risks (Elster 1990, 864; Petersen 2001, 22). Certain shared community demographics – such as shared ethnicity or class – may enhance civilian capacity for collective action. For example, the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó (PCSJA) are a campesino community, occupying a certain societal class in Colombia. Others, such as the Nasa indigenous communities, constitute a specific ethnic group.

To investigate this in Colombia, I construct a dichotomous variable for each of the main ethnic identity groups: indigenous, mestizo (mixed Spanish and indigenous descendent) and afrodescendiente (of African descent). Figure 4.2 reveals that indigenous villages that are part of a coalition of villages persist the longest. This is

Figure 3.2. Duration of Colombian peace communities by ethnicity and coalition



unsurprising given the long historical tradition of nonviolent resistance amongst indigenous groups in Colombia, from colonialism to the present day (Arbeláez-Ruiz 2022). Afrodescendiente villages that acted in a coalition were found to persist much longer than their single equivalents, by around 200 months. More generally, coalitions of villages appear to last considerably longer than peace communities comprised of a single village. In the dataset, no single village lasted longer than 270 months, yet some peace communities that acted in a coalition of villages persisted almost 500 months. This is also unsurprising, since there is likely to be a greater number of potential participants available to engage in the sustained mass participation important to effective collective action in coalitions of villages compared to single villages that act alone (cf. Chenoweth and Stephen 2011, 39).

3.3.6.4. Borderline cases, and cases with insufficient information

In addition to the group-level dataset, the codebook also lists cases with insufficient information as well as borderline cases, where at least 3 of the 5 inclusion criteria are met. To give one example of a borderline case, though there is evidence that the Populations in Resistance in Guatemala engage in sustained coordination of nonviolent activities to reduce violence amidst conflict, the civilians are mobile

refugees and other exiled populations based outside of their home territory (Stoll 1993). The community is therefore excluded from the dataset since they do not engage in sustained mobilization to prevent or reduce violence where they live, and instead move frequently to new territory to avoid potential attacks. This larger set of cases could be used in future research investigating the broader phenomenon of collective nonviolent resistance, to which peace communities belong.

3.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the overall research design for the dissertation. I have also described the novel group-level dataset of peace communities that I use in chapters 4 and 6.

This chapter provides the overall methodological set up for the three empirical chapters that follow. I test my theory of peace community emergence in chapter 4. Thereafter, I examine my theory of nonviolent capacity in chapter 5. Finally, I test my theory of peace community success in chapter 6. A summary of the research design can be found on the next page.

Table 3.2. Research design overview of the thesis

Emergence theory	Methodology	Where tested
H1.1: Peace communities emerge in response to the threat of collective targeting of civilians with violence	Logistic regression	Chapter 4
H1.2: Peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists	Logistic regression	Chapter 4
Nonviolent capacity theory		
H2: Influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence increase the likelihood that civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities in response to collective targeting	Process tracing	Chapter 5
Fortunes theory		
H3: Peace communities' ability to reduce local conflict-related violence is mitigated by whether NGO support is consistent or inconsistent: When NGO support is consistent, peace communities are more likely to reduce conflict-related violence. When NGO support is inconsistent, peace communities are less likely to reduce conflict-related violence	Negative binomial regression	Chapter 6

Chapter 4: The conditions under which peace communities emerge

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter I outlined the overall research design of the thesis, as well as describing the peace communities dataset that I developed for the dissertation. This chapter is the first empirical chapter of the thesis and, in the pages that follow, I seek to ask and then answer the first research question: *Under what conditions do peace communities emerge?* Overall, I argue that peace communities are more likely to emerge in territories where civilians are threatened with collective violence, and where peace communities already exist. To test the argument, I estimate a logistic regression in a sample of 8,298 observations of municipality-years in Colombia between 1998 and 2006, drawing from the peace communities dataset, the 1993 Colombian census, the Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Observatory (HRIHLO), and the Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE).

Many accounts that describe the initiation of peace communities, ascribe an important role to collective threats in motivating the actions of civilians (Burnyeat 2018; Kaplan 2017; Masullo 2015). The ATCC, for example, was formed in 1987 after civilians received an ultimatum to displace, join one armed actor or another or face death (Kaplan 2017). In the past residents had tried various strategies to respond to the varying atrocities they had experienced over the years. As one interviewee disclosed to me, "...people have been trying all sorts of things since the 1950s. They have been trying to displace, to stay, to use arms, to use non-violence" (A112 2019). However this ultimatum, issued to the community by all local armed actors, galvanized local leaders around the need for a collective response. If they pledged their loyalty to the FARC, the paramilitaries would likely kill them. If they sought refuge with the paramilitaries, they could expect violent retaliation from the FARC (Kaplan 2017). The other option was to leave their territory, yet for most residents doing so would be unbearable. As a former leader of the ATCC explained to me of his decision to stay, "My roots and sense of belonging to the land was strong. I wanted to defend my land" (A147 2020).

The ATCC was one of the first peace communities in Colombia, but many more peace communities emerged in the years that followed. Accounts of the formation of other peace communities often mention the importance of existing peace communities

in inspiring civilians in deciding to form their own. For example, leaders of the peace community of San Francisco de Asís were reported to have been encouraged by learning of the peace community of San José de Apartadó, which had recently formed in their home department of Antioquia. (Amnesty International 2020; Burnyeat 2018; Espinosa 2011; Hernández Delgado 2000, 2002). Similarly, founding member of the Municipal Constituent Assembly of Tarso, Alirio Arroyave, noted that learning of the Municipal Constituent Assembly of Mogotes spurred his conviction to attempt something similar in his hometown (Moreno 2015).⁵⁴

In this chapter I test two hypotheses.⁵⁵ The first hypothesis is that peace communities emerge in response to the threat of collective targeting of civilians with violence. Though some individually targeted threats – such as those directed towards a beloved leader – may also generate the mass moral outrage which often underpins the initiation of collective action under high risk, I expect that collectively targeted threats are more likely than individually targeted threats, to do so (cf. Steele 2017; Wood 2003).⁵⁶ This hypothesis builds on the work of Anastasia Shesterinina, whose key finding in her study of the 1992 Georgian-Abkhaz war was that civilians are more likely to fight in their community's defence the stronger the perception that the threat was directed towards a broader collectivity, rather than themselves, their close family, or friends (2016). My hypothesis also builds on the work of Abbey Steele, who finds that collective displacement is more likely when civilians are collectively targeted, and on the work of Juan Masullo, who also finds that organized noncooperation is more likely when civilians face collective rather than selective forms of targeting (Masullo 2017; Steele 2017). Similarly, I suggest that peace communities – one form of collective action that conflict-affected civilians can take – are also more likely to emerge the stronger the perception that threats by local armed actors target the community as a whole, rather than individuals. By implication, the threat of collective forms of violence – such as massacres – should predict the emergence of peace communities. Supporting this hypothesis, in this chapter I find that the presence of at

⁵⁴ Some municipal constituent assemblies meet the definition of a peace community that I develop in chapter 2.

⁵⁵ I elaborate on these hypotheses in greater detail in chapter 2.

⁵⁶ As noted, there are some exceptions to this general rule. For example, when a high-status individual within a community is targeted for selective violence by local armed groups, individual-level violence targets the group as a whole. In this case, individual violence remains a threat to the broader collectivity, and may also generate mass outrage capable of triggering mobilization.

least one massacre in a municipality has a substantive and statistically significant association with the emergence of a new peace community.

The second hypothesis is that peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists. This expectation builds on a variety of literatures that examine processes of diffusion (Earl 2010; Elkins and Simmons 2005; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Myers 2000; Shipan and Volden 2008) The emergence of a successful peace community in one location can signal that a comparable approach might be suitable in nearby conflict-affected territories. Where possible, civilians – and the external actors that often support them – are likely to seek to emulate successful models to respond to similar conditions of conflict where they live. How armed actors respond to a peace community in one location is likely to influence the behaviour of armed actors to other potential peace communities nearby (cf. Raleigh and Choi 2017). However, some communities may simply copy their neighbours regardless of whether doing so is appropriate to local conditions, whilst others may be persuaded to pursue the policy by local NGOs. Supporting this hypothesis, the results of the analysis indicate that the probability of a new peace community emerging is much higher in municipalities where at least one peace community already exists.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. Firstly, I briefly restate the theory and outline the dependent and independent variables. Next, I describe the research design. I present the results of a series of binary logistic regressions, and then discuss the robustness checks. I conclude with implications of the results for the thesis.

4.2. The conditions under which peace communities emerge in conflict-affected territories

Overall, I expect that peace communities form in territories where civilians experience the threat of collective targeting with violence, as those that remain must mobilize for the group's survival. Furthermore, I expect that this strategy for group survival is more likely in places where peace communities already exist, as news travels locally of an alternative approach to avoiding displacement in a process of diffusion. With these overall expectations in mind, I next turn to the independent and dependent variables.

4.2.1. Independent variables

The threat of collective targeting with violence

The first independent variable in my argument is the threat of collective targeting of civilians with violence. Due to strategic interactions with other violent groups, armed actors sometimes issue communities with ultimatums to displace, pledge their allegiance, or otherwise face death (Kalyvas 2006; Steele 2007; Stepputat 1999). However, these collective threats can be counterproductive and lead to the mobilization of the community against armed actors if individuals have reason to fear for their lives whatever decision they make (cf. Eisinger 1973; McAdam 1999; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Skocpol 1979; Tilly 1979). As the costs of inaction come to outweigh those of action, civilians may be incentivised to seek fresh approaches to adapt and survive (Alimi 2007; Almeida 2018; Einwohner and Maher 2011; Goldstone and Tilly 2001; Tilly 1979). When threats are collectively framed, such as when armed actors threaten a community with a collective violence, unless they displace or pick a fighting side, civilians may be more likely to adopt a collective response (cf. Shesterinina 2016). One option, I argue, is to create a peace community.

Diffusion: the existence of other peace communities nearby

As collectively opting out of war is unlikely a familiar pathway for conflict-affected civilians, I expect that new peace communities are likely to emerge close to other existing peace communities, as news travels of an alternative approach to avoiding displacement. Neighbouring conflict-affected communities may face the same local armed actors, and a similar set of choices, where they live too. Peace communities may also cluster due to the presence of local NGOs that promote this civilian strategy across nearby territories. For example, Colombian NGO Redepaz has direct ties to tens of peace communities as a result of their campaign for “100 peace communities” (Alther 2006). I therefore expect that new peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists. This discussion leads to the following hypotheses for my theory of peace community emergence.

H1.1: Peace communities emerge in response to the threat of collective targeting of civilians with violence

H1.2: Peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one peace community already exists

4.2.2. Dependent variable: the emergence of a new peace community

The dependent variable of interest in this chapter is the emergence of a new peace community in a municipality in a given year. As I have elaborated in further detail in section 2.2.3. of chapter 2, there are five core attributes of peace communities that I consider necessary for conceptual membership. Peace communities involve the (i) community-based mobilization of civilians where they live (ii) in the midst of war; that involves the (ii) sustained and organized coordination of civilians engaged in (iv) nonviolent activities. Activities are (v) purposively aimed at ending or preventing conflict locally, but which may involve aspirations beyond the local village or municipality. With this definition in mind, I next turn to the research design of this chapter.

4.3. Research design

4.3.1. Country selection: Colombia

A subnational research design is appropriate given that the argument is grounded in the local decisions of civilians. There are several reasons why Colombia is a particularly suitable setting. Firstly – and perhaps unsurprisingly given the high number of observations found in the country – the Colombian conflict offers ideal country-level theoretical conditions for the emergence of peace communities: a particularly long and largely ideological civil war that followed a prior period of intense and violent conflict in the 1950s known as La Violencia (cf. Kaplan 2017).⁵⁷ In wars fought for ideological aims, Marxist groups – such as the FARC or the ELN in the Colombian context – typically frame their fight as for the people, thus broad-based civilian support is a key objective and peace communities may have a greater chance of initiation (cf. Balcells

⁵⁷ As noted in chapter 3, of the 69 peace communities in my dataset, 62 were identified in Colombia, representing around 90% of observations.

and Kalyvas 2010). By contrast, in identity-based conflicts (ethnic, national, or religious) armed groups may be more likely to presume loyalty from certain identity groups (co-ethnics, co-nationals or co-religious) and be unwilling to bargain with other groups, leaving fewer opportunities for civilians to successfully organize and negotiate a neutral territory. Peace communities may also emerge more frequently in longer conflicts, since the decision to opt out of conflict is unlikely the first choice civilians make as wars begin. Indeed, it is over time that civilians attempt new strategies and seek different paths to survival.

4.3.2. Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis for the regression is the municipality-year. Although people in peace communities tend to think about their lives and decisions at the local level – in terms of villages – municipalities are the lowest administrative level for which there is disaggregated data on the variables available in Colombia. Therefore, the municipality level of analysis is the best design given data availability. Given that civilians are likely to mobilize in response to collective violence in terms of days and weeks rather than months or years, greater temporal disaggregation would be preferred. However, I was only able to obtain data on the month in which a peace community emerged for around 28% of the observations in the dataset. Thus, a month-level analysis would significantly reduce precision of the analysis.

I test the argument in a sample of 8,298 observations of municipality-years in Colombia between 1998 and 2006. This is the largest time period over which there is disaggregated data available on the variables available in Colombia.⁵⁸ There are 1,122 municipalities in Colombia, thus the sample includes 8,298 observations of municipality-years. I combine my peace communities dataset with municipality-year panel data from the HRIHLO, the CEDE, and the 1993 census (Steele 2018).

4.3.3. Operationalisation of dependent variable

The dependent variable is the emergence of at least one peace community in a municipality. Peace communities either emerge or not, thus the dependent variable is

⁵⁸ I obtain data for my analysis from Abbey Steele's article *IDP resettlement and collective targeting during civil wars: Evidence from Colombia* (2018).

a categorial variable and a binary logistic regression is appropriate to answer the research question (Osborne 2017).

I construct a binary indicator for the dependent variable for two main reasons. Firstly, since it is likely that more peace communities emerged in Colombia than I was able to identify through desk research, a dummy variable increases the precision of the analysis. A dummy dependent variable is also appropriate since I do not expect the *number of new peace communities* to increase with higher numbers of existing peace communities, or as the frequency of collective targeting of civilians increases. Although as the collective targeting of civilians increases the number of civilians that seek to join peace communities is also likely to increase, there is no particular theoretical rationale why civilians may seek to create more new independent peace communities as collective targeting increases, when they could instead extend the territory of an already existing peace community nearby through an alliance to add additional villages. Indeed, peace communities are not a uniform size: analysis of the dataset reveals that some peace communities amount to one village, whilst others encompass 60 or more. Thus, I conclude that a binary dependent variable is best suited for the analysis.

The dependent variable is equal to 1 if at least one new peace community emerged in that municipality in that year, otherwise it is equal to 0. I construct this variable from my dataset in which I record the initiation, termination, and location of peace communities at the municipality level.⁵⁹ To recap chapter 3, searches to identify peace communities are conducted in Google Books, Google Scholar, UNDP-DPPA and UNDP BCPR annual reports as well as UNDP and USIP websites, as well as seminal volumes of peace communities (Anderson and Wallace 2013; Kaplan 2017; Hancock and Mitchell 2007). Once candidate cases are identified, coders are instructed to widen out their searches to news sources, INGO and NGO websites, in order to assess whether or not candidates meet the five inclusion criteria.

I record the initiation of peace communities in the dataset as precisely as sources allow. Where possible, three variables record the exact date when the peace community was formed or first mentioned in sources. The peace community might have been newly created on this date or an already existing community might have

⁵⁹ For each peace community in my dataset, I record the DANE municipality code, which enables mapping to HRIHLO, CEDE and 1993 census data.

met all the criteria for inclusion on this date. For example, if a community announces that they will no longer permit the use of physical violence within the boundary of the peace community, then this variable is used to code the announcement date, not the earlier date in which conflict-affected civilians formed an organized community.

I also record the termination of peace communities as precisely as possible in the dataset. Where possible, three variables record the exact date when the community was terminated. The peace community might have officially disbanded on this date via a public proclamation, or it might be the date when evidence suggests that the community no longer met all the criteria for inclusion. For example, if a community resorts to collective violence because of recent threats by armed groups, then this variable records the date of using violent methods. Collective violence does not include one-off violent events by a less than five civilians from the community. Collective violence by more than five civilians that subsequently break from the community also does not indicate the termination of the peace community, rather it may indicate the emergence of a new armed faction in the territory.

For both the initiation and termination dates of peace communities, if a source refers to a time range rather than a specific date (e.g. referring to “the 1990s” instead of a specific year), then the earliest time point of the given range is coded (e.g. “the 1990s” is coded as 1990, etc). If sources record multiple dates, similarly the earliest time point will be recorded in the dataset. If the peace community is ongoing as of the data collection date, coders are asked to type 2021 for the termination year. A variable is also used to identify peace communities ongoing as at the data collection date. Refer to the codebook for further detail (appendix 1).

4.3.4. Operationalisation of independent variables

4.3.4.1. The threat of collective targeting with violence

Qualitative studies of peace communities suggest that in the days or weeks before collective violence against civilians, armed actors often threaten communities with one or more warnings (e.g. Burnyeat 2018; Masullo 2015; Kaplan 2017). I thus operationalise the first independent variable with a binary indicator for the presence of at least one massacre in a municipality in a year, using HRIHLO data of the Colombian

Vice Presidency (Steele 2018). If there was at least one massacre in a municipality in a given year, this is coded 1, otherwise the variable is coded 0.⁶⁰

The objective of such threats is often for community compliance with armed actor demands for displacement or loyalty (Steele 2017). As a result, threats tend to be issued with a matter of days or weeks notice. This was the case in San José de Apartadó, where paramilitaries sought to use threats to displace local villagers. A resident of the region recalled the words of paramilitaries, who stated, “you have five days. If in five days we find a kid, an old man, an old woman, no matter who they are or what are they called, we do not care. We come to cut heads off” (cited in Masullo 2015, 30). It was only three days later that the paramilitaries returned to make good on their threat. Despite the violence, many residents remained and soon after the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó was formed (Burnyeat 2018; Masullo 2015).

Ultimatums to civilians by local armed actors are frequently noted as triggers to peace community formation. For example, prior to the initiation of the Proceso Ciudadano for Tiquisio in 2015, armed actors entered the municipality and threatened the local population with violence (Saiz Sáenz 2015). Similarly, the ATCC was initiated following an ultimatum by all local armed actors, to displace, join one armed actor or other, or face death (Kaplan 2017). Local leaders had to decide in a matter of days which of these options they would take.

Even if armed actors do not make direct threats, the threat of violence may be implied or communicated in advance of action through other means, such as rumours or the display of force. For example, the Asociación Campesina del Catatumbo (ASCAMCAT) was formed following the incursion of paramilitary groups into the territory of Catatumbo, raising concerns amongst local residents that violence would follow (Lombo Vanegas 2019). Similarly, the Puente Nayero Humanitarian Zone was partly formed due to rumours circling of collusion between the state, paramilitaries and multinational actors to displace the community (Taylor 2015). In both cases the perception of collective threats pre-dated violence and the emergence of a peace community.

⁶⁰ A limitation of this measure is that it could also pick up the triggering of peace community initiation after actual collective targeting, rather than its threat. However, it is not possible to empirically assess the direction of causality of the role of actual collective targeting of civilians and the emergence of peace communities from the analyses given data that available data is disaggregated by year. By contrast, warnings about impending collective violence occur prior to threats being carried out by definition.

The HRIHLO defines massacres as when at least three people are killed in one day, in one place. Massacres are recorded by municipality and date. The data draws from the Colombian security agency, the police, and human rights organizations (Steele 2018). A total of 1,295 massacres are recorded by all armed actors to the conflict over the period of analysis.⁶¹ This measure thus captures the collective targeting of civilians with violence.

Though I also expect that actual incidences of massacres, and other forms of violence, such as battles between armed actors or the targeting of individual civilians also increase the likelihood that peace communities emerge, I expect that the threat of collective violence is key to predicting this outcome. When threats are directed toward the community as a whole, rather than individuals, civilians are more likely to initiate a peace community as a form of collective defence (cf. Shesterinina 2016). Moreover, whilst collective threats are likely to motivate preventive action, actual violence may also demobilize civilians under certain conditions. Thus, I operationalise the independent variable using data on massacres, and I include other types of violence as controls in the model, since other types of violence are likely to both influence the likely occurrence of massacres, due to their indicating the presence of local armed actors, and peace communities.

4.3.4.2. Diffusion: the presence of existing peace communities

The second independent variable is the presence of at least one existing peace community in a municipality. I operationalise this variable as a dummy, which is coded 1 if there was at least one existing peace community in the municipality in the prior year. If there were no peace communities in the municipality in the prior year, this variable is coded 0. A binary variable is appropriate since I do not expect increasing numbers of existing peace communities in a territory to increase the probability that a new peace community emerges the following year. Indeed, the opposite relationship might be expected for some number of peace communities, due to a saturation of demand in a municipality.

⁶¹ All Colombian armed conflict actors feature in the HRIHLO data: the military, the AUC, the FARC, and the ELN. Approximately two thirds of massacres are coded as “delinquency” rather than identifying the perpetrator. Thus, these data are not accurate enough to disaggregate by perpetrator (Steele 2018).

A summary of the theoretical justification, data and operationalisation of the independent variables can be found in table 4.1. For summary statistics of the independent and dependent variables, refer to table 4.2. Next, I describe the controls.

Table 4.1. Summary of independent variables for emergence theory

Independent variables	Direction of relationship	Theoretical justification	Data and operationalisation
The threat of collective targeting of civilians with violence	Positive	Collective targeting leads communities to adopt new strategies to survive	Binary variable for the presence of at least one massacre, defined as at least three people killed in one day, in one place (source: HRIHLO)
Diffusion: the presence of existing peace communities	Positive	News travels locally of new approaches to avoiding displacement	Presence of at least one other peace community in the prior year in a municipality (source: Peace Communities Dataset)

Table 4.2. Summary statistics of independent and dependent variables

	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max	N
New peace community (binary)	0.001	0.000	0.027	0.000	1.000	8,298
Massacres (binary)	0.094	0.000	0.292	0.000	1.000	8,298
Peace communities, t-1 (binary)	0.000	0.000	0.019	0.000	1.000	8,298

4.3.5. Control variables

In the model, I include geographic and demographic controls, as well as controls for local forms of current and prior violence.

4.3.5.1. Geographic remoteness

I first control for the geographic remoteness of each municipality. Strong social ties and reciprocity amongst conflict-affected civilians – key components of their capacity to mobilize – tends to be greater where exit options are relatively inaccessible (cf. Humphreys and Weinstein 2006). Peace communities may therefore be more likely to

emerge in relatively remote locations – be that due to mountainous terrain, inadequate transport infrastructure or geographic isolation.⁶² The local reach of the state is also likely to be reduced in geographically remote municipalities, with implications for the capacity of local communities to engage in collective action. Indeed, needs-based explanations for mobilizational capacity suggest that communities organize more where the state is weak (cf. Risse 2005). From this perspective, peace communities may therefore also be more likely to emerge in municipalities with little state presence, where local community organizations are forced to fill the gap.

However, armed groups are also more likely to govern where the state is absent or weak as they face fewer challenges to their aspirations to rule (cf. Arjona 2016, 2017; Cammett and MacLean 2014; MacLean 2017). The possible replacement of the state by the governance of other armed actors complicates the expected relationship between local state weakness and the mobilizational capacity of communities. Thus, communities may be more likely to organize in municipalities where governance by any armed actor – not just the state – is weak.⁶³

I operationalise geographic remoteness with three variables, drawing data from the CEDE, a development economics institute based at the Universidad de los Andes.⁶⁴ These controls all indicate the relative accessibility of each municipality, and thus the ease with which civilians may leave, and travel elsewhere, when facing significant threats. The geographic controls are (i) the distance in km of the municipality centre to the nearest departmental capital; (ii) average elevation in km; and (iii) the total length of paved roads in km in 1995. Distance from the departmental capital offers a measure of closeness to the central hub of the department to which each municipality is a part.⁶⁵ Colombia is also mountainous, with the Andes Mountains covering 25% of the country's total landmass (Armenteras and Rodríguez 2007). Populations living in mountainous municipalities, at heightened elevation, are likely to experience greater difficulty in accessing other regions as the terrain is more difficult

⁶² Indeed, Gretchen Alther notes in her exploratory research into four Colombian peace communities that, “peace communities tend to emerge in areas that have traditionally been marginalised by the state” (2006, 286)

⁶³ Subnational data on local governance by armed actors is not yet available in Colombia. I am therefore unable to control for non-state armed actors in the model given data availability.

⁶⁴ Data can be downloaded from <https://datoscede.uniandes.edu.co/>.

⁶⁵ There are 32 departments in Colombia. Each department has its own capital, governor, and an assembly, which are subject to election on a four-year cycle.

to traverse. Similarly, municipalities with less paved road are also likely to be relatively inaccessible.

4.3.5.2. Poverty

The next two control variables capture local measures of poverty. In the early social movements literature, resource deprivation was considered a primary cause of mobilization. From this perspective, people suffering absolute deprivation – when basic human needs for food, shelter and security are not met – have most to gain, and least to lose, from changes to the status quo. Furthermore, when people are disappointed by their socio-economic status relative to their expectations, or that of others, shared grievances can fuel anger and, with this, rebellion (Davies 1962; Gurr 1970). Applied to conflict-affected civilians, it may therefore follow that people living in relatively more deprived areas are more likely to engage in collective action. Indeed, for civilians whose skills and livelihoods derive from local land and industry, fleeing violence may also be a highly costly strategy. When civilians do not have resources to flee violence, they may need to innovate new strategies – such as the initiation of a peace community – if they are to stay and survive. Furthermore, when civilians do not have the necessary skills and knowledge to earn a living elsewhere, they may also need to remain and adapt. From this perspective, therefore, peace communities should be more likely to emerge in relatively economically deprived municipalities.

However, later scholars of social movements emphasized a different perspective: that access to resources is a vital component of mobilization whilst deprivation and the grievances they generate tend to be relatively stable over time. According to resource mobilization scholars, a minimum level of resources – financial, social, and organizational, amongst others – are necessary to collective action. Indeed, those suffering absolute deprivation – the poorest in society – may struggle to mobilize at all since their time and efforts are fully occupied with basic survival (Cress and Snow 1996; Zald 1992). From this perspective, therefore, peace communities should be more likely to emerge in places where a larger proportion of the population have their basic needs met.

I operationalise poverty with two variables. These are: (i) the Impuesto de Industria y Comercio (ICA); and (ii) the Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas (NBI). The ICA is a measure of municipality economic performance. It is a municipal tax imposed

on revenue generated by commercial activities within the municipality, varies annually, and is measured in the Colombian peso (Ayala, Dall'erba and Ridley 2022). The NBI is a measure of the extent to which the basic needs of a population are met when accounting for the adequacy of housing, household overcrowding, levels of household economic dependence, and whether school-age children are enrolled in school (DANE 2022a). A low number indicates that more of the basic needs of a population are met, whilst high numbers indicate worse municipal performance. The NBI measure does not vary over time, as it is a static measure calculated with data from the 1993 census. The 1993 census is appropriate as it predates the period under analysis.

4.3.5.3. Population

I also control for each municipality's population by taking a natural log of municipality population per the 1993 census. I use data from the 1993 census as this is the last census undertaken prior beginning of the period under analysis. This data is accessible from the Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE).⁶⁶ A larger population may increase the chance that peace communities spread due to social network effects (cf. McDoom 2014). Such locations also offer a greater pool of potential participants for mobilization. This is important as when groups are able to mobilize a larger number of potential recruits they have been found to be less likely to use violence (Cyr and Widmeier 2021). Therefore peace communities should be more likely to emerge in municipalities with greater populations.

4.3.5.4. Presence of armed actors

The next set of variables control for the presence of armed actors, which both predicts the emergence of peace communities, and the threat of collective targeting of civilians. These are (i) a count of violent events attributed to the FARC; (ii) a count of violent events attributed to paramilitaries; (iii) a lag of these two variables; (iv) a lag of massacres. The presence of paramilitaries or the FARC may lead to an increase in the collective targeting of civilians, and also increase the likelihood that civilians seek to initiate a peace community in response. Since the prior presence of armed actors may also both lead to an increase risk that civilians are threatened with collective violence, and the likelihood that civilians create a peace community in response, I also

⁶⁶ Data can be downloaded from <https://www.dane.gov.co/>

include a one year lag of both variables, as well as a lag of the presence of massacres.⁶⁷ Indeed, prior collective violence may also increase the likelihood of future collective threats of violence, as armed actors rely on familiar patterns of violence in their efforts to gain territorial control.

The data for these controls come from the Colombian vice presidency's Human Rights and International Law Observatory (Steele 2018). The Human Rights and International Law Observatory was created by the Colombian state to monitor human rights and international humanitarian law in the country (Colombian Government 2023).

4.4.5.5. Territorial contestation

The final control variable is territorial contestation and competition between armed groups. I construct a binary variable that is equal to one if there was at least one violent event attributed to the FARC and at least one violent event attributed to paramilitaries in the same municipality in the same year. I include a lag of this variable in the model, since past territorial contestation and competition in a municipality may also be related to the probability that new peace communities emerge and the probability of threats of collective violence.

Territorial contestation and competition between armed groups is an important situational factor that offers incentives for civilians to engage in forms of collective self-protection, such as peace communities (Krause et al. Forthcoming). Existing scholarship on civilian agency has found that violent and nonviolent resistance to armed actors is more likely under local conditions of territorial contestation (Masullo 2017; Vüllers and Krtsch 2020; Jentzsch 2022). Under conditions of territorial contestation, armed actors are less capable of offering reliable protection (Jentzsch 2022). As peace communities are one form of sustained resistance by civilians, I anticipate that peace communities will be more likely to form under conditions of territorial competition as well. Refer to table 4.3 for a summary of control variables and table 4.4 for summary statistics of controls.

⁶⁷ The length of the lag is due to data constraints rather than being theoretically determined. Ideally the lag would be in terms of months or weeks, as it is likely that peace communities form in response to recent conflict conditions rather than events that happened further in the past.

Table 4.3. Summary of controls for emergence theory

	<i>Direction of relationship</i>	<i>Theoretical justification</i>	<i>Data and operationalisation</i>
Geographic remoteness	Positive	Inaccessible communities must organize themselves more	Distance to nearest departmental capital in km (source: CEDE) Elevation in km (source: CEDE) Length of paved road in km (source: CEDE)
Poverty	Positive	When civilians do not have the resources to flee, they must innovate new strategies to survive	NBI – Poverty calc (source: 1993 census) ICA – commercial tax in municipality (source: 1993 census)
Population log	Positive	Peace communities emerge in places where sufficient numbers for mass action	Natural log of municipal population in 1993 (source: 1993 census)
FARC events	Positive	Peace communities emerge in response to the presence of local armed actors	Count of violent events attributed to the FARC (source: HRIHLO)
Paramilitary events	Positive	Peace communities emerge in response to the presence of local armed actors	Count of violent events attributed to paramilitaries (source: HRIHLO)
Past FARC events	Positive	Peace communities emerge in response to the presence of local armed actors	Lagged count of violent events attributed to the FARC (source: HRIHLO)
Past paramilitary events	Positive	Peace communities emerge in response to the presence of local armed actors	Lagged count of violent events attributed to paramilitaries (source: HRIHLO)
Past massacres	Positive	Peace communities emerge in response to the presence of local armed actors	Lag of binary variable which indicates the presence of at least one massacre, defined as at least three people killed in one day, in one place (source: HRIHLO)
Territorial contestation	Positive	Armed actors have less capacity to protect civilians	Presence of > 1 armed actor in the municipality year (source: HRIHLO)
Past territorial contestation	Positive	Armed actors have less capacity to protect civilians	Presence of > 1 armed actor in the municipality in prior year (source: HRIHLO)

Table 4.4. Summary statistics of controls

	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max	N
Distance to dept. capital, km	0.077	0.0649	0.056	0.000	0.376	8,298
Elevation, km	1.135	1.101	1.179	0.002	25.221	8,298
Paved roads, 1995, km	69.820	45.840	86.956	0.000	962.600	8,298
NBI	54.927	52.932	21.009	9.154	105.290	8,298
ICA, Colombian Peso \$	228.600	0.100	7,767.244	0.000	479,521.00	8,298
Population, 1993, log	9.370	9.579	2.007	0.000	15.504	8,298
FARC events	7.636	0.000	34.698	0.000	1056.000	8,298
Paramilitary events	1.311	0.000	6.745	0.000	232.000	8,298
FARC events, t-1	7.636	0.000	34.698	0.000	1056.000	8,298
Paramilitary events, t-1	1.302	0.000	6.744	0.000	232.000	8,298
Massacres, t-1 (binary)	0.094	0.000	0.292	0.000	1.000	8,298
Contestation (binary)	0.172	0.000	0.3774	0.000	1.000	8,298
Contestation, (binary), t-1	0.172	0.000	0.3774	0.000	1.000	8,298

4.4. Analysis and results

To test the hypotheses, I estimate four binary logistic regressions. In the first model, I regress if a new peace community emerged in a municipality on whether or not at least one massacre took place in that municipality in the same year. In the second model, I regress if a new peace community emerged in a municipality on a dummy for there being at least one other peace community in the municipality in the prior year. I include all independent variables in the third model. The fourth is the full model with all control variables. The results are in table 4.5.

Turning to hypothesis 1, I find strong evidence in support of the role of the threat of collective targeting and the emergence of peace communities. The binary indicator for massacres has a positive, substantive and statistically significant association with the emergence of a new peace community across all models at the 99% level. The results of the full model indicate that the presence of at least one massacre in a municipality in a year is associated with a 1.5-fold increase in the probability that a peace community also emerges that year. This provides strong evidence in support of the hypothesis that the threat of collective targeting predicts the emergence of peace communities.

Table 4.5: Collective targeting, existing peace communities, and the emergence of peace communities

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Emergence of a new peace community			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Massacres, (binary)	1.743*** (0.400)		1.785*** (0.418)	1.518*** (0.486)
Existing peace community (binary), t-1		6.248*** (0.935)	6.352*** (0.979)	6.545*** (1.114)
Distance				-3.396 (3.977)
Elevation				-0.244 (0.281)
Paved road 1995				-0.0005 (0.002)
NBI				0.016 (0.012)
ICA				-0.0002 (0.001)
Population 1993 (log)				-0.224*** (0.062)
FARC events				0.0002 (0.010)
Paramilitary events				-0.065 (0.063)
FARC events, t-1				-0.028 (0.022)
Paramilitary events, t-1				0.026 (0.023)
Massacres (binary), t-1				0.388 (0.566)
Contested				1.620*** (0.531)
Contested, t-1				0.401 (0.540)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-174.066	-167.613	-160.266	-144.878
Akaike Inf. Crit.	352.132	339.226	326.532	321.755

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Turning to hypothesis 2, I also find strong evidence that peace communities are more likely to emerge in territories where other peace communities already exist, with the association statistically significant at the 99% level across all models. The results of the full model indicate that the existence of at least one peace community in the municipality the prior year is associated with an approximately 6.5-fold increase in the probability of a new peace community emerging in that municipality. These results thus offer strong evidence in support of the second hypothesis.

4.4.1. Controls

The majority of controls are not statistically significant. The NBI is positively, though negligibly, associated with the likelihood that a new peace community emerges. A higher NBI indicates a worse municipal performance; that a smaller proportion of the basic needs of the municipal population are met. Thus, the positive association between NBI in the 1993 census and the probability that a new peace community emerges supports the expectations of resource deprivation scholars of social movements. Furthermore, the ICA is negatively associated with the probability that a peace community emerges. Increases in municipal economic performance are thus also associated with a lowered probability of a peace community emerging. This offers further support for relative deprivation theory: that relatively economically deprived groups are more likely to mobilize, however the association is substantively small and not significant at conventional levels across the models.

FARC events and paramilitary events have a substantively low association with the probability that a new peace community emerges. The coefficient of paramilitary events and the lagged variable for FARC events are negative though the associations are not significant at conventional levels. A possible explanation is that violence by one of these actors alone is insufficient to trigger civilian mobilization into a peace community and may even disinhibit the chance of their doing so. Indeed, when turning to territorial contestation, the association with the emergence of a new peace community is positive and statistically significant at the 99% level. The results indicate that territorial contestation is associated with an approximately 1.6-fold increase in the probability of a new peace community emerging in that municipality, which is substantively similar to the threat of collective violence. However, although the presence of contestation in the prior year is also positive associated with the likelihood

of a peace community emerging, the association does not achieve conventional levels of significance and is negligible. A plausible explanation is that contestation between armed actors requires an immediate rather than delayed response by communities.

I find that the lag of massacres does not have a statistically significant association with the emergence of a new peace community in any of the models, though the association is positive as expected. There are several ways this could be interpreted. A plausible explanation is that massacres require an immediate, rather than delayed, response by civilians – whether to flee, to defend themselves with arms or to create a peace community. Thus, when a massacre takes place in a territory, civilians must decide how to respond in terms of days and weeks rather than in terms of months or years. It is not possible to empirically assess whether this explanation holds from the current analyses given data availability.

Turning to geographic indicators, the distance to the nearest capital and elevation are both negatively associated with the likely emergence of a new peace community, though the substantive effect of paved roads is negligible. The substantive effect of the distance from the departmental capital is large and negative, with elevation also negative – though substantially small. This suggests that, overall, peace communities may be more likely to emerge in less remote locations. A possible explanation for these results is that nonstate actors may fill the gap of a weak state in remote areas of Colombia, with negative implications for the capacity of local communities to engage in collective action. Finally, the population control though negative and negligible is statistically significant, suggesting that it may be in municipalities with smaller populations that peace communities are more likely to emerge.

Refer to appendix 7 for further model specifications. In each table in appendix 7, model 1 is a simple bivariate test. Model 2 includes geographic, population and poverty controls. Model 3 includes armed actor, territorial contestation, geographic, population and poverty controls. Model 4 is the full model.

4.4.2. Robustness checks and discussion

In this section I discuss the results of robustness tests with differing specifications of the model.⁶⁸ As a check on the robustness of the results for the first independent variable, I use a count indicator for massacres in each municipality year as an alternative measure of the threat of collective targeting of civilians with violence. Refer to appendix 8 for results. Overall, the results are consistent with the main models, and the coefficients on the variables in appendix 8 are similar both to those in table 4.5 and the full set of models in appendix 7. A key difference between the models is that the association between the count variable for massacres and the emergence of peace communities is weaker than the binary specification of the variable. When the count indicator is used, the association between the independent and dependent variable is significant at the 95% level, whilst when a binary indicator is used, the association is significant at the 99% level. As expected, these differences indicate stronger evidence for an association between the threat of collective targeting of civilians and the emergence of a peace community when the indicator is binary.

4.5. Conclusion for chapter

In this chapter I have analysed the conditions under which peace communities emerge in Colombia – drawing on data from my peace communities dataset, the HRIHLO, the CEDE, and the 1993 census – to answer the first research question: Under *what conditions do peace communities emerge?* I have tested two hypotheses. The first hypothesis is that peace communities emerge in response to the threat of collective targeting of civilians. Supporting this hypothesis, in this chapter I find that the presence of at least one massacre in a municipality has a substantive and statistically significant association with the emergence of a new peace community. This offers strong support for the role of threats of collective targeting in explaining this phenomenon.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ In each table in appendices 2 and 3, model 1 is a simple bivariate test. Model 2 includes geographic, population and poverty controls. Model 3 includes armed actor, territorial contestation, geographic, population and poverty controls. Model 4 is the full model.

⁶⁹ An alternative explanation for this finding is the peace communities emerge in response to actual collective violence. It is not possible to empirically test the direction of the relationship with this analysis since available data is disaggregated by year. However, qualitative accounts discussed earlier in the chapter indicate that civilians are often issued with ultimatums and other threats prior to the initiation of peace communities. The results of chapter 6 also indicate that the presence of peace communities is associated with increased conflict-related violence.

The second hypothesis is that peace communities are more likely to emerge in places where at least one other peace community already exists due to diffusion. In line with this expectation, the results of the analysis indicate that the probability of a new peace community emerging is much higher in municipalities where peace communities already exist. This association is statistically significant across all models at the 99% level.

The results of this chapter offer some insight into the conditions under which peace communities emerge, yet not all civilian groups possess the capacity to do so. In many areas and at many times, communities in Colombia have endured horrifying forms of collective suffering at the hands of local armed actors. Yet peace communities have only emerged in approximately 4.5% of municipalities in Colombia.⁷⁰ Thus the results of this chapter suggest an *average* positive relationship between the threat of collective targeting of civilians and the probability that a peace community emerges.

The models in the current chapter also do not explain nor test how the associations I identify between variables work: doing so is the work of chapter 5. In the following chapter, I test the hypothesis that influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence are crucial to explaining *how conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities* when facing collective targeting where they live.⁷¹ I suggest that first movers trigger a sorting process in their communities when they visibly oppose armed actors, leading to a selection bias for nonviolence in the population that remains. I elaborate further upon – and test – this theory in the chapter that follows.

⁷⁰ This descriptive statistic is calculated from my peace communities dataset, which covers the period 1985-2021.

⁷¹ I outline my theory of nonviolent first movers in greater detail in chapter 2.

Chapter 5: How conflict-affected civilians develop nonviolent capacity in conflict environments: the case of the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare (ATCC)

5.1. Introduction and organization of the chapter

The previous chapter suggests that peace communities in Colombia tend to emerge in locations where civilians face collective threats of violence from local armed actors. An existing explanation for how civilians are able to do so under such challenging conditions is that ties to external allies – such as NGOs – can reduce the costs of mobilization to conflict-affected communities by making repression costly to armed actors (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Masullo 2015; Moreno León 2021).⁷² This existing work is helpful in that it identifies some of the mechanisms through which war-torn communities attain the aptitude to non-violently resist when civilians are helped by supportive outsiders. Yet, descriptive analysis of my dataset in chapter 3 reveals that only 25% of observations of peace communities in the dataset were initiated with NGO support. Understanding how conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity they need to attain this *outcome in the absence of external support* thus seems a highly relevant endeavour for scholars and practitioners concerned with civilian choice and agency in conflict. In this chapter, I seek to do so by examining the case of the ATCC in Colombia, using interview, archival, and secondary source data.

To recap, the background to the formation of this civilian group is as follows. In February 1987, multiple armed actors issued an ultimatum to villages in the Carare region of Colombia. The villagers were presented with a stark choice between forging an alliance with one of them, leaving the area or facing death (A028 2020; ATCC#1 and ATCC#2 1998; ATCC#3 1998; Sanz de Santamaria 1998). Responding to this collective threat, local village leaders met in secret to discuss how to respond. After much debate the leaders agreed on a new and bold approach: to seek to opt out their communities out of the conflict and mobilize into active and sustained nonviolent resistance. The outcome of this decision was highly uncertain. Yet after many months of discussions, the armed groups all agreed and the villagers formed the Peasant

⁷² Refer to chapter 2 for a detailed discussion of the various mechanisms by which NGOs may support peace communities.

Workers Association of the Carare River, or the ATCC, in May 1987 (A028 2020; ATCC#1 and ATCC#2 1998; Kaplan 2017; Sanz de Santamaria 1998). How did the community develop the capacity it needed to successfully initiate a peace community under these severe conditions of war?

The circumstances surrounding the initiation of the ATCC coheres with the findings of the previous chapter. The statistical model in chapter 4 suggests that the threat of collective violence in a municipality increases the probability that a new peace community emerges.⁷³ However, what the statistical model is unable to capture – and is the source of investigation in this chapter – is why certain communities have the capacity to create a peace community under these conditions and others do not. That is to say, the statistical model in the previous chapter captures an *average* positive relationship between collective threats against civilians and the probability of peace community formation. However, the model does not explain how this association works. The purpose of this chapter is to fill this gap by explaining and then testing my theory of how the actions of nonviolent first movers can lead to the outcome of interest. Understanding this relationship may help supportive external organizations better identify which communities have a better chance of successfully initiating this high-risk strategy in conflict environments. This chapter, thus, asks and answers the following research question:

How do conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities?

To answer this question, I draw on 28 semi-structured interviews with relevant conflict actors, leaders of the ATCC, members of the Mennonite and Catholic Church, peacebuilding experts in Colombia, five historical interviews with founders of the ATCC, and 14 documents from the community archive. Using process tracing methods, I test a causal mechanism that explains how first movers develop nonviolent capacity in their communities. My hypothesis holds that by visibly opposing armed actors using nonviolent methods, first movers trigger a population sorting process in their communities that leads to selection bias for nonviolence in the population that

⁷³ I operationalise the threat of collective violence as the presence of at least one massacre in a municipality in the same year. Massacres are defined as at least three people are killed in one day, in one place (source: HRIHLO)

remains. Population sorting works to increase local mobilizational capacity simply because those that remain or join the community must adapt and work together to survive. When influential first movers are nonviolent, I suggest that their actions frame and constrain the bounds of a community's capacity for collective action into nonviolent repertoires of contention, over time.

The results of the analysis indicate that each part of the mechanism was present and functioned as expected in the case of the ATCC. Three parts of the mechanism – first mover framing, nonviolent preferences, and mobilizational capacity – passed either a smoking gun or double decisive test, whilst the final part of the mechanism – population sorting – passed two straw in the wind tests and one hoop test.⁷⁴ For the three parts of the mechanism that pass the double decisive or smoking gun tests, I significantly update my confidence in their validity since there are no other plausible explanations for finding the evidence in the empirical record. For population sorting, I find independent evidence for each of the three tests, which cumulatively increases confidence that this part of the mechanism was also present and functioned as expected. I therefore conclude that each part of the mechanism was present and functioned as expected in the case of the ATCC. First movers increased nonviolent preferences in the territory of the ATCC and their actions enhanced the community's mobilizational capacity over time, in part due to population sorting thereafter.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. First, I restate the theory and empirical expectations. I describe the research design and then test the theory using process tracing methodology. Finally, I conclude with implications for practitioners.

5.2. Nonviolent capacity and how it is attained in conflict environments

Overall, I argue that when armed actors issue groups of civilians with collective threats at time t , peace communities are more likely to form at time $t+1$ when influential first

⁷⁴ Although individually straw in the wind and hoop tests do little to update confidence in the validity of the hypothesis – as they rely on low uniqueness - I find independent evidence for each test, which cumulatively does increase confidence that this part of the mechanism was also present and functioned as expected.

movers have engaged in nonviolent repertoires of contention at $t-1$.⁷⁵ My argument is that when first movers act, they can trigger a population sorting mechanism in their community, priming those who stay for nonviolent resistance such that the community has the nonviolent capacity necessary to organize a peace community when faced with fresh threats or violence. I suggest that this capacity is developed through community experience with nonviolent contention after first movers engage in nonviolent resistance. I anticipate that the actions of first movers result in a feedback loop of retaliatory attacks by armed actors and additional acts of community nonviolent resistance. I suggest that nonviolent capacity is itself comprised of mobilizational capacity and nonviolent preferences, since in the absence of nonviolent preferences civilians may seek to mobilize violently instead. I set out this argument in further detail in chapter 2. This discussion leads to the overall hypothesis:

H2: *Influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence increase the likelihood that civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities in response to collective targeting*

The previous chapter showed that peace communities tend to emerge in locations where civilians face collective threats. In this chapter I show how influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence increase the likelihood that civilians develop the nonviolent capacity they need to form peace communities under this condition. I do so by examining the empirical record to identify whether or not evidence exists for the observable implications of the theory and alternative explanations. I develop these implications, or expectations, next.

5.2.1. Empirical expectations of the theory and alternative explanations

Qualitative threshold for X1 first movers

In section 2.4.2.1 of chapter 2, I determine a qualitative threshold for four dimensions of first movers, drawing on the social movements, civil wars, civil resistance, and social psychological literatures. These are the timing of first mover action, their social position, the visibility of their action, and their expressing nonviolent preferences.

⁷⁵ Collective threats, or other acts that cause mass outrage in the community, such as massacres or the killing of a beloved leader (Wood 2003).

Based on this qualitative threshold I expect to find the observable implications outlined in table 5.1.⁷⁶

Nonviolent framing, C1 and nonviolent preferences, Y1A

I suggest that the early decision of first movers to frame nonviolent contention as preferable is key to longer term patterns of mobilization that communities come to depend on over time as new threats present. The relationship between first movers and nonviolent preferences – the first necessary component of nonviolent capacity – is summarised in figure 5.1.⁷⁷ Observable implications for nonviolent framing C1 and nonviolent preferences, Y1A, as well as alternative explanations to the theory, are outlined in table 5.1.⁷⁸ Refer to chapter 2 for a detailed explanation of how each observable implication follows from the theory.

Table 5.1. Qualitative threshold for nonviolent first mover X₁

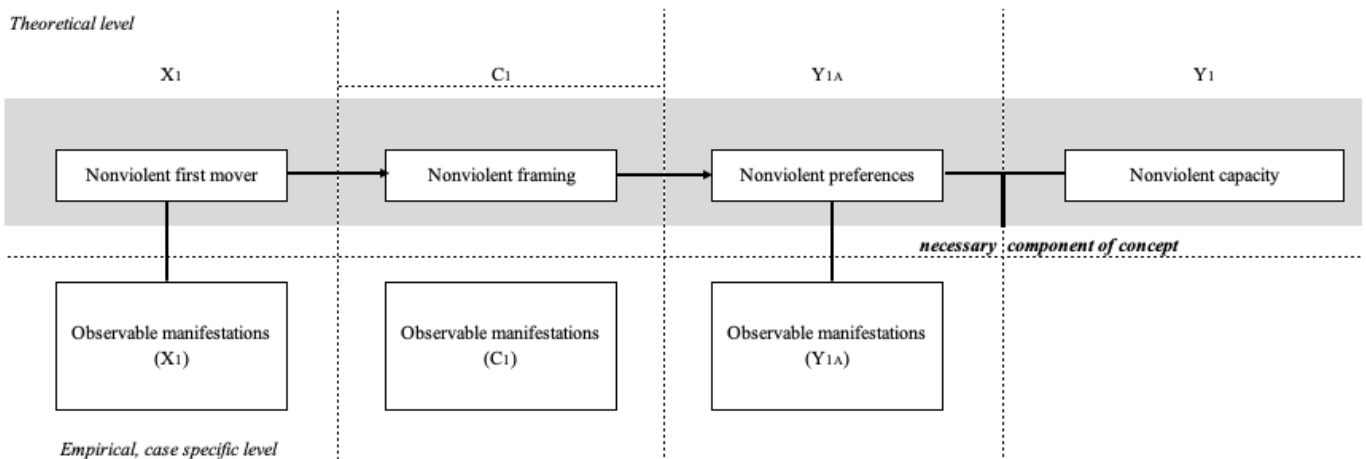
Dimension	Definition	Qualitative threshold	Observable implications
Timing	Early in mobilizational cycle	First mover acts before others	First mover acts before widespread nonviolent resistance
Social position	High or low position	First mover occupies prominent social position	References in interview and archive data that first mover is influential in community
Visibility	Public or covert action	Action taken publicly	Reference to public action by first mover in interview data and community meeting minutes
Nonviolent preferences	Nonviolent or violent	Speech acts frame nonviolent resistance as preferable	References in interview and archive data that first mover expresses preference for nonviolent resistance

⁷⁶ The table is a copy of table 2.3 in chapter 2 and is included here for ease of reference.

⁷⁷ The figure is a copy of figure 2.2 in chapter 2, included here for ease of reference.

⁷⁸ The table is a copy of table 2.3 in chapter 2, included here for ease of reference.

Figure 5.1. Nonviolent framing C_1 and nonviolent preferences Y_{1A}



Adapted from Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p. 15

A key alternative explanation is that peace communities emerge when civilians lack other options. Communities may develop shared norms of nonviolence when violent resistance, fleeing, and loyalty to one or more armed actors is not possible or practical. Where civilians have little knowledge or experience with weaponry, few resources and networks to buy them, or where civilians are massively outgunned, violent resistance is unlikely to be successful where. When civilians have few resources to travel, little opportunities to use the skills they need to survive elsewhere, or where communities are remote and badly connected, fleeing may be impractical. Loyalty to armed actors may be difficult or impossible to sustain in communities that have suffered from violence on all sides. When other options are unavailable, civilians may feel they have little choice but to adopt this different strategy. The observable implications for this alternative explanation, A_1 – *that civilians form peace communities when no other options are available* – are included in table 5.2 to enable comparison between the hypotheses.

Table 5.2. Observable implications for C₁, Y_{1A}, and alternative explanations, A₁

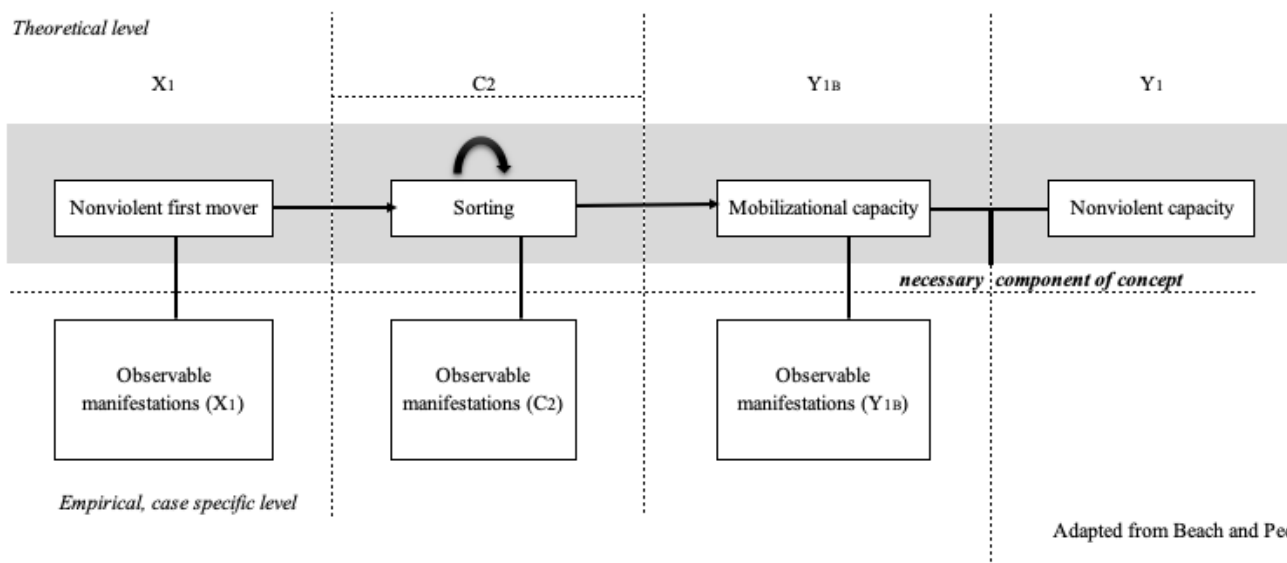
Nonviolent framing C₁	
1	References in historical accounts and interview data to first mover speech acts, demonstrating resolve to resist armed actor demands and conflict dynamics with nonviolent action
2	References in historical accounts and interview data to first mover framing peaceful repertoires of contention as preferable to combat armed actor incursions within their communities
Nonviolent preferences, Y_{1A}	
1	Community speeches and meeting minutes reference greater commitment to nonviolence after first mover
2	Development of community rules requiring adherence to nonviolence after first mover
3	Community does not increase weaponry or weapons training after first mover
4	Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover, framing and nonviolent preferences
Alternative explanation, A₁	
1	Civilians have little knowledge or experience with weaponry, resources, and networks to buy them. Armed actors likely to outgun civilians
2	Civilians have difficulty travelling outside of the territory, either due to a lack of resources or due to geographic remoteness and inaccessibility
3	Civilians have skills that are not transferable to other locations nearby, to which they could flee
4	Civilians have been victimized by all local armed actors in the past

Population sorting C₂ as a coping mechanism that develops mobilizational capacity Y_{1B}

In my theory, I suggest that a population sorting mechanism – which is triggered by the nonviolent actions of the first movers – leads to selection bias for nonviolent resistance in the population that remains. Civilians in the territory that do not agree with the objectives and strategies of the peace community leave, whilst civilians with a preference for nonviolent resistance seek to join. Sorting sees those who wish to flee local conditions of conflict (and can) to do so, those that wish to join armed actors do so, and those that initiate armed resistance to defend their community likely being outgunned or co-opted over time. Thus, over time a larger proportion of remaining residents have a preference for nonviolence.

The relationship between sorting and mobilizational capacity – the second necessary component of nonviolent capacity – is summarised in figure 5.2, below.⁷⁹ Observable implications for sorting C₂ and mobilizational capacity, Y_{1B}, are outlined in table 5.3.⁸⁰ Refer to chapter 2 for a detailed explanation of how each observable implication follows from the theory.

Figure 5.2. First movers X₁ and mobilizational capacity Y_{1B}



Adapted from Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p. 15

There are three potential alternative pathways through which others might argue that local mobilizational capacity can be attained. Firstly, as I outline in the theory of emergence in chapter 2, the sorting mechanism may already be triggered in response to ongoing threats and conflict violence, without an influential first mover taking a stand. Over time, some civilians flee, others join armed actors or mobilize against them with arms. Some communities offer support to whichever armed actor controls the territory. Others still seek to avoid armed actors as best they can. This also leads to population sorting such that civilians that remain in conflict-affected territories must learn to adapt and rely on each other if they are to survive. However, without a nonviolent first mover (C₁) the preference for active nonviolent resistance (as opposed to the potentially less risky strategy of evasion) may not emerge.

⁷⁹ The figure is a copy of figure 2.3 in chapter 2 and is included here for ease of reference.

⁸⁰ The table is a copy of table 2.5 in chapter 2 and is included here for ease of reference.

Table 5.3. Observable implications for C₂, Y_{1B} and alternative explanations A₂

Sorting, C₂	
1	Armed actor responds with coercive repression after first mover action
2	Some civilians flee after first mover if they have the resources and networks to do so
3	Some civilians join the armed actor after the first mover action
4	Civilians with exit options remain after the first mover action
5	Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover action and selection bias for nonviolent resistance in population that remains over time
Mobilizational capacity, Y_{1B}	
1	Increased frequency of meetings and community projects across distinct within-community groups
2	New economic ties emerge across within-community groups after first mover
3	References in interviews to an increase in trust between within-community groups after first mover
4	Development of ties to NGOs offering solidarity after first mover
5	Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover and increased mobilizational capacity in the population that remains
Alternative explanations, A₂	
1	The community is supported to form a peace community by external allies such as NGOs, who provide technical assistance to boost mobilizational capacity
2	Community lacks resources and state presence

Secondly, communities may be more organized where the state is weak (cf. Risse 2005). To survive, communities may have to develop the skills, networks, knowledge and experience they need for resistance in places where the state is not present. Communities may also develop mobilizational capacity in places where exit options are limited, such that civilians must fend for themselves. Exit options tend to be limited in poorer and more remote territories, due to the costs involved with leaving. A lack of options increases the need to develop strong bonds of reciprocity with those nearby, which can also result in the development of local community institutions that fill gaps where the state does not provide. However – as is the case with the first alternative pathway – without a nonviolent first mover (C₁) the preference for nonviolent resistance of the community may not arise. This alternative explanation offers insight into the theoretical conditions for mobilization more generally rather than peace communities in particular.

Others attribute the emergence of mobilizational capacity to a third pathway: the development of new community ties with civil society allies external to the community, such as NGOs, who provide technical assistance and training to those in need of support. Indeed, individual and collective resistance has been found to be more likely where dense yet diverse interpersonal local networks are embedded within broader national and transnational networks of nonviolent solidarity and support (Loveman 1998). As I have already discussed in chapter 2, external actors may fill crucial gaps in a community's aptitude to resist, enabling their mobilization. Yet in others, mobilized communities may seek out external actors *after a first mover* acts, to boost publicity of their new strategy. There are clear benefits to doing so. External support can increase the appeal to non-members of joining, as well as increasing the costs of civilian targeting (Chenoweth and Ulfelder 2017). Observable implications for these alternative explanations A_2 are outlined in table 5.3. I then summarise the research design of this chapter.

5.3. Research design

In this section I describe the methodology and the empirical tests I conduct, the case selection, and the data I use to test the theory.

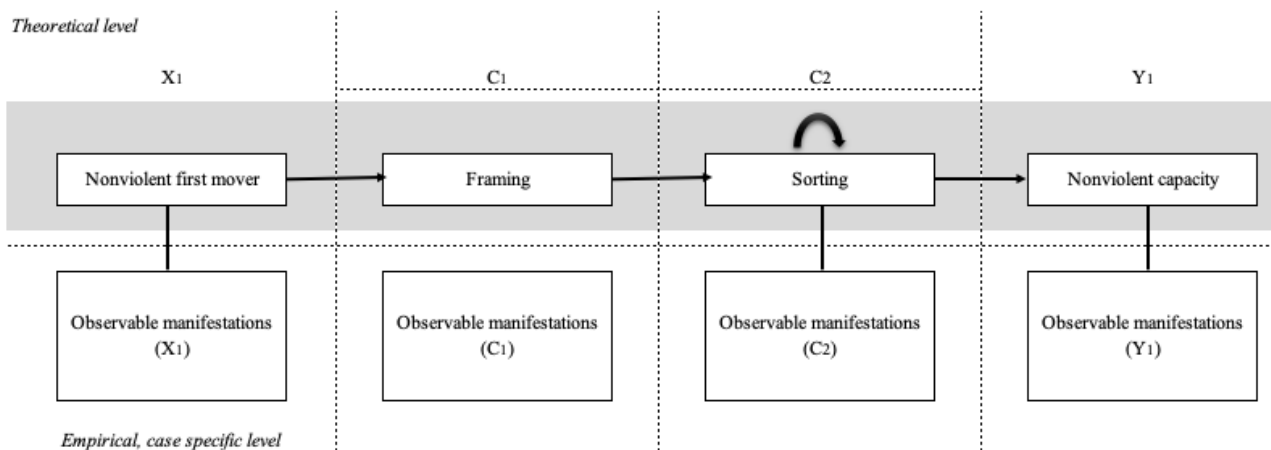
5.3.1. Process tracing

In this chapter, I use process tracing to test the argument that the presence of influential nonviolent first movers best explains the link between collective threats and violence by armed actors and the emergence of peace communities, in certain places and not others. Process tracing is particularly suited to a focus on first movers as if information is available on the actions of anyone in a community, it is likely to be available for them.

Process tracing differs from input-output causal claims which involve $X \rightarrow Y$ causal relationships, instead focusing on how X and Y are linked together to develop a mechanistic explanation (Beach and Kaas 2020; Ilari and Russo 2014; Machamer, Darden and Craver 2000). The first step in this methodology is to conceptualise a causal mechanism that explains how nonviolent first movers and peace communities are connected. I do this in section 2.4.2. of chapter 2, conceptualising a causal

mechanism based on existing theorisation about first movers, social referents, the effects of framing on individual and collective decision making, and theorisation about the effects of backlash dynamics on mobilization. This overall process is summarised again in figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3. Casual mechanism of nonviolent capacity, Y_1



Adapted from Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p. 15

The second step involves theorizing the potential observable implication of each theoretical component of the mechanism by translating the theoretical expectations into empirical predictions of what expected observable implication each of the parts should have if the mechanism is present in the case (Beach and Pedersen 2019, 155-222). I also assess the value of each empirical test using Bayes theorem, which states that confidence in the validity of the hypothesis (and each part of the mechanism) after collecting evidence (posterior) is, “equal to the probability of the evidence conditional on the hypothesis being true relative to other alternative hypotheses (likelihood), times the probability that a theory is true based on our prior knowledge” (prior) (Beach and Pedersen 2013, 83).

To establish the inferential quality of the evidence that I collect, I assess the certainty – whether one empirical fingerprint in particular must be found for the hypothesis to be confirmed – and uniqueness – whether there are alternative plausible explanations for finding the evidence – of each observable implication (Beach and Pedersen 2019). Different combinations of certainty and uniqueness determine the strength of each empirical test, and the extent to which confidence in a hypothesis can be updated if evidence is or is not found.

Overall, for tests that rely on evidence with high certainty, confidence in a hypothesis is reduced if I do not find the evidence, whilst for tests with low certainty there is no effect on confidence in a hypothesis if I do not find the evidence. If I find evidence for tests with high certainty or low certainty this also does little to update confidence in a hypothesis. If I find evidence for tests that rely on evidence with high uniqueness it significantly increases confidence in the hypothesis, whereas if I find evidence for tests that rely on low uniqueness it does little to update confidence. These varying combinations are summarised in table 5.4.

Table 5.4. Empirical tests for process tracing

	Certainty	Uniqueness	Found	Not found
Smoking gun	Low	High	Significant increase	No effect
Double decisive	High	High	Increase	Reduce
Hoop	High	Low	No effect	Reduce
Straw in the wind	Low	Low	No effect	No effect

The *smoking gun test* relies on low certainty and high uniqueness of evidence. Therefore, if I find evidence for this test, confidence in the validity of the hypothesis is significantly updated for this part of the mechanism. If I do not find this evidence, this does not reduce confidence in the hypothesis. The *double decisive test* relies on high certainty and high uniqueness of evidence. Therefore, if I find the predicted evidence for this test, confidence in the validity of the evidence is improved. If I do not find this evidence, this reduces confidence in the validity of the hypothesis. The *hoop test* relies on high certainty but low uniqueness of evidence. Therefore, if I find the evidence for this test, doing so does not update the validity of the hypothesis. However, if I do not find evidence for this test, the validity of the hypothesis is reduced. Finally, the *straw in the wind test* relies on low certainty and low uniqueness of evidence. Therefore, whether I find or do not find evidence for these tests has little implication for the validity of the hypothesis (Beach and Pedersen 2019). In this chapter, I consider the strength of each empirical test with these terms.

I set out the observable implications I expect to find for each component of the mechanism and assess the certainty and uniqueness of the empirical tests I conduct

in this chapter, on table 5.5, over the following pages. Thereafter, I describe the case study selection.

The final step involves searching the empirical record for observable implications of the theory and its alternatives (Sober 2009, 68). I complete steps 1-3 for alternative explanations as a means of evaluating the uniqueness of the empirical tests for each part of the mechanism in the hypothesis, and also to ensure I evaluate the relative strength of evidence for each potential account. I do so in section 5.4 of this chapter, with the results summarised in tables 5.7 and 5.8.

Table 5.5. Empirical evidence, certainty, uniqueness and causal tests

Observable implications (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
Nonviolent framing, C₁	
<p>1. References in historical accounts and interview data to first mover speech acts, demonstrating resolve to resist armed actor demands and conflict dynamics with nonviolent action</p>	<p>High certainty: references to first mover speech acts must be found in the empirical record to prove this occurred – as by definition such high risk action should be recalled in interview data and historical accounts</p> <p>Low uniqueness: First movers may reference resolve to use nonviolent action as a consequence of civilians having no other option</p> <p>Test: hoop test</p>
<p>2. References in historical accounts and interview data to first mover framing peaceful repertoires of contention as preferable to combat armed actor incursions within their communities</p>	<p>High certainty: references to first mover peaceful preferences must be found in the empirical record to prove their presence – forthright framing of preferences should be recalled in interview data or historical accounts</p> <p>Low uniqueness: First movers may frame nonviolent action as preferable as a consequence of civilians having no other option</p> <p>Test: hoop test</p>
Nonviolent preferences, Y_{1A}	
<p>3. Community speeches and meeting minutes reference greater commitment to nonviolence after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: The community started recording meeting minutes and speeches when initiating the ATCC, therefore evidence of normative frames may not be available prior to the action of the first mover</p> <p>Low uniqueness: An increase in nonviolent preferences may be observed after the first mover if they act at in response to civilians having no other option</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>
<p>4. Development of community rules requiring adherence to nonviolence after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased nonviolent preferences of the community, besides developing new rules, such as in speeches of influential members of the community.</p> <p>Low uniqueness: An increase in nonviolent preferences may be observed after the first mover if they act at in response to civilians having no other option.</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>

Observable implications (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
<p>5. Community does not increase weaponry or weapons training after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased nonviolent preferences, besides the community not increasing military capacity, such as the development of new rules requiring adherence to nonviolence after the first mover</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons a community does not increase its military, such as due to resource constraints</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>
<p>6. Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover, framing and nonviolent preferences</p>	<p>Low certainty: interview data may not explicitly reference nonviolent preferences as an outcome of framing by first mover</p> <p>High uniqueness: if found, the evidence cannot be explained by an alternative hypothesis</p> <p>Test: smoking gun test</p>
<p>Alternative explanation, A₁</p>	
<p>7. Civilians have little knowledge or experience with weaponry, resources, and networks to buy them. Armed actors likely to outgun civilians. Observable in community meeting minutes and interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: whether or not civilians have little experience with weaponry must be determined for this alternative explanation for the emergence of nonviolent preferences to be plausible</p> <p>Low uniqueness: if found, the evidence can be explained by the first mover hypothesis, since civilians may attempt other strategies such as evasion</p> <p>Test: hoop test</p>
<p>8. Civilians have difficulty travelling outside of the territory, either due to a lack of resources or due to geographic remoteness and inaccessibility. Observable in interview data, community meeting minutes, regional economic and geographic data</p>	<p>High certainty: the location and lack of resources must be found in the empirical record to prove this occurred – as if lack of resources or state presence leads to the development of nonviolent preferences, this lack should be significant enough to be recalled in interview data and historical accounts. Location data are static and thus must be found in the geographical data</p> <p>Low uniqueness: if found, the evidence can be explained by the first mover hypothesis, since civilians may attempt other strategies such as evasion</p> <p>Test: hoop test</p>

Observable implications (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
<p>9. Civilians have skills that are not transferable to other locations nearby, to which they could flee. Observable in meeting minutes, community documents, data on local industries, interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: whether or not local industries are transferable elsewhere must be determined as the alternative hypothesis states that civilians have no other options available</p> <p>Low uniqueness: if found, the evidence may be explained by the first mover hypothesis, if other strategies such as evasion are possible</p> <p>Test: hoop test</p>
<p>10. Civilians have been victimized by all armed actors in the past. Observable in meeting minutes, community documents and interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: references to victimization by all armed actors should be recalled in interview data or historical accounts</p> <p>Low uniqueness: if found this evidence may make pacts with any of the armed actors unlikely, but not necessarily lead to the development of nonviolent preferences</p> <p>Test: hoop test</p>
<p>Sorting C₂</p>	
<p>11. Armed actor responds with coercive repression after first mover action. Referenced in media outlets, historical accounts, and interview data</p>	<p>Low certainty: references to armed actor repression is not necessary for the population sorting to occur after the first mover. The first mover action alone may inspire population sorting in anticipation of armed actor retaliation, or if some civilians prefer alternative actions, such as armed mobilization or loyalty to the armed actor they may leave afterwards</p> <p>Low uniqueness: armed actors may target a community due to strategic interactions with other armed actors located in the region</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>
<p>12. Some civilians flee if they have the resources and networks to do so. Referenced in media, historical accounts and interview data, migration trends after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: references to civilian exit is not alone necessary for population sorting to occur, civilians with lower resolve for nonviolent resistance may alternatively join the armed actor or seek to initiate armed resistance</p> <p>Low uniqueness: civilian exit may be explained by coercive repression of armed actors prior to first mover action</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>

Observable implications (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
<p>13. Some civilians join the armed actor after first mover. Referenced in media outlets, historical accounts, and interview data</p>	<p>Low certainty: references to civilians joining the armed actor is alone not necessary for population sorting to occur, civilians with lower resolve for nonviolent resistance may alternatively flee or seek to initiate armed resistance</p> <p>Low uniqueness: civilians joining armed actor may be explained by coercive repression of armed actors prior to first mover action, prior loyalties to armed actor</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>
<p>14. Some civilians with exit options remain. Referenced in media outlets, historical accounts, and interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: for selection bias for resistance to emerge in remaining populations, some civilians with exit options must remain despite actual coercion from armed actors or its threat</p> <p>Low uniqueness: civilians with exit options may stay due to personal ties, loyalties, collaboration with armed actors, or due to the presence of supportive NGOs</p> <p>Test: hoop test</p>
<p>15. Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover action and selection bias for nonviolent resistance in population that remains over time</p>	<p>Low certainty: the connection between civilian decisions to flee, join an armed actor, seek to initiate armed resistance or remain despite exit options may not explicitly reference the role of the community frames for contentious behaviour after the first mover, and their willingness or ability to participate within these bounds</p> <p>High uniqueness: if found, the evidence cannot be explained by another hypothesis</p> <p>Test: smoking gun test</p>
<p>Mobilizational capacity, Y_{1B}</p>	
<p>16. Increased frequency in community meetings and community projects across distinct within-community groups</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased interpersonal trust between within-community groups after the first mover, such as new economic ties across within-community groups</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons for increased meetings, such as there being an emergency</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>
<p>17. New economic ties emerge across within-community groups after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased interpersonal trust between within-community groups after the first mover, such as new within-community group projects</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons for new economic ties across within-community groups after first mover, such as development grants being offered for specific project types</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>

Observable implications (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
<p>18. References in interviews to an increase in trust between within-community groups after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased interpersonal trust between within-community groups after the first mover, such as the development of new economic ties or new within-community group projects.</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons for increased trust after the actions of the first mover, such as an increase in meetings to deal with an emergency</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>
<p>19. Development of ties to NGOs offering nonviolent solidarity after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased nonviolent capacity, besides developing ties to NGOs, such as an increase in community projects and meetings</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons why an NGO might offer nonviolent solidarity after first mover, such as seeking to support a community in an emergency</p> <p>Test: straw in the wind test</p>
<p>20. Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover and increased mobilizational capacity in the population that remains</p>	<p>Low certainty: interview data may not explicitly reference increased mobilizational capacity as an outcome of nonviolent framing by first mover</p> <p>High uniqueness: if found, the evidence cannot be explained by an alternative hypothesis</p> <p>Test: smoking gun test</p>
<p>Alternative explanation, A₂</p>	
<p>21. The community is supported to form a peace community by external allies such as NGOs, who provide technical assistance to boost mobilizational capacity. Observable in meeting minutes and interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: reference to external support must be found in the empirical record to prove this occurred – as by definition such external support that develops mobilizational capacity should be significant enough to be recalled in interview data and historical accounts</p> <p>High uniqueness: if found, the references cannot be explained by another hypothesis</p> <p>Test: double decisive test</p>

Observable implications (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
<p>22. Community lacks resources and are located in periphery with a weak state presence. Observable in interview data, community meeting minutes, regional economic and geographic data</p>	<p>High certainty: the location and lack of resources and state presence must be found in the empirical record to prove this occurred – as if lack of resources or state presence leads to the development of mobilizational capacity, this lack should be significant enough to be recalled in interview data and historical accounts. Location data are static and thus must be found in the geographical data</p> <p>Low uniqueness: mobilizational capacity may be developed due to a number of alternative means – such as through external support - in remote communities</p> <p>Test: hoop test</p>

5.3.2. Selection of the ATCC in Colombia

An important objective of this case study is to test a *new explanation* for how peace communities emerge. The emergence of peace communities has typically been explained by scholars as resulting from the relationship of conflict-affected communities with external allies – such as national and international NGOs – as their involvement reduces the costs of mobilization (e.g. Masullo 2015, 52; Moreno León 2021). Although my theory complements this account, it focuses on an earlier stage in the process and on the important role of nonviolent first movers in developing their community's aptitude to initiate a peace community when facing intensifying collective threats.

When the research objective of a study is to test new explanations for a dependent variable of interest, scholars tend to advise selection of deviant cases on the independent variable (Collier, Brady and Seawright 2004; George and Bennett 2004; Gerring 2004, 2007; Seawright and Gerring 2008, 302). Deviant cases are outliers, in that cases are selected to maximize the variance between the mean value for the independent variable of interest and the actual value for the independent variable in the case selected for study.

The ATCC in the Carare region of Colombia is, thus, particularly well suited to the aims of this thesis. Firstly – as I set out in more detail in section 5.4 – a significant number of first movers influenced the decision of civilians to form a peace community in response to intensifying violence and threats. This compares to the modal peace community in the dataset I compiled, which has only one observed nonviolent first mover.

Secondly, the ATCC formed in the absence of NGO or other *external* support, and thus is selected from the population of interest. Multiple sources indicate that the Church was important in the initiation of the ATCC (Archive #14; CNRR 2011; Masullo 2021). However, in contrast to existing explanations, the emergence of ties between the community and the Church did not trigger the initiation of a peace community. By the time the ATCC was initiated the Church was deeply integrated in the community, having been resident to the territory for over two decades prior – only 30 years after the first settlers arrived in the area.⁸¹ Indeed, one of the first Adventist settlers in La

⁸¹ Mass immigration into the area first started in the 1940s due to government development policies (CNRR 2011, 41).

India became a key community leader, and served as the first President of the village's Communal Board (JAC) (Masullo 2021).⁸² The majority of the JAC were also Adventist. Thus, the Church was part of the community rather than external to it by the time the ATCC was formed (CNRR 2011; Masullo 2021).

Finally, the peace community is particularly data rich, in large part due to the community's decades old experience with management of its archives and openness to sharing its data with interested scholars (e.g. Kaplan 2013b, 2017; Masullo 2015, 2021). The ATCC is thus an appropriate choice from a theoretical, empirical, and practical perspective. I turn to the data I rely on for analysis of the case next.

5.3.3. Evidence and data collection: interviews and community archives

The empirical analysis relies on qualitative data acquired from the ATCC community archives, semi-structured interviews during fieldwork, historical interview data, historical accounts of the community, media reporting, and NGO reports. I thus combine several independent empirical sources to strengthen the objectivity and factual correctness of the observations (Flick, von Kardoff and Steinke 2004; Thurmond 2004).

The fieldwork interview data is based on 28 semi-structured interviews, 18 informal discussions and three informal group discussions conducted between November 2019 and August 2020. Interviews were held with relevant conflict actors, peace leaders, members of the Mennonite and Catholic Church, and peacebuilding experts in Colombia.

During a six week fieldwork visit to Colombia, from November 2019 until December 2019, I relied on snowballing techniques and opportunity sampling, whereby one interviewee provides the name of another potential interviewee, who in turn provides further names (Voet 1999). To initiate the chain of referral for the sample, I identified experts working on peacebuilding and peace communities in Colombia through publicly available sources, such as the academic and secondary literature included as part of the thesis literature review. Next, I then contacted scholars with

⁸² JACs are the principal local organization in Colombian communities (Kaplan 2017, 79). In the 1950s and 1960s JACs were originally composed of a priest, a policeman, an teacher and a government official, plus a board of 4 further elected officials (Gutiérrez 2021). Thus, it is not surprising that at least one Church member formed part of the JAC. However, it remains significant that a Church member was elected the first president, and that the majority of the board were Adventists.

recent relevant publications including Oliver Kaplan (2017), Gwen Bunyeat (2018), and Juan Masullo (2015) prior to the field trip.

A major critique of snowballing is that selection bias is introduced as those sampled depend on the subjective choices of interviewees. Snowball sampling thus limits the generalisability of the relationships identified as the sample is biased towards individuals with interrelationships and excludes those not connected to a set of accessible networks (McCurdy and Uldam 2014; Van Meter 1990). However, snowball sampling is also a means of decreasing interviewee scepticism towards the researcher and increasing trust between the interviewer and interviewee (McCurdy and Uldam 2014, 51). As I had few prior contacts in Colombia prior to conducting this thesis, I prioritized building networks and trusted relationships over the bias that such an approach would introduce. In addition, many populations in Colombia have already been subject to multiple rounds of research, with the outcome that now trust can only be built up slowly with new researchers. Detailed information about the interviews can be found in appendix 2. Ethics approval for the field trip is included in appendix 3.

The initial research design involved a second field trip to Colombia. However, due to the Covid 19 pandemic this was not possible as ethics restrictions required researchers to postpone their fieldwork plans or move interviews online. As a result, I conducted the final interview online.

Only a small number of interview respondents were present at the emergence of peace communities, and only one was present when the ATCC was formed. Thus, I also obtained historical interview data from Colombian scholar Alejandro Sanz de Santamaria, as well as documents from the ATCC archives, kindly obtained from Oliver Kaplan, to complement my fieldwork data.⁸³

The historical interview data comprise five transcripts of open-ended interviews held with the founders of the ATCC in La India soon after its formation in 1987. The documents were compiled by the Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE) between 1988 and 1990 and also include recordings that the ATCC members made of the meetings they held during the onset of the organization.⁸⁴ A list of

⁸³ Oliver Kaplan obtained documents from the ATCC archives whilst conducting research for his book, *Resisting War: How Communities Protect Themselves* (2017).

⁸⁴ CEDE is one of the first and main economic and social research centers in Colombia, based out of the University of Los Andes.

transcripts is included in appendix 2. I also reviewed the 14 documents listed in appendix 4, from the community archives.

A small number of first-hand accounts in my fieldwork interview data is therefore offset by the large number of first-hand accounts obtained from accessing historical interview data and the community archives. I also draw upon *El Orden Desarmado*; a detailed history of the ATCC based on 34 interviews with residents by CNRR (2011). Relying on these data, I conduct the case study analysis in the section that follows.

5.4. Case study analysis and results

5.4.1. The cause: identifying the nonviolent first movers, X₁

The first step I take in this analysis is to identify first movers in the community by scanning the empirical record to identify individual(s) that meet each of the four dimensions of the qualitative threshold. These are timing, social position, visibility, and nonviolent preferences. I identify several individuals from this review. These are José Vargas, Salomón Blandón, the local Church leadership, and other leaders of the villages along the Carare river. I map these individuals to each qualitative dimension in the paragraphs that follow.

Timing

Historical interview data indicates that village leader José Vargas was first to stand up to local armed actors. He did so in response to the FARC seeking to divide up residents' land – a policy which was highly unpopular at the time. José actively resisted the plan, leading the FARC to summon him to a trial intended to sway him with the threat of death if he did not comply (ATCC#1 1989; CNRR 2011, 310-311). Yet instead, Salomón Blandón, another village leader present, said that if José was executed the guerrilla would also have to kill everyone else present in that meeting that day too. As a result of this interaction, the FARC plan was dropped, and José survived (CNRR 2011, 310-311).

After this, José engaged in a further acts resistance. Of particular note, following the ultimatum of all armed groups to local residents, he called a meeting with the FARC on 18th May 1987. Historical interview data from one of the founders of the

ATCC detail that in response to a member of the FARC commenting that, “we are the ones who command here, and you are the ones that obey.” José retorted,

“No. We didn’t come here for you to impose conditions to us. We come to establish our own conditions. Your rules end here. We don’t accept rules or conditions from anyone. We rather die before accepting conditions from anyone. If you want to kill us, then kill us here at once. And it is not just me who is speaking here. Let the people speak.” (ATCC#1 1989)

Sixty residents, including other local village leaders, accompanied him to the meeting and spoke in turn over four and a half hours. In the end, the FARC accepted José’s conditions – that the guerrilla will no longer kill campesinos, that the campesinos will no longer provide any services to the guerrilla, that the guerrilla will no longer impose rules – so long as the same conditions were demanded from the paramilitary and army as well. In the weeks they followed these armed actors were also petitioned in a similar fashion and all agreed (ATCC#1 1989; Kaplan 2017, 184).⁸⁵

Social position

Interview data reveals that José Vargas, Salomón Blandón, and the other leaders of the villages along the Carare river, enjoyed local influence and were well known in the territory due to their social position (A112 2019). All village leaders along the Carare river were involved in the decision to opt out of the conflict, yet not all names are recorded in the documents I have reviewed (A147 2020).

Interview data indicate that José Vargas enjoyed particular credibility and legitimacy. As one interviewee states, “he wasn’t just a regular campesino... he was admired because he was able to have his own farm and to produce, he was also an honest person.... because of that [others] believe in him and they follow his lead.” (A112 2019)

Local Church leaders also enjoyed significant influence. The village of La India – a prominent site in the territory of the ATCC – was built in 1968 around an Adventist Church, which had its headquarters there. Around 35% of residents were Adventist when the ATCC formed (Masullo 2021, 1869). The Church became the locus of

⁸⁵ “Campesino” is a common term used to describe farming populations in Colombia.

community life. Indeed, the majority of the village's Communal Board (JAC) – the focal point for community organization in the area – were Adventists (Ibid., 1868). Thus, Adventist leaders – who had advocated for nonviolent action from the mid-1980s onwards – enjoyed influence over residents' perceptions of groups norms and significant social status (CNRR 2011, 44, 104; Masullo 2021). After the ultimatum, Church leaders explicitly rejected the use of violence in response, offering support but, as one religious leader stated, “not with weapons” (CNRR 2011, 324).

Visibility

The actions of José Vargas and Salomón Blandón were highly visible. The opposition of José to the FARC plan to divide land provoked a public meeting intended by the guerrillas to twist his arm. (ATCC#1 1989; CNRR 2011, 310-311). Similarly, Church leaders promoted nonviolent action publicly in their sermons, offering teachings from the Bible to instruct villagers' behaviour in war, as part of their services (Masullo 2021, 1868).

The initial actions of other village leaders along the Carare river were less visible in that conversations to discuss a collective response by the villages to the ultimatum had initially taken place secretly (Kaplan 2017, 183). However, later on these leaders joined José Vargas at meetings imploring local armed actors to accept the villagers' conditions (CNRR 2011).

Nonviolent preferences

According to interview data and secondary sources, José Vargas had initially advocated for armed violent resistance, but was unsuccessful in mobilising the community (A147 2020; CNRR 2011, 321). His lack of success in mobilising armed resistance may be explained by his clash with the views of local – and highly influential – Church leaders. Compared to José the Church enjoyed broader sway over the group norms of residents. José was the leader of one village, yet the Church was highly influential across the broader territory of the ATCC. Adventists had long advocated normative beliefs of nonviolence, repeatedly linking the behaviour of the villagers in war to Bible teachings (A112 2019; CNRR 2011, 322; Masullo 2021, 1868). The other village leaders advocated for nonviolent resistance after the ultimatum Yet in private at least one leader advocated for an armed response (A147 2020; Kaplan 2017, 183).

Overall, the evidence confirms that the qualitative threshold for the first movers was met ahead of the formation of the ATCC. A summary of dimensions of the qualitative threshold is outlined in table 5.6. The four dimensions of the qualitative threshold for the first mover were shared between a variety of individuals. José Vargas met all four dimensions (timing, social position, visibility, nonviolent preferences) when he first resisted the FARC plans to divide up land in 1986, and then again when he advocated for collective nonviolent resistance after the ultimatum was issued. Church leaders also met all four dimensions (timing, social position, visibility, nonviolent preferences) when advocating for nonviolence throughout the 1980s, and then against armed resistance in the aftermath of the ultimatum. Yet it was when the other leaders of the Carare villages also met these four dimensions that the mobilizational capacity of the region crystallised. Their public agreement on the necessity of neutrality and nonviolence combined with their broad social influence across the territory of the ATCC. As noted by one of the leaders,

“Each leader had knowledge about the region and power, credibility and leadership...each of the leaders had something to contribute. In my case personally, a lot of families supported me (Some from the armed groups, some from the civilians). Also, the leadership history that each one of us already had. I also had projects before becoming a member of the organization. My dream was to create schools in the region and to implement clean agriculture programs. Saul’s project was different. Josue’s project was related to agriculture as well. Excelino’s project was related to cattle ranchers. They were all leaders that had a lot of workers in their farms. I didn’t have workers but I had families (who were loyal to me) ... So, each of leader’s skills were put together. I think is very important.” (A147 2020)

The second step of the analysis is to scan the empirical record for each observable implication of the theory and alternative explanations that I have outlined in this section, and in greater detail in section 2.4.2. of chapter 2. I first consider evidence that nonviolent framing by an influential first mover led to the development of nonviolent preferences in the community.

Table 5.6. Observable implications of nonviolent first movers X₁

	Timing	Social position	Visibility	Nonviolent preferences
José Vargas	José first acted in 1986	Highly influential due to leadership role	José actively resisted FARC plan to divide residents' land	José resisted verbally, without resorting to violence
Salomón Blandón	Salomón first acted after José in 1986	Highly influential due to leadership role	Salomón stood up to the FARC in the public meeting with José	Salomón resisted verbally, without resorting to violence
Other Carare village leaders	Leaders met after ultimatum in May 1987	Highly influential due to leadership roles	Leaders demanded village neutrality from conflict	Leaders committed publicly to nonviolence
Church leaders	During the 1980s	Highly influential on group norms due to importance of religion in area	Leaders advocated for nonviolence	Armed resistance framed as against moral principles

5.4.2. Evaluating the empirical record for evidence of nonviolent framing C₁ and nonviolent preferences Y_{1A}

First mover framing, C₁

Historical interview and secondary source data suggests that the actions of first movers framed nonviolent contention as an appropriate response to resist armed actor demands. From my review of observable implications for C₁ I find references to first mover speech acts by José Vargas, demonstrating his resolve to resist armed actor demands with nonviolent action. I also find references to Adventist Church leaders – another first mover I identify in this case – framing peaceful repertoires of contention as preferable to combat armed actors.

When José Vargas stood up to the FARC plan in 1986, he did so without resorting to violence (ATCC#1 1989; CNRR 2011, 310-311). With this experience the community learnt that it was possible to resist armed actors without the use of arms and survive. The actions of José Vargas tested the boundaries of public claim making

against armed actors and framed the contours around which future community resistance would arise.

According to interview and secondary source data, Adventist Church leaders had been playing an important role in propagating norms of nonviolence in the region during the 1980s (A112 2019; Masullo 2021, 1868). At this time, the Church had sought to educate people locally about human rights, and that they did not have to put up with torture and abuse (A112 2019). Immediately prior to the emergence of the ATCC, Church leaders also advocated for nonviolent resistance (CNRR 2011).

The hypothesis passes the hoop test. I next consider whether evidence supports the proposition that framing by nonviolent first movers led to an increase in nonviolent preferences in the community ahead of the ultimatum.

Nonviolent preferences, Y_{1A}

Overall, from my review of observable implications for Y_{1A}, I find evidence that the community developed rules requiring adherence to nonviolence after the actions of José Vargas in 1986 and rejected offers of increasing weaponry as well (A147 2019; Archive#12; ATCC#4 1988; Kaplan 2017). Evidence from historical interview data and the ATCC archives indicates that the preference for nonviolent resistance was repeated in speeches and community meetings (ATTC#1 and ATTC#2 1988; Archive#9).

As one of the leaders disclosed, “if we had an argument instead of fighting, we would discuss about it and dialogue” (A147 2019). Once the ATCC was formed, new members signed a certificate committing themselves to their rules, which includes, “setting an example through my way of life, to demonstrate my unwavering commitment to peace and nonviolence.” (Archive#12). A leader noted that this, “meant that whoever came to the organization had to abide by the same rules that we had internally. It was an internal agreement that we had to avoid others from damaging the region” (A147 2019).

It was not possible to confirm whether community speeches and meeting minutes had greater reference to commitment to norms of nonviolence after José’s stance against the FARC since the community only started recording meeting minutes in the year the ATCC was formed. However, community speeches and meeting minutes from the organization’s formation clearly indicate a strong preference for

nonviolence. Indeed, in the first meeting with the FARC to negotiate the initiation of the ATCC, José stated, “The revolutionary ethics is not to kill people. Is to make the changes that are needed to improve the living conditions of the people” (ATTCC#1 and ATTCC#2 1988). Then, in a meeting with the FARC and residents of La India, again José emphasises to applause that the ATCC is a nonviolent uprising, and “has no intent to raise in arms to create more violence” (Archive#9). At the first anniversary commemoration of the creation of the ATCC, May 22, 1988, José Vargas recalled in his speech the, “decisive act of union, to achieve, by the own decision of the campesinos, to start the pacification of the region,” in response to pressure from local armed groups (Ibid.).

From my review of the empirical record, I find no reference to an increase in weaponry after the actions of the first mover. In fact, historical interview data indicates that during the initial negotiations with the army to create the ATCC, the armed actor offered residents weapons to organize armed defence (ATCC#4 1988). The offer was rejected. The hypothesis therefore passes these three straw in the wind tests.

Interview, archival and secondary source data also confirms the hypothesized connection between first movers framing activities and the emergence of nonviolent preferences in the community. One of the first settlers in the village – Pastor Julio – who established the Church in the 1960s, was interviewed by Juan Masullo for his article, *Civilian Contention in Civil War: How Ideational Factors Shape Community Responses to Armed Groups* (2021). In his interview with Masullo, Pastor Julio claimed that he had deliberately “used” Church teachings to shape residents’ views about the use of violence (Masullo 2021, 1868). Adventist religious leaders in the territory argued that they could not use the same methods as the armed actors. Doing so would make them no better than those already doing residents harm. (Kaplan 2017, 184). The religious leaders understood the need for action but stated, “we are willing to collaborate with prayer, with any resource we can, but not with weapons.” (cited in CNRR 2011, 324). Amongst them was Father Luis Castaño, who revealed his own influence on José Vargas – the ATCC’s most influential leader, and its first president, who had studied to be a Catholic priest (A147 2020; Masullo 2021, 1868). Father Luis Castaño recollects that, “I’ve said to José many times, that they should never retaliate against anyone but look forward; that this dialogue – as it has been said many times – is part of a process and should be looked at with positivity to accomplish the goals” (Archive #14).

Thus, although the village leaders of Carare considered using violence as a response to local conflict conditions, in the end – working with local Church leaders – they opted for nonviolence and decided to create the ATCC, “for the defense of life, peace and work” (CNRR 2011, 322). Interview, archival, and secondary source data thus indicate that the stance of Church leaders was influential on community – and other first movers – preferences for nonviolent action. Therefore, the hypothesis passes the smoking gun test. I next consider evidence for alternative explanations, and their implications for the uniqueness of the empirical tests for C1 and Y1A that I have just evaluated.

Alternative explanations, A₁

The key alternative explanation is that civilians develop nonviolent preferences when other options are unavailable. Overall, from my review of observable implications for A₁, I find evidence that for the most part civilians had little experience with weaponry, faced some barriers to exit due to the territory’s accessibility, and had been victimized by all armed actors in the past. However, I also find evidence that civilians had skills that could be transferred elsewhere, and thus alternatives to the creation of the ATCC remained.

Supporting the alternative hypothesis is historical interview and secondary source data which suggests that many residents had little experience of weaponry, though at least one community leader, David, did (ATCC#4 1988; Masullo 2021, 1869). When offered weapons by the army during negotiations to create the ATCC, a leader recalls of the time that he thought, “we are just villagers, old people dedicated to cultivating fields, how could we even think of it?” (ATCC#4 1988). Years prior, the state military had also offered residents weapons and logistical support to form armed self-defence groups and fight the FARC. This offer of weaponry and support was also rejected (CNRR 2011, 320-321). Though residents of the ATCC were offered the resources – and had the networks needed – to embark on violent self-defence its future members were unwilling to use armed methods of collective resistance. The evidence suggests this was in part due to their lacking knowledge of armed defence.

Geographical barriers to exit also exist in the area. The ATCC has few roads, indicating that residents may have difficult travelling elsewhere (Kaplan 2017, 186). However, some civilians left the region after the armed actor ultimatum (Hernández

Delgado 2004b, 329). Despite the territory's relative inaccessibility exit options remained available.

Interview and secondary source data also indicate that the majority of residents were farmers and boatmen, with skills of use in many other nearby rural locations (A147 2020; CNRR 2011, 50-57). According to the first development plan created by the ATCC in 1987, maize, cassava, banana and cocoa were the main crops planted by residents, half of whom worked as farmers. Residents also had experience with livestock, rice, fruit trees, sugar cane, timber, and searching for emeralds in the river (CNRR 2011, 62). At that time forest covered 45% of zone of influence of the ATCC, and around 13% of the population had experience felling trees (Ibid., 58). The territory of the ATCC is found within the department of Santander.⁸⁶ According to the Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), 26% of the territory of the department is agricultural, 43% is grazing land for livestock (2022). Santander is surrounded by five departments: Boyacá, Norte de Santander, Antioquia, Bolívar and Cesar. In three of these departments (Norte de Santander, Boyacá and Antioquia) more than 20% of the territory is agricultural, whilst the remaining two (Cesar and Bolívar) report 13-18%. In addition, over 30% of the remaining territory of all five departments is pastureland (DANE 2022a). Thus, residents had a range of skills and experience that could be used across the vast – and nearby – rural territories of Colombia.⁸⁷

Residents of the territory of the ATCC had also experienced severe victimization from all local armed groups prior to the emergence of the peace community. Initially significant violence against civilians began at the hands of the state. State military activity had increased in the 1970s when Coronel Néstor Espitia Sotelo arrived at the region. He implemented a counter-insurgent campaign called “carnetización” which required residents to regularly check in with the military authorities. Secondary source data indicate that residents were subjected to a range of abuses – such as torture and arbitrary detentions from the army – during these meetings. (CNRR 2011, 302; Hernández Delgado 2004b, 320-321). In response, the FARC also started to use selective violence against local residents to punish army collaborators, even if cooperation was forced (CNRR 2011, 303; Hernández Delgado

⁸⁶ Departments are the highest administrative order in Colombia. There are 31 in Colombia.

⁸⁷ Rural land accounts for over half of the territory of Colombia (World Bank 2022b).

2004b, 323-325). Over time, this led to a dispute between the FARC and the army, leading to further violence. As noted in the *Antecedents to the ATCC* document in the community archive, “they wouldn’t hurt each other. They would only calm their fury against those who couldn’t defend themselves” (cited in CNRR 2011, 303). Later these issues lessened, and people become used to coexisting with the army and the FARC; as one leader described, “it was necessary to trick one or the other to live.” (ATCC#4 1988) An escalation of violence ensued in 1983 when paramilitary groups entered the region. The same leader describes how, “they came to murder people that for one reason or the other had links with the guerrilla. At the same time, the guerrilla started accusing a lot of people of helping the paramilitaries enter the territory... there was a point when you could no longer know who was killing more if the guerrilla or the paramilitaries.” (Ibid.) Thus, by the time the ATCC was initiated its residents had suffered at the hands of all local armed actors and so were unwilling to collaborate with any side (CNRR 2011, 322).

Overall, my review of the empirical record indicates that civilians had other options available to them when they created the ATCC, an outcome that strengthens confidence in the hypothesis for C1 and Y1A. The alternative hypothesis does not pass the hoop test. As a result, I update the confidence that I can place on the tests of first mover framing C1 and nonviolent preferences Y1A (since the key alternative explanation that I identify for each is that civilians have no other alternative options available to them). The hypothesis for C1 passes the double decisive test and the hypothesis for Y1A passes a smoking gun test. I summarise the analysis for this part of the mechanism in table 5.7.

Next, I consider evidence that population sorting led to an increase in mobilizational capacity in the community ahead of the ultimatum.

Table 5.7. Results of empirical tests of C1, Y1A and A1

	Empirical tests	Result	Implications for validity
Nonviolent framing, C1	2 Double decisive	Pass	Increase confidence
Nonviolent preferences, Y1A	2 Smoking gun 1 Straw in the wind 1 Smoking gun	Pass Pass Fail	Significantly increase confidence
Alternative explanation, A1 <i>No other options available</i>	3 Hoop 1 Hoop	Pass Fail	Reduce confidence in alternative hypothesis
Conclusion			Confidence is increased for this part of the mechanism

5.4.3. Evaluating the empirical record for evidence of population sorting C₂ and mobilizational capacity Y_{1B}

Sorting, C₂

Overall, from my review of observable implications for C₂ I find evidence for population sorting in the territory of the ATCC after the actions of nonviolent first movers. Some civilians fled, some civilians joined one armed actor or another, and some civilians remained. However, rather than population sorting being triggered by the actions of first movers the mechanism appears to have been triggered by local conflict violence unrelated to first movers instead.

In response to José Vargas public stance against the FARC, historical interview and secondary source data indicate that the guerrilla responded not with vengeance – as expected by the theory – but with conciliation (CNRR 2011, 310-311, ATCC#1 1989). The FARC abandoned the plan to divide up the residents’ land and Vargas achieved a victory from his act of nonviolent resistance. Yet soon after, conflict erupted again between the armed actors, with civilians experiencing the brunt of violence (CNRR 2011, 310-311). Intensifying violence led civilians to consider their options.

One interviewee disclosed that, “the least risky option is to displace. But that implies leaving everything behind and going somewhere else to start life again. Or the least risky option is to ally with an armed group. So, this one is a risky option, but it allows people to stay.” (A112 2019). In recounting a discussion with the army in the lead up to the ultimatum, a village leader recounted that, “we have had many people

leave... some others were only waiting to be killed.” (ATCC#4). Another leader recalled that, “a lot of people ran away from the land... sold their properties and got out of the region” (A147 2020). In the period following the ultimatum, more population sorting occurred. Some residents were reported to have joined one armed actor or another, and others still displaced (Hernández Delgado 2004b, 329). Many more residents stayed.

Archival, historical and fieldwork interview data also suggests that there was mass movement *both in and out* of the territory over many decades before José Vargas took his first stand. The 1940s saw mass immigration into the area by settlers from all over Colombia as government projects promoted development in the territory (CNRR 2011, 41). Then, the latter period of civil war known as *La Violencia* from 1948 to 1958 saw the beginnings of displacement. As one interviewee states, “...people have been trying all sorts of things since the 1950s. They have been trying to displace, to stay, to use arms, to use non-violence.” (A112 2019). Further cycles of violence affected the territory between 1970 and 1982, as the Army led a counterinsurgency effort involving mass arrests, curfews, and torture (CNRR 2011, 18). Then from 1983, violence surged with the arrival of the paramilitaries (ATTC#1 and ATTC#2 1988). Many “central” families in the territory – whom were the first to colonize the territory of the ATCC in the 1940s and 1950s, bringing with them relatives and friends – were reportedly displaced after the paramilitaries arrived, whilst many traditional leaders and male heads of households were also murdered (CNRR 2011, 48-49, 55). In 1984, around 700 people reportedly displaced following the torture of nine residents by the FARC and the paramilitaries (Ibid, 317). With each phase of the conflict, some civilians stayed, some residents remained, others joined one armed group or another, and others still moved into the territory.

Interview data with one of the founders indicates that prior to the mid-1980s, recruitment of residents into the FARC was strong. It was mandatory for every family had to have one of its members join; “you could actually say that we were part of the guerrilla group” (A147 2019). Later, some FARC members joined the paramilitary, leading many residents to have relatives in both armed groups (Ibid.). A likely outcome of residents having family members in local armed groups is a reluctance to initiate a new armed group to fight – rather than join – their already armed relatives.

In Colombia, insurgent groups had formed in the 1960s and counterinsurgent groups in the late 1970s, yet data from Colombian NGO Consultancy for Human

Rights and Displacement (CODHES) suggests that displacement in the country increased from 1986 onwards (Steele 2017, 120). Though the Catholic Church started recording displacement from the mid-1980s onwards, the state only officially recognised displacement as an issue with the introduction of Law 387 in 1997, long after the emergence of the ATCC (Steele 2017, 114).⁸⁸ Churches – present in the territory of the ATCC from the 1960s – had long advocated nonviolence (Masullo 2021, 1868). Thus, the greater volume of population sorting that took place in the year immediately prior to the emergence of the ATCC likely selected for those with a preference for nonviolent responses to conflict violence.⁸⁹ The hypothesis therefore passed two straw in the wind tests and one hoop test. As these tests rely on evidence that has low uniqueness, individually these tests do little to update confidence in the validity of the hypothesis. However, as I find independent evidence for each of these three tests, together this evidence does increase confidence in the hypothesis for this part of the mechanism (Beach and Pedersen 2013).

Finally, from my review of the empirical record, I did not find evidence to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesized connection between first mover action and selection bias for nonviolent resistance in the population that remains. The hypothesis does not pass this smoking gun test. I next consider whether the evidence supports the proposition that population sorting led to an increase in mobilizational capacity in the community ahead of the ultimatum.

Mobilizational capacity, Y_{1B}

From my review of observable implications for Y_{1B} I find evidence for an increase in mobilizational capacity after the actions of the first movers.

Community meetings increased across the territory and the ATCC developed new ties with NGOs after the actions of the first movers. Meetings between village leaders in the region had been frequent in the year prior to the emergence to the ATCC, though historical interview data suggests this was in large part due to the

⁸⁸ Law 387 outlines guidance for reparations and restitutions for the displaced, as well as emergency assistance (Steele 2017, 114). The Catholic Church has not made their data public. Data is aggregate to Colombia, rather than available at the municipality level.

⁸⁹ Once the peace community was formed, the sorting mechanism appears to have continued (Kaplan 2017, 194-195). As one interviewee from my fieldwork commented, “many people come and go out of those communities. That is part of having a social fabric that allows them to mobilize. So, they abandon the community 6 months and then they come back, maybe they come back with more family members, so those kinds of things change a lot.” (A171 2019).

intensifying victimization of residents from all conflict actors (ATCC#4; CNRR 2011; Kaplan 2017). In the weeks after the ATCC was formed, regular community meetings were held to discuss mechanisms and coordinated strategies to implement when an armed actor arrived (CNRR 2011; Kaplan 2017).

The ATCC also developed new ties with NGOS after the actions of the first mover. External actors such as the International Red Cross, The Magdalena Peace and Development Program Medio and the United Nations Development Programme offered support from 1992, five years after the group had been set up (A147 2020; CNRR 2011, 410). The hypothesis therefore passes two straw in the wind tests.

Interview data from secondary sources also confirms the hypothesized connection between the first movers and increased mobilizational capacity in the population that remained. The influential leader José Vargas is considered an icon of resistance by residents. By not submitting to the will of the FARC, he is reported to have inspired others to do the same. (CNRR 2011, 311). The hypothesis therefore passes the smoking gun test. As a farmer recollects of the time,

“Well, they didn’t take any land from me because I rebelled. And actually, they didn’t take land from anyone because we all rebelled. That is when it all started... We had accepted deaths, we had accepted violations, we had accepted many things but when they messed with our pockets (money), with our land, we couldn’t take it anymore.” (2010, cited in Ibid.)

Alternative explanations, A₂

Next, I consider evidence for alternative explanations. From my review of observable implications for A₂ I did not find evidence that NGOs had provided external assistance for the initiation of the peace community. The community did not initially receive external support to form a peace community, though a number of NGOs did so after the ATCC was established (A147 2020; ATCC#4 1988).

Evidence for the involvement of NGOs at the initiation of the peace community had to be found in the case for the alternative hypothesis to hold. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis of NGO support at initiation does not pass the double decisive test.

I find some evidence that the community lacks resources and state presence. Data from the community archives and secondary sources identifies problems for

residents obtaining basic state services and transportation out of the area (Archive#13; CNRR 2011, 48). More generally, the capacity of the state to provide protection and services is considered highly variable across Colombia (A173 2019). Therefore, the needs-based alternative hypothesis for the development of mobilizational capacity does pass the hoop test and is not disconfirmed for this part of the mechanism.

Overall, I find some evidence that supports the validity of population sorting leading to increased mobilizational capacity after the first mover. I find independent evidence for three tests of population sorting C2, which also increases confidence in the hypothesis for this part of the mechanism. I also find evidence for two straw in the wind tests and one smoking gun test of mobilizational capacity Y1B, which significantly increases confidence in the validity of this part of the mechanism. Since evidence was not found for the alternative hypothesis of NGO support, and the test for the needs-based alternative hypothesis relies on low uniqueness, the validity of the hypothesis for this part of the mechanism is also increased. I summarise the analysis for this part of the mechanism in table 5.8.

Table 5.8. Results of empirical tests of C2, Y1B and A2

	Empirical tests	Result	Implications for validity
Sorting, C2	2 Straw in the wind 1 Hoop test 1 Smoking gun	Pass Pass Fail	Increase confidence, independent evidence found for each test
Mobilizational capacity, Y1B	1 Straw in the wind 1 smoking gun 3 Straw in the wind	Pass Pass Fail	Significantly increase confidence
Alternative explanations, A2 <i>Lack of resources / state</i> <i>NGO support</i>	Hoop Double decisive	Pass Fail	No update to confidence of alternative hypothesis of lack of resources / state Reduce confidence in alternative hypothesis of NGO support
Conclusion			Confidence is increased for this part of the mechanism

5.5. Conclusion for chapter

In this chapter I have assessed the certainty and uniqueness of the expected observable implications of my hypothesis and its alternatives in the case of the ATCC in Colombia; honing in on the processes that lead conflict-affected civilians to initiate a peace community – rather than flee, align with one armed actor or another, or violently resist. To do so, I draw on archival, secondary source, historical and fieldwork interview data to test the theory that influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence increase the likelihood that civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities when faced with intensifying threats and violence where they live. The hypothesis passed either a smoking gun or double decisive test for three parts of the mechanism: first mover framing C1, nonviolent preferences Y1A and mobilizational capacity Y1B.⁹⁰ The fourth part of the mechanism – population sorting C2 – passed two straw in the wind tests and one hoop test. Although individually these tests do little to update confidence in the validity of the hypothesis – as they rely on low uniqueness – I found independent evidence for each test, which cumulatively does increase confidence that this part of the mechanism was also present and functioned as expected. I therefore conclude that each part of the mechanism was present and functioned as expected in the case of the ATCC. First movers increased nonviolent preferences in the territory of the ATCC and their actions enhanced the community’s mobilizational capacity over time, in part due to population sorting.

This single study can only update our confidence in the presence of the mechanism in this particular case. However, one can determine membership of other cases within the set by using the qualitative threshold for nonviolent first movers, the scope conditions of the theory that I expand upon in chapter 2, and the case selection criteria I used to choose the case of the ATCC. The results may therefore be generalized to explain how other civilians developed the capacity they need to form peace communities: in territories with at least one nonviolent first mover present, in locations without the presence of NGOs, and in contexts of intensifying violence against civilians by certain armed actor types.⁹¹ The results of this chapter thus have

⁹⁰ Refer to appendix 9 for a detailed analysis of each piece of evidence.

⁹¹ Refer to chapter 2, section 2.3.2. for a detailed discussion of how local armed actors, including the state, might help or hinder peace communities depending on their objectives, beliefs, structure, and connections to local civilian groups.

important implications for NGOs and other external actors who seek to offer vulnerable communities support. In territories where nonviolent first movers possess influence civilians may have a greater aptitude to form peace communities despite significant risks.

This case study has focused on a peace community which emerged without the initial support of NGOs, yet analysis of the dataset I constructed for this thesis reveals that 25% of peace communities emerge whilst enjoying at least one form of NGO support. What are the effects of this support on the likelihood of peace community success? Does NGO support help or hinder peace communities? More generally, are peace communities an effective strategy for reducing local violence? I examine these and other questions in the chapter that follows.

Chapter 6: Peace community success and NGO support

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I find that influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence increase the likelihood that civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities when faced with collective threats of violence where they live. In this chapter, I turn my attention to evaluating the success of peace communities that do emerge. In particular, I investigate how different patterns of NGO support may help or hinder peace communities in achieving their primary stated goal; namely reducing local conflict-related violence in the territories in which they live. In the pages that follow I ask and then answer the final research question of the thesis: Under *what conditions do peace communities attain success?* To do so, I test the argument that consistent NGO support is key to the effectiveness of peace communities in reducing local conflict-related violence. Overall, the empirical evidence in this chapter does not support the argument. As I discuss later in this chapter, a possible explanation for this preliminary thesis finding may be that the analysis picks up violent backlash by armed actors against the formation of peace communities, which I anticipate in my theory of peace community emergence in chapter 4.

The case of the Communities of Self-determination, Life and Dignity from Cacarica (CAVIDA) illuminates how peace communities may benefit from consistent NGO support under certain conditions. CAVIDA is an association of villages which initiated ten humanitarian zones in the municipality of Riosucio between 1999 and 2001 (PBI Colombia 2017).⁹² Their members were civilians that had been displaced in 1997 during a military and paramilitary operation known as “Operation Genesis” (PBI Colombia 2014). CAVIDA was originally formed by the displaced population as means by which to organize their phased return to Riosucio. Each phase of the return was accompanied by NGOs, such as Peace Brigades International (PBI) Colombia, and each village formed their own humanitarian zone on their return. From 1999 to 2011, PBI Colombia continued to accompany CAVIDA with a constant physical presence across the villages of the association. This consistent support appears to have had a deterrent effect against local violence. Whilst threats of and actual violence

⁹² Many humanitarian zones meet my definition of a peace community. Humanitarian zones were set up in the 1990s in Colombia as means of distinguishing territories where civilians are located (PASC 2006).

by paramilitaries continued when civilians first returned to their territory, over the next five years local violent events diminished, with nil recorded in 2006. As one member of CAVIDA recalls of the impact of PBI Colombia's support to the community, "threats reduced with this international presence and there were no more killings" (PBI Colombia 2017). Over the longer term, consistent NGO support appears to have had a protective effect in this case.

Yet some peace communities appear to fare worse when support from NGOs is inconsistent. The Community of Life and Work of Balsita de Dabeiba (CLWBD) was set up in 1999 by a population of civilians that had been forcibly displaced by paramilitaries only two years earlier, as was the case for CAVIDA as well (Amnesty International 2000). Yet, unlike CAVIDA, the CLWBD was set up as a humanitarian zone by the civilians themselves, without NGO support. Over the 23 years that have followed, several NGOs – PBI Colombia, the Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz (CIJP), and Amnesty International – publicised the fate and objectives of the community intermittently (e.g. Amnesty International 2000; CIJP 2020; Ortiz 2014). Yet, this publicity appears to be a reaction to its lack of success: almost 400 violent events were documented locally in the five years following the community's formation as both the FARC and paramilitaries accused its members of supporting the other side (Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution 2012). Though there are many similarities between the background of the peace communities of CAVIDA and CLWBD, the latter was less effective in achieving its aims.

In this chapter I test the argument that the ability of peace communities to reduce local conflict-related violence is mitigated by whether NGO support is consistent or inconsistent. To do so, I estimate a negative binomial regression on data in Colombia, combining my peace communities dataset with data from the 1993 Colombian census, the Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Observatory (HRIHLO), and the Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE) (Steel 2018). I test the argument in a sample of 8,298 observations of municipality-years over eight years (1998-2006). I expected to find that conflict-related violence would be lower in municipalities where peace communities that enjoy consistent NGO support are present compared to those with no peace communities, but what I find is that conflict-related violence is greater in municipalities with peace communities compared to those without them, regardless of the consistency of NGO

support. Given the data limitations that I later set out in this chapter, this part of the argument is difficult to test, but preliminary results are not supportive.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows. Firstly, I outline the theory of how the consistency of NGO support may be linked to local violence reduction. Next, I describe the research design and the dependent and independent variables. I present the results, and then discuss robustness checks and potential selection effects. I conclude with implications of the results for the thesis and suggest fruitful avenues of future research.

6.2. Theory

In this chapter, I argue that whether or not peace communities achieve the primary goal they set for themselves can be partially explained by the consistency of NGO support to the community over its lifetime. As further described in section 2.2.3. of chapter 2, peace communities benefit from external support through several mechanisms: (1) deterring local violence against civilians by increasing costs to armed actors; (2) opening up prospects for discussion and dialogue between communities and armed actors; and (3) improving the local nonviolent capacity of civilian groups (cf. Furnari, Bliesemann de Guevara and Julian 2021; Bob 2005; Jo and Thomson 2014; Jo 2015; Zartman 1995). These differing constellations of assistance have important implications for local conflict dynamics. In particular, I expect that peace communities that enjoy consistent support from NGOs are more likely to attain success. I suggest that consistency increases the likelihood of peace community success through three main pathways.

Firstly, a key outcome of consistent NGO support is that it can alter armed actor expectations – as individuals and as a group – about the long term costs of attacking the community. Many forms of NGO support to peace communities – such as accompaniment or publicity – can act as a deterrent against local violence (cf. *Ibid*). For example, armed actors risk their reputation as a group if their recruits attack accompanied communities, since in doing so they may accidentally harm international outsiders, which can have serious implications for their political legitimacy on the international stage (cf. Talmon 2011). Individual members of armed groups may also be less willing to use lethal force against civilians when NGO support is consistent,

due to the constant risk of their being made identified, made accountable, and prosecuted under the Geneva Convention (cf. DeMeritt 2015). When NGO support to a peace community endures, armed groups may benefit from moving their troops elsewhere, where external scrutiny is lesser.

Secondly, consistent NGO support is likely to engender confidence in peace community members, thereby also increasing the prospects for the sustained and mass participation of its population, which tends to be critical to the success of collective action (cf. Chenoweth and Stephen 2011, 39). When civilians participate in collective action in large numbers, armed actors expect greater costs from ignoring their demands. Indeed, the literature on peace communities emphasizes the importance of unified and mass participation to their survival (Allouche and Jackson 2019; Anderson and Wallace 2013; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Sta. Maria 2000; Mitchell and Hancock 2007). The consistent involvement of NGOs may lead community members to anticipate greater participation from others in the community, which in turn reduces the risks to each individual of participation whilst increasing the costs of nonparticipation – such as to reputation. The consistent involvement of NGOs may also connect communities to fresh insights on what does and does not work from the organizations' experiences with other peace communities, further enhancing local nonviolent capacity, and leading individuals to estimate greater prospects for future success.

Steadfast support may also signal stability in the community's commitments to nonviolence and neutrality, which can be crucial to convincing armed actors that peace communities are not secretly aiding or abetting one fighting side (cf. Kaplan 2017). Institutionalisation of peace community rules offers one means by which members can signal stability to local armed actors in their commitments. However, attracting the consistent support of a reputable third party is an alternative. When armed actors believe that civilians consistently treat all armed actors the same, peace community participants are less likely to attract suspicion and subsequent targeting for perceived disloyalty, thereby reducing the risk of local violence. This discussion leads to the following hypothesis.

H3: *Peace communities' ability to reduce local conflict-related violence is mitigated by whether NGO support is consistent or inconsistent: When NGO support is consistent, peace communities are more likely to reduce conflict-related violence. When NGO support is inconsistent, peace communities are less likely to reduce conflict-related violence.*

6.3. Research design

As is the case for chapter 4, I test the argument in a sample of 8,298 observations of municipality-years in Colombia over eight years (1998-2006). Similarly to the first empirical chapter, I combine the new dataset of peace communities that I developed with municipality-year panel data from the HRIHLO, the Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE), and the 1993 census. In the remainder of this section I describe the country selection for subnational analysis, the unit of analysis, operationalisation of dependent and independent variables, and the rationale for the choice of regression. I then describe the data that I include in the models.

6.3.1. Country selection: Colombia

The large majority of peace communities in my new cross-national dataset were identified in Colombia.⁹³ Thus, given data availability, Colombia offers the best opportunity for subnational analysis. Moreover, several NGOs, such as CINEP (Center for Research and Popular Education Program for Peace) and Redepaz (National Network of Initiatives for Peace and Against War) promoted and campaigned for the development of peace communities in different times and places in Colombia under the period of analysis. As a result, some peace communities enjoyed the support of NGOs at different points in their life cycles, whilst others did not. Furthermore, the publicity and documentation that NGOs maintained of their assistance of peace communities during the period studied results in rich empirical data from which to construct the independent variable for this chapter's analysis.

⁹³ As detailed further in chapter 3, I also conducted searches in nine other countries, and found peace communities in four further countries. Data is therefore available for further subnational testing beyond Colombia, though this was not possible within the constraints of a single doctoral dissertation.

6.3.2. Unit of analysis

As in chapter 4, I test the argument in a sample of 8,298 observations of municipality-years in Colombia over eight years (1998-2006).⁹⁴ The lowest level of disaggregation for which there is data available in Colombia is the municipality. Therefore, a municipality-year unit of analysis is the best design given data availability. Consistent with chapter 4, I combine my peace communities dataset with municipality-year panel data from the HRIHLO, the CEDE, and the 1993 census (Steele 2018).⁹⁵

6.3.3. The independent variable

The independent variable in this chapter is the presence of at least one peace community in a municipality that enjoys consistent support from NGOs. As I have elaborated in further detail in section 2.2.3. of chapter 2, there are five core attributes of peace communities that I consider necessary for conceptual membership. Peace communities involve the (i) community-based mobilization of civilians where they live (ii) in the midst of war; that involves the (ii) sustained and organized coordination of civilians engaged in (iv) nonviolent activities. Activities are (v) purposively aimed at ending or preventing conflict locally, but which may involve aspirations beyond the local village or municipality. While peace communities constitute groups of civilians, many are indirectly or directly affiliated with NGOs, who often help to publicize their plight. For example, Redepaz has direct ties to tens of peace communities as a result of their campaign for “100 peace communities” (Alther 2006). However, other peace communities, such as the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare (ATCC) in Colombia are formed exclusively by civilians themselves, and only attracted the support of NGOs later on (Kaplan 2017). Support that NGOs offer peace communities include accompaniment, funding, mediation, training, and guidance.⁹⁶

The independent variable is a binary variable, which is equal to 1 if at least one peace community is present in a municipality in a year, that enjoys consistent support from NGOs – both during their initiation, and then later on in their lifetimes as well. I construct this variable from the dataset I developed, in which I record the initiation,

⁹⁴ I obtain data for my analysis from Steele (2018)'s article *IDP resettlement and collective targeting during civil wars: Evidence from Colombia*.

⁹⁵ The 1993 census is the last census undertaken prior to the period under analysis.

⁹⁶ I examine the distribution of these support types by peace community in the cross-national data in chapter 3.

termination, and location of peace communities at the municipality level, as well as whether and when communities are supported.⁹⁷

To construct the independent variable, I rely on two variables in the dataset. The first records whether the peace community receives NGO support in the first 12 months following its initiation. The second documents whether the peace community receives NGO support from the year after its start date. When a peace community receives NGO support in both phases, I code the independent variable as 1, otherwise the variable is coded 0. Approximately 36% of the peace communities in the dataset I developed enjoyed consistent support, whilst the remainder of the sample is split between peace communities that enjoyed inconsistent support, or no support at all. Peace communities with inconsistent support are those that either receive support in the first year following their initiation, or only in the time following this. Peace communities that I identify with no support at all, are those for which NGO support is not referenced in any of the documents I reviewed for this peace community.⁹⁸ Table 6.1. summarises the breakdown of patterns of support across the sample.⁹⁹

Table 6.1. Summary of NGO support to peace communities in Colombia

	Number of observations	Percentage of sample
Peace community, consistent support	22	35.5%
Peace community, no support	25	40.3%
Peace community, inconsistent support	15	24.2%
Total number of peace communities	62	

In Table 6.2, I present a descriptive summary of the success of peace communities, by municipality, and support pattern. To assess success by municipality, I compare the average number of violent events in the municipality in the years prior to the presence of at least one peace community, to the average number of violent events in the municipality in the years where at least one peace community is present.

⁹⁷ For each peace community in the dataset I developed, I record the DANE municipality code, which enables mapping to HRIHLO, CEDE and 1993 census data.

⁹⁸ As further discussed in chapter 3, I rely on academic literature, NGO and INGO reports and news sources to construct the variables in the dataset.

⁹⁹ These variables are constructed from a detailed review of all sources identified for each observation in the dataset. Further variables record the type of support provided. Refer to my codebook in appendix 1 for further detail.

For these descriptive statistics, success is defined as when the average number of conflict-related violent events is lower in the period in which at least one peace community is present, compared to a prior period in which there are no peace communities present, between 1998 and 2006. I define failure as when the average number of conflict-related violent events is higher in the period in which at least one peace community is present, compared to a prior period in which there are no peace communities present.

Table 6.2. The consistency of NGO support and success by municipality

	Success	Failure	Unable to assess	Total number of municipalities
Presence of peace community with consistent NGO support				
Number of municipalities	1	0	4	5
Percentage	100.0%	0.0%		
Presence of peace community with inconsistent NGO support				
Number of municipalities	2	4	17	23
Percentage	33.3%	66.7%		
Presence of peace community with no NGO support				
Number of municipalities	10	2	3	15
Percentage	83.3%	16.7%		
Total	13	6	24	43

There are 43 municipalities with peace communities present between 1998 and 2006. Of these, there is data on violence before and after the emergence of at least one peace community in 19 municipalities. For the remaining 24 municipalities, there is no data on violence before the emergence of at least one peace community, as at least one peace community was present in the municipality in 1998. It is therefore not possible to assess whether violence is greater or lower on average with the presence of peace communities in these municipalities.

While the one municipality with a peace community with consistent support saw a reduction in conflict-related violence after its emergence, ten of the 12 municipalities

with peace communities without any support also saw conflict-related violence reduce on average. In addition, of the six municipalities with peace communities with inconsistent support, four saw conflict-related violence increase on average after the emergence of peace communities.

I test the conditional hypothesis of this chapter by splitting the sample of peace communities rather than using an interaction term due to data constraints. Subnational data is not available on the support that NGOs offered all villages and municipalities in Colombia over the period under analysis. Instead, I only have data on the timing and types of support that NGOs provide to villages and municipalities that initiated peace communities. As a result, the only means by which I can test the conditional hypothesis, within the constraints of data availability, is to split the sample. In the model, I also include an indicator for peace communities with no support, and another indicator for peace communities with inconsistent support.

I summarise the independent variable in table 6.3. Refer to appendix 10 for summary statistics of the independent and dependent variables. I next describe the control variables in the model.

Table 6.3. Summary of independent variable

Independent variable	Direction of relationship	Theoretical justification	Data and operationalisation
Peace community with consistent support	Negative	Consistent support increases costs to armed actors from violence over longer time horizon	Binary indicator for the presence of at least one peace community, with evidence of consistent NGO support (in both phases) (Source: Peace communities dataset)

6.3.4. Defining the dependent variable: the success of peace communities

The dependent variable is local conflict-related violence. By definition, peace communities are initiated with the objective of creating local peace, expelling conflict parties from their territories, and reducing local levels of conflict-related violence. Empirical examination of the effects of peace communities on local conflict-related violence will thus offer insight into whether peace communities achieve the primary goal they set for themselves. Doing so also offers the opportunity to build upon the work of Kaplan (2017), who empirically examined the effects of local community

councils on outcomes of violence against civilians in Colombia, with his key finding that social organization and cohesion can reduce wartime victimization of civilians.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, I expect that under certain conditions, peace communities can be effective at reducing conflict-related violence.

This approach follows similar measurement strategies by scholars of armed and civil resistance concerned with assessing the failure or success of armed and unarmed movements, groups, and campaigns. In the civil resistance literature, success is typically evaluated with reference to whether or not groups, movements, or campaigns achieve their primary aims. For example, in their examination of 323 violent and nonviolent resistance campaigns – “a series of observable, continual tactics in pursuit of a political objective” – between 1900 and 2006, Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephen evaluate success in terms of whether or not the campaigns achieved their stated goals as a direct outcome of their activities (Ackermann and Kruegler 1994, 10-11; Chenoweth and Stephen 2011).¹⁰¹ Similarly, in his assessment of national movement success, Peter Krause conceptualises campaign outcomes on a scale of “total success” for the achievement of a new state, “moderate success” as gaining control of a territory or institutions, “limited success” as the movement’s recognition as a legitimate actor, and “failure” as a lack of any territory, recognition, or institutions (2013, 78). Measurement of success in his study derives from the classification of nationalist movements, namely that by definition they seek to gain international legitimacy as would-be rulers, and to gain sovereign control of a new state or some territory. By contrast, peace communities are chiefly concerned with pacifying conflict-related violence in the territories in which their members live. By the same logic, I thus measure success as the extent to which peace communities achieve their stated goal of reducing local conflict-related violence.

6.3.5. Measuring the dependent variable: local conflict-related violence

To test the argument, I measure the dependent variable with a count of the number of violent events attributed to the FARC or paramilitaries in that municipality in that year,

¹⁰⁰ The dependent variable in Kaplan’s analysis is civilian victimization, whilst the dependent variable in this chapter is conflict-related violence. Though different measures, both studies are concerned with the effect of social organisation on wartime violence.

¹⁰¹ In their study, the authors select campaigns which would fundamentally change the political order. They identify these as regime change, anti-occupation or secession.

using data from the HRIHLO in the office of the Colombian vice presidency (Steele 2018). Data is collected from the Colombian security agency, the police, and human rights organizations. A count variable is appropriate since I expect that the number of violent events will decrease in municipalities that contain peace communities with consistent NGO support.

Though there are other armed actors to the Colombian conflict, the FARC and the paramilitaries are the largest and most prominent of those active during the period under study. The National Liberation Army (ELN) was also active between 1998 and 2006; however, its numbers are estimated to range between 1,500 and 3,000 troops. To give a sense of scale, their troops approximate only 7.5-15% of the FARCs estimated 21,000 recruits (Norman 2018). There were also a number of other small groups such as the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), however their scale was also rather dwarfed by the FARC's presence in about 70% of Colombia's municipalities (Norman 2018).¹⁰² By the 1990s, the paramilitaries also had powerful fronts across Colombia (Romero 2003). I thus operationalise the dependent variable as the number of violent events attributed to the FARC or paramilitaries in each year in each municipality in Colombia.

The dependent variable is measured at the municipality level; however the territorial boundaries of municipalities and peace communities typically do not coincide. Indeed, in the dataset, I find that 13% of observations in Colombia span two or more municipalities. Municipalities also tend to comprise 36-66 villages, yet just over half the peace communities in the sample are single villages. The research design is thus a tough test of the theory.

Massacres offer an alternative operationalisation of the dependent variable. However, as massacres are relatively rare I suggest that a count of violent events is preferable. Over the period under analysis, there were an average of 0.125 massacres per municipality per year compared to an average of 8.95 violent events per municipality per year. Each municipality experiences less than 1 massacre per year on average, thus detecting the effect of peace communities on massacres is much more challenging than detecting their effect on all violent events attributed to the FARC and paramilitaries. In addition, though peace communities tend to emerge in response

¹⁰² The Popular Liberation Army (EPL), formed in 1967, and the 19th April Movement (M-19) formed in 1970, demobilized and become political parties in 1991 (Offstein 2003; Boudon 2001).

to collective threats of violence, as shown in chapter 4, the primary objective of peace communities is not to prevent collective violence in particular, but rather to eliminate all conflict actors and all types of conflict-related violence from their territory. For this reason, I suggest that the most appropriate measure of the dependent variable is the reduction of conflict-related violence of all kinds, rather than one particular type.¹⁰³

Alternative sources of data for conflict-related violence include the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset, which count incidences of one-sided violence against civilians and civilian deaths, from a range of media sources (Croicu and Sundberg 2016). However, a known issue with datasets derived from media reports is that they tend to overreport violent events (Weidmann 2015). Since data for my measure of violent events is collected from multiple within-country sources – the Colombian security agency, the police, and human rights organizations – the measurement error in the dependent variable is likely to be reduced due to an improvement in the accuracy and completeness of the data (Steel 2018).

6.3.6. The model: a negative binomial regression

As the dependent variable is continuous, a negative binomial regression is an appropriate tool to answer the research question of this chapter (Orme and Combs-Orme 2009). Negative binomial regressions estimate the count of events, in this case the number of violent attacks by the FARC and paramilitaries, where the dependent variable is over-dispersed compared to the assumptions of the Poisson distribution. Both negative binomial and Poisson models account for the possibility of contagion between violent events; that is that different events may be related to one another (Ibid.). This is important given that one violent event might influence another, as a series of separately counted events may form part of the same violent campaign. However, the key difference between the two models is that the negative binomial includes an additional parameter to account for overdispersion. Data is over-dispersed when the variance of the data is high, meaning that the variance of the data is greater than the mean.

To test for overdispersion, I compare the log-likelihood ratios of a negative binomial regression to the restriction of a Poisson restriction, that the variance is equal to the mean of the dependent variable. I reject the null of the Poisson restriction in

¹⁰³ I use massacres as an alternative dependent variable in the robustness tests in this chapter.

favour of the negative binomial regression because the test statistic 263,393 exceeds the 95% level of significance of 2.7055, with a p value of 2.2e-16. I therefore conclude that the Poisson is a poor fit of the data compared to the negative binomial model.

As the data on violence is municipality wide, and so covers a substantially large area beyond the boundaries of peace communities, this design is a tough test of the theory. Municipalities typically comprise 36-66 villages, whilst just over half the peace communities in the Colombia sample are single villages. By implication, a logistic regression would not be an appropriate test of the hypothesis in this chapter, since the occurrence of a single violent event in a municipality may be captured far from the territory of the peace community. A more appropriate method to test the success of peace communities reducing the number of violent events in the municipalities they are present in.

6.3.7. Limitations of the research design

There are at least two limitations of the measurement strategy of the dependent variable. Firstly, peace communities are rarely singularly motivated and might also concurrently highlight other issues such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, and crime. For example, as well as aiming to reducing physical violence against its members, the Asociación Campesina del Valle del Rio Cimitarra (ACVC) in the Magdalena Medio region of Colombia was also founded to protect the environment from excessive exploitation, and its members sought agrarian reform (Lefebvre 2017). Similarly, the Resguardo de San Andrés was also founded to protect indigenous culture in the Colombian Department of Cauca (Hernández Delgado 2006). Peace communities are thus often impelled by multiple issues, though what connects these disparate groups by definition is the shared principal organising objective of ending or preventing local conflict-related violence. Therefore, though not perfect, the measure does permit comparative assessment of an outcome valued by all groups.

A further potential concern is that the results of this study are driven by selection effects, since it is likely that peace communities that attract less violence are those that are accessible to researchers, and thus are more easily identified with the search procedures for the dataset I developed. Other would-be peace communities that are destroyed at their foundation would never make it into this thesis project, and I acknowledge this limitation. This project *does not* measure the success of peace

communities relative to those that fail at the first hurdle. Instead, the project can explain the relative efficacy of peace communities that have sufficient networks to academics or other external actors that can publicise their plight.

There is at least one further limitation of the research design. There is some evidence that nongovernmental organizations, such as Amnesty International, select those they advocate for intentionally (Stroup and Wong 2017). Similarly, there is also a possibility that NGOs do not pick peace communities to support at random, but rather may choose to support those peace communities that have a greater chance of success (cf. Jackson 2019; Stroup and Wong 2017). As a result, it is possible that selection effects could drive the results of the analysis in this chapter. This possible alternative explanation occurred to me during the write up phase of the thesis. I thus conduct some preliminary investigations into this alternative explanation in section 6.4.3. Next, I discuss the controls in the model.

6.3.8. Control variables

6.3.8.1. Geographic remoteness

The first control variable is the geographic remoteness of the municipality. Strong social ties and reciprocity amongst conflict-affected civilians tend to be greater when the option to leave the community is more challenging (cf. Humphreys and Weinstein 2006). Peace communities should therefore be more successful at achieving their goals in relatively remote locations, as the civilians that live in these territories are likely to have had to develop the capacity to work together in order to survive.¹⁰⁴ Alternatively, remoteness may make the actions of armed actors less visible, leading to their being less fearful of facing accountability for their actions, and thereby increasing violence in these locations (cf. DeMeritt 2015). Remoteness may be a consequence of mountainous terrain, inadequate transport infrastructure or geographic isolation.

As in chapter 4, I operationalise geographic remoteness with three variables, drawing data from the CEDE, a development economics institute based at the Universidad de los Andes. These are (i) the distance in km of the municipality centre

¹⁰⁴ NGOs may struggle to access more remote communities, which may mitigate the substantive value of this effect.

to the nearest departmental capital; (ii) average elevation in km; and (iii) the total length of paved roads in km in 1995.

6.3.8.2. Poverty

The next two control variables capture local measures of poverty. Without a minimum level of resources civilians may struggle to engage in a peace community if their time is fully occupied with basic survival (cf. Cress and Snow 1996; Zald 1992). Peace communities should therefore be more effective in places where a larger proportion of the population have their basic needs met.

In more prosperous communities, civilians may also be more likely to invest time and funds into making peace communities a success. For example, with greater income, civilians may visit other successful peace communities, or fund a community website that publicises the actions of local armed actors. Peace communities should therefore also be more effective in municipalities that enjoy improved economic performance.

As in chapter 4, I operationalise poverty with two variables. These are (i) the ICA; and (ii) the NBI. The ICA is a measure of municipality economic performance. The NBI is a measure of the extent to which the basic needs of a population are met (DANE 2022a). Refer to section 4.3.5. of chapter 4 for more detail on these measures.

6.3.8.3. Population

Peace communities should be more effective in territories with higher populations, since the greater availability of potential members permits greater possibility of mass participation – which is consistently found in the civil resistance and civil wars literatures to improve the chances of success as well (Chenoweth and Stephen 2011; DeNardo 2014; Lichbach 1994; Weinstein 2007; Wickham-Crowley 1992). There is also a consensus that levels of participation are crucial to success in the peace communities literature (Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Anderson and Wallace 2013; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Mouly 2021; Allouche and Jackson 2019; Sta. Maria 2000). Yet conversely, higher populations may also offer greater potential for armed actor interactions with civilians, and therefore greater opportunities for violence. Overall, I expect to find that population is positively associated with peace community success, and thus negatively associated with

conflict-related violence, though populated municipalities may also attract a greater number of violent events.

6.3.8.4. *Prior violence*

I also control for prior conflict-related violence, which likely predicts future violent events, and thus the effectiveness of peace communities. Greater numbers of violent events attributed to paramilitaries or the FARC in the recent past may increase the likelihood that violence continues due to the presence of local armed actors. In addition, the peace communities literature indicates that the existing relationship between a community and local armed actors affects the chances of peace community success (Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015). Higher levels of prior violence against civilians by armed actors is one indicator that the existing relationship between local armed actors and the civilian population is poor. Therefore I also control for prior massacres. The lag for both controls is a year.¹⁰⁵ I summarise these controlling variables, together with a theoretical justification for the expected direction of the relationship in table 6.4. Summary statistics of controls are found in table 6.5. I present the analysis next.

¹⁰⁵ As in chapter 4, the length of the lag is not theoretically determined, but instead results from data availability.

Table 6.4. Summary of controls

	<i>Direction of the relationship</i>	<i>Theoretical justification</i>	<i>Data and operationalisation</i>
Geographic remoteness	Negative, less violence	Inaccessible communities require civilians to organize themselves more, thus peace communities should be more effective	Distance to nearest departmental capital in km (source: CEDE) Elevation in km (source: CEDE) Length of paved road in km (source: CEDE)
Poverty	Positive, more violence	Communities with more resources can afford to invest in making the peace community a success	NBI – Poverty calc (source: 1993 census) ICA – commercial tax in municipality (source: 1993 census)
Population log	Negative, less violence	A higher population increases the likelihood that peace communities are effective but also increases the potential for armed actor interactions.	Natural log of municipal population in 1993 (source: 1993 census)
Past violent events	Positive, more violence	Prior violence increases the likelihood of further violence and indicates a poor relationship between local armed actors and the community	Lagged count of violent events attributed to the FARC and paramilitaries (source: HRIHLO)
Past massacres	Positive, more violence	Massacres increase the likelihood of further violence and indicate a poor relationship between the community and local armed actors	Lag of count of massacres, defined as at least three people killed in one day, in one place (source: HRIHLO)

Table 6.5. Summary statistics of controls

	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max	N
Distance to dept. capital, km	0.077	0.065	0.056	0.000	0.376	8,298
Elevation, km	1.135	1.101	1.179	0.002	25.221	8,298
Paved roads, 1995, km	69.820	45.840	86.956	0.000	962.600	8,298
NBI	54.927	52.932	21.009	9.154	105.290	8,298
ICA, COP \$	228.600	0.100	7,767.24 4	0.000	479,521.00	8,298
Population, 1993, log	9.370	9.579	2.007	0.000	15.504	8,298
Massacres, t-1	0.1561	0.000	0.726	0.000	29.000	8,298
Violent events, t-1	8.809	1.000	34.601	0.000	989.000	8,298

6.4. Analysis and results

To test the hypothesis of this chapter, I conduct two regressions. In the first model, I regress the number of violent events by the FARC and paramilitaries in a municipality in a given year on whether or not at least one peace community was present in that municipality that year. This model allows the investigation of the overall association between the presence of peace communities and local conflict-related violence. Since peace communities are forged with the objective of ending local conflict, this model allows for investigation as to whether they tend to be generally successful in achieving their primary stated aim. In the second model, I create a binary independent variable for peace communities that enjoy the consistent support of NGOs. I also include binary variables for peace communities that enjoy inconsistent support and those that enjoy no support at all. With the second model, I test the expectation that peace communities with consistent support tend to be successful at reducing local conflict-related violence, when compared to municipalities where there are no peace communities present. The reference category for the models are municipalities where there are no peace communities.

The first model shows that the presence of at least one peace community in a municipality has a positive association with local conflict-related violence. This is an unsurprising finding given that I argue that patterns of external support are key to the effectiveness of peace communities.

Turning to model 2, the results do not support the hypothesis that peace communities that attract consistent NGO support are successful in achieving their primary stated aim of reducing local conflict-related violence. In fact, the presence of peace communities that receive consistent support in a municipality is associated with increased violent events by the FARC and paramilitaries compared to municipalities without peace communities. This association is significant at the 99% level. However, this relationship is not specific to this particular pattern of NGO support. The presence of peace communities without any support is also associated with increased conflict-related violence in municipalities, with the association significant at the 95% level. Again, the presence of peace communities with inconsistent support is also associated with increased conflict-related violence at the 99% level. The direction of these associations are broadly the same for the naïve models (appendix 11). Overall, these results suggest that peace communities tend not to be successful in achieving their

Table 6.6. Peace communities, NGO support, and violent events

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Presence of a peace community	0.503*** (0.096)	
Peace community, consistent		0.673** (0.330)
Peace community, no support		0.393** (0.164)
Peace community, inconsistent		0.538*** (0.124)
Distance	-0.373 (0.349)	-0.409 (0.352)
Elevation	-0.008 (0.016)	-0.008 (0.016)
Paved roads	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
NBI	0.005*** (0.001)	0.005*** (0.001)
ICA	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00000 (0.00000)
Population (log) 1993	0.074*** (0.011)	0.075*** (0.011)
Violent events, t-1	0.073*** (0.0005)	0.073*** (0.0005)
Massacres, t-1	0.125*** (0.024)	0.125*** (0.024)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-17,596.210	-17,595.810
θ	0.461*** (0.010)	0.461*** (0.010)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	35,212.430	35,215.610
<i>Note:</i>	2	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

primary stated goal, and that the consistency of the support by NGOs may not be key to their success. A possible explanation for this finding may be that the analysis picks up an initially repressive reaction by armed actors to the formation of peace communities, which I anticipate in my theory of peace community emergence (chapter 4). Specifically, I assume that the actions of nonviolent first movers trigger a feedback loop of intensifying violence and nonviolent resistance which culminates in the emergence of a peace community. However, these results indicate that this cycle of violence may persist beyond the initial establishment of a peace community. Indeed, if armed actors are unconvinced of the claim of many peace communities to impartiality or neutrality, they are likely to presume its members are disloyal instead (Mouly 2021). Peace community members may thus be targeted with violence because of their refusal to pledge allegiance to any armed actor, leading to increased local conflict-related violence. The results in this chapter suggest that such a backlash effect may persist over time, rather than fade quickly, though further research is needed to understand how the success of peace communities varies over time.

The role of nonviolent capacity in explaining how civilians develop the mobilizational capacity they need to initiate peace communities may also help to explain the results in this chapter. To recap the theory of the previous chapter in brief: the nonviolent capacity of a community is comprised of mobilizational capacity – the capacity of a community to engage in collective action – and nonviolent preferences – the preference for nonviolent action. Though facets of nonviolent capacity can be partially supplanted through training or external intervention by NGOs, such capacity may be stronger in communities that have already developed the tools they need to adapt and survive alone. Prior experience is also likely to increase the trust peace community members have in their individual and group capacity for collective action at a given moment in time – unlike external training by NGOs which requires that civilians test out a new high-risk strategy amidst the immense uncertainty of changing conflict environments. In addition, though NGOs may suggest that civilians create a peace community for self-protection, the commitment of the group to nonviolence may be greater when its rules have been developed, agreed, and set internally by the community itself. The resolve of civilian groups to sustain such peace communities may thus appear more credible to local armed actors than others that are supported in their initiative. Moreover, the sorting mechanism that I test and theorise in the previous chapter may further help to explain these results.

When the nonviolent capacity of a community is bolstered by the support of NGOs, one outcome is that civilians that do not agree with the objectives and strategies of the peace community may nonetheless remain whilst external support is on offer. These civilians may do so as they infer at least some short-term protection from the involvement of external actors, rather than due to a genuine commitment to norms of nonviolence, ties with others that wish to remain, experienced leaders or collective experience with nonviolent resistance. Similarly, whilst some civilians that move into a peace community that enjoys NGO support are likely to prefer nonviolent resistance, others are likely to do so only as a protection-seeking mechanism due to the presence of external actors. In effect, the support of external actors may disrupt the tendency of the sorting mechanism to nonviolent resistance, unlike communities that develop nonviolent capacity from the bottom up. All this may lead to mixed outcomes for peace community success from the involvement of NGO support. I next discuss the controls.

6.4.1 Controls

Many of the control are statistically significant, and the direction of their associations are largely in line with my expectations. The distance to the nearest capital and elevation are negatively associated with local violent events, though the effect of elevation is negligible. The effect of the distance from the departmental capital is greater, though, of the geographic controls, it is only the length of paved roads that achieve significance at conventional levels of analysis and the association is positive though negligible. Overall, these results suggests that conflict-related violence is lessened in relatively inaccessible locations, as expected.

Turning to indicators of poverty in the model, the NBI is positively, though negligibly, associated with increased local violence. Furthermore, the ICA has nil association with conflict violence. This offers little indication that local levels of poverty impact local violence. The association between population and local violence is positive and significant at the 99% level, suggesting that in territories with greater populations, there is a greater incidence of violent interactions.

As expected, past violence by the insurgents and counterinsurgents, and past massacres, are both positively and significantly associated with the current

violence.¹⁰⁶ As a robustness check on these results in the next section, I include massacres as an alternative measure for the dependent variable.

6.4.2. Robustness checks

I complete several robustness checks on the main result. The direction of the results are the same when I estimate a negative binomial with year fixed effects (appendix 12). I also estimate an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression (appendix 13), an OLS with fixed effects (appendix 14), and a binary logistic regression (appendix 15). In the OLS models, I log the dependent variable to correct for the positive skew in the data.¹⁰⁷ In the OLS models, I find that peace communities with inconsistent support and no support are both associated with a statistically significant increase in conflict-related violence. I also find that the presence of peace communities with consistent support is positively though negligibly associated with increased conflict-related violence. However, the evidence for the direction of this relationship is weak, as the association does not achieve conventional levels of statistical significance. When I estimate a binary logistic regression, I find that the association between the presence of peace communities and local conflict related violence does not achieve statistical significance at conventional levels. This is unsurprising given that at least one violent event was observed in over half of the municipality-years under analysis.

Next, I use a count variable as an alternative dependent variable. There is a great deal of variation in the size of peace communities, with some numbering a single village and others comprising 50 or more. This compares to the size of municipalities, the geographic unit of analysis, which typically comprise 36-66 villages. It is plausible that if there are more peace communities in a municipality, or there are more villages that are part of peace communities in a municipality, that their presence will have a greater effect on municipal levels of conflict-related violence since a greater proportion of the municipality will be a peace community. However, I find that the direction of the results are the same when I estimate a negative binomial with a count of the number of peace communities in a municipality in a year (appendix 16), a count of the number of villages that are part of peace communities in a municipality in a year (appendix

¹⁰⁶ The data for both variables are collected by the HRIHLO and count different events.

¹⁰⁷ The skew of the dependent variable, the number of violent events by the FARC and paramilitaries in a municipality year, is 12.97375. The distribution is thus positively skewed and biased towards higher values, meaning that the mean of the distribution exceeds the median of the distribution.

17), and an indicator for the size of the peace communities present in a municipality in a year (appendix 18).¹⁰⁸ The results also hold with the same count variables when I estimate an OLS and again log the dependent variable to correct for skew in the data (appendix 19, appendix 20).

It appears unlikely that the presence of a single village peace community in a municipality would have a municipal-level effect on levels of conflict-related violence. Therefore, I rerun the main model, excluding peace communities that comprise a single village from the sample (appendix 21). I also estimate a negative binomial with a count of peace communities as the independent variable (appendix 22) and with a count of the number of villages in peace communities as the independent variable (appendix 23), excluding single village peace communities from the sample. In these models I find that the results hold for peace communities with inconsistent support and no support. I find that the presence of peace communities with consistent support is positively associated with increased conflict-related violence. However, in these three models the evidence for the direction of this relationship is weak, as the association does not achieve conventional levels of statistical significance.

Finally, I use massacres as an alternative dependent variable. The massacres variable includes instances when at least three people are killed in one place on one day. For this variable the HRIHLO collected data from the Colombian security agency, the police, and human rights organizations (Steele 2018). The results hold for this specification (appendix 24). This robustness test is also a tough test of the theory given the level of disaggregation in available data and the relative rarity of massacres. To give a sense of the scale: there are 1,034 massacres recorded in the period under analysis compared to the 74,245 violent events recorded over the same period. Detecting the effect of peace communities on massacres is thus much more challenging than detecting their effect on all violent events attributed to the FARC and paramilitaries, as on average each municipality experiences less than 1 massacre per year. Furthermore, as the data on massacres is recorded at the municipality level, it is not possible to further investigate whether the massacres recorded took place within peace community villages.

¹⁰⁸ To create an independent variable that accounts for the size of peace communities present in each municipality, I sum the total number of villages that comprise each peace community present in a given municipality together. For example, if there are two peace communities present in a municipality in a year, and one is a single village and the other comprises 60 villages, the total size is 61, regardless of whether some of the 60 villages in the larger peace community are located in an adjacent municipality.

6.4.3. Discussion of potential selection effects

A further explanation for the results may be that peace communities that enjoy consistent support from NGOs are also those that most need external intervention, in locations at greatest risk of local violence. That is to say, the results may be driven by selection effects. To investigate the plausibility of this alternative hypothesis I examine the proportion of the sample with a history of prior noncooperation. Prior noncooperation of a community with local armed actors – be it through protest, public denunciation or everyday forms of resistance – is a potential indicator of the pre-existing mobilizational capacity of civilian groups that form peace communities and their social cohesion (cf. Kaplan 2017; Masullo 2021).¹⁰⁹ If NGOs select peace communities to support based on need based on need, it follows that NGOs should be more likely to select peace communities without a history of prior noncooperation. If NGOs select peace communities to support based on the existing capacity of the civilian group, and their likelihood of success, the opposite should be true.

The descriptive statistics in tables 6.7. and 6.8. support the potential explanation that NGOs select peace communities based on need, and a lack of existing nonviolent capacity. Of the 37 peace communities in the sample that were supported by NGOs, 56.8% are those *without* a history of prior noncooperation, i.e. those that lack prior relevant experience (table 6.7). Furthermore, when examining peace communities that receive consistent support, 63.6% of the sample have no history of prior noncooperation (table 6.8). This suggests that selection by NGOs may be based on need rather than on an evaluation of chances of success. This coheres with a fieldwork interview with the Director General of Centro de Investigacion y Educacion Popular Programa Por la Paz (CINEP), an organization that has worked closely with peace communities, who described them as a “model for emergency” (A115 2019).

¹⁰⁹ I collect six forms of prior noncooperation in my dataset: everyday resistance, protest, public denunciation, social noncooperation, prior attempt at creating a peace community, and violent noncooperation. I also collect data on prior cooperation with local armed actors. Refer to the codebook for more information.

Table 6.7. NGO support and prior noncooperation

	NGO support		No NGO support		Total	
	Number of observations	Percentage	Number of observations	Percentage	Number of observations	Percentage
Peace community, prior noncooperation	16	43.2%	21	84.0%	37	59.7%
Peace community, no prior noncooperation	21	56.8%	4	16.0%	25	40.3%
Total	37		25		62	

Table 6.8. The consistency of NGO support and prior noncooperation

	Peace community, prior noncooperation	Peace community, no prior noncooperation	Total number of peace communities
Consistent NGO support			
Number of observations	8	14	22
Percentage	36.4%	63.6%	
Inconsistent NGO support			
Number of observations	8	7	15
Percentage	53.3%	46.7%	
No NGO support			
Number of observations	21	4	25
Percentage	84.0%	16.0%	
Total	37	25	62

I further hone in on one form of prior noncooperation that may be a particularly good indicator of nonviolent capacity: protest.¹¹⁰ If a civilian group has already protested prior to forming a peace community, this suggests that when forming the peace community the group already had the capacity to mobilize collectively, and to do so using nonviolent methods. The descriptive statistics for prior protest are even more stark (table 6.9). All 22 of the peace communities that enjoy consistent support are those without a prior history of protest, whilst 84% of the 27 peace communities without any NGO support are those without a history of prior protest.

Table 6.9. The consistency of NGO support and prior protest

	Peace community, prior protest	Peace community, no prior protest	Total number of peace communities
Consistent NGO support			
Number of observations	0	22	22
Percentage	0.0%	100.0%	
Inconsistent NGO support			
Number of observations	6	9	15
Percentage	40.0%	60.0%	
No NGO support			
Number of observations	21	4	25
Percentage	84.0%	16.0%	
Total	27	35	

The descriptive statistics, taken together with interview data from fieldwork, suggest that NGOs may select peace communities with less nonviolent capacity to support, indicating selection based on need. I suggest that further interviews with representatives of NGOs regarding the decision making process of which communities to support would form a fruitful avenue for postdoctoral research, to further investigate the initial analysis of this chapter.

¹¹⁰ This data is also taken from the peace communities dataset I developed.

6.5 Higher levels of violence and the emergence of peace communities

In this chapter I find that presence of peace communities is associated with higher levels of conflict-related violence. One possible explanation for this finding, which is favourable to my argument, is that these are territories in which even higher levels of violence may have taken place if peace communities had not emerged. Appropriate empirical investigation of this explanation would require additional data collection at the month level in Colombia, which is outside of the scope of this thesis. However, theoretically this explanation for the finding makes sense, since I argue in chapter 2 that peace communities are a response to conflict-affected conditions. Indeed, I find in chapter 4 that peace communities are more likely to emerge in territories where civilians experience the threat of collective violence, in territories where at least one massacre occurred in the same year.

To empirically investigate the possibility that peace communities are present in territories where even higher levels of violence may have taken place were peace communities not present, I conduct some preliminary tests using the data I have on evolution of violence over time. To do so, I select a sample of four municipalities at random in which at least one peace community emerged for the first time in one of the years under analysis. For three municipalities, Buenos Aires, Corinto and López de Micay, peace communities were present from 2001-2006 (figures 6.1, 6.2, 6.3), and in one municipality, Caloto, peace communities were present from 2000-2006 (figure 6.4). In Buenos Aires, violence had been on a downward trajectory in the year prior to the peace community being initiated, and then began increasing in 2001 when the peace community was formed. In Corinto, violence significantly reduced in the year that the peace community was formed in 2001 and remained at a lower level for two further years before increasing again. Since the trajectory of violence was significantly altered in the year that a peace community was formed in Corinto, this descriptive evidence suggests that the peace community may have enjoyed some success in this case, though further research would be necessary to investigate the circumstances of the case. In López de Micay, violence had been steadily decreasing in the municipality in the years prior to and including 2001, when a peace community was initiated. However, violence began to steadily increase in the years that followed. Since the trajectory of violence in the municipality was altered in López de Micay, this may

indicate that the peace community was unsuccessful in this territory. Further research would be necessary to understand other circumstances which may explain this outcome. Finally, in Caloto, the trajectory of reducing violence in the municipality continued in 2000, the year that the peace community was formed, and continued to do so in the following year. However, violence in the municipality steadily rose again from 2002. Overall, the results of these tests are inconclusive as the trajectory of violence in each municipality after the emergence of at least one peace community differed across the sample.

Figure 6.1. Violent events over time, Buenos Aires

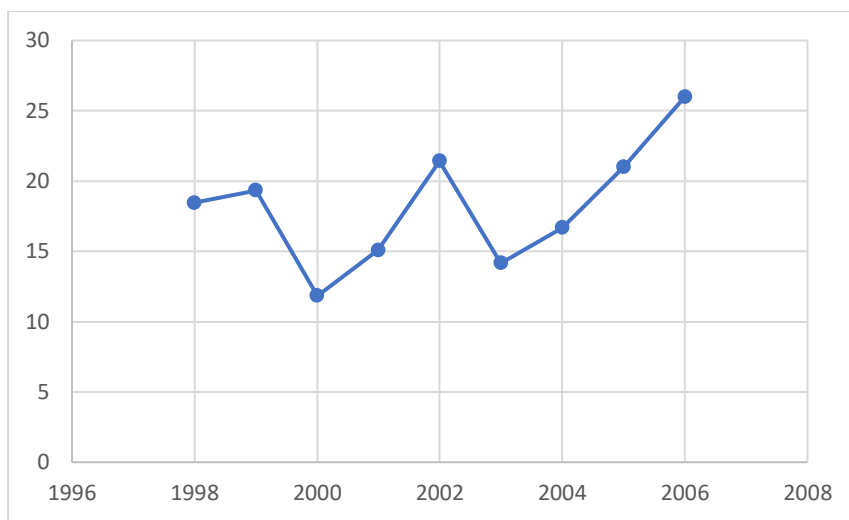


Figure 6.2 Violent events over time, Corinto

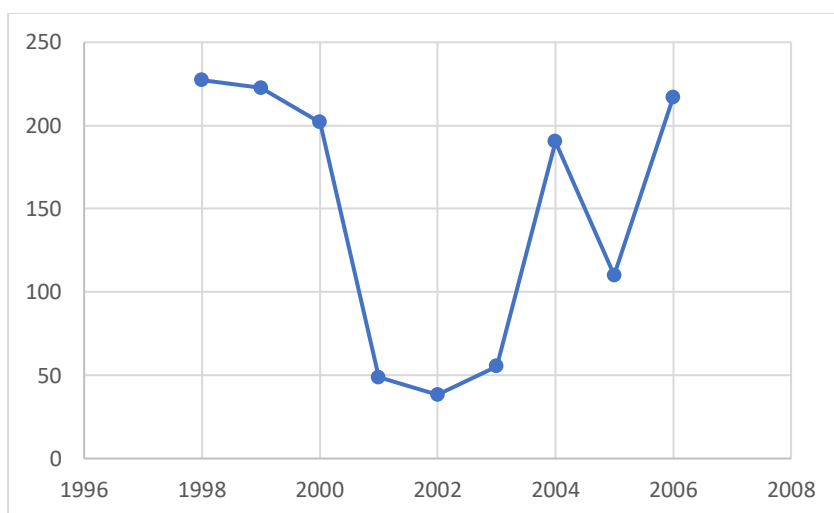


Figure 6.3 Violent events over time, López de Micay

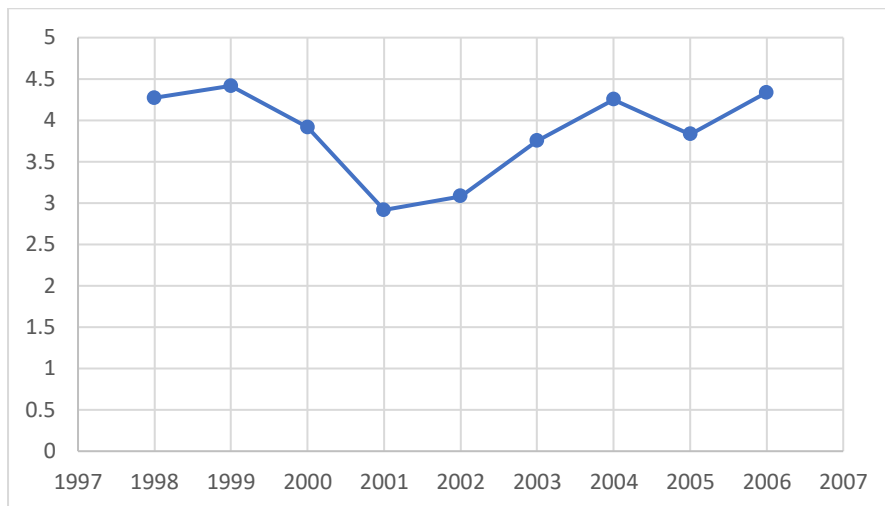
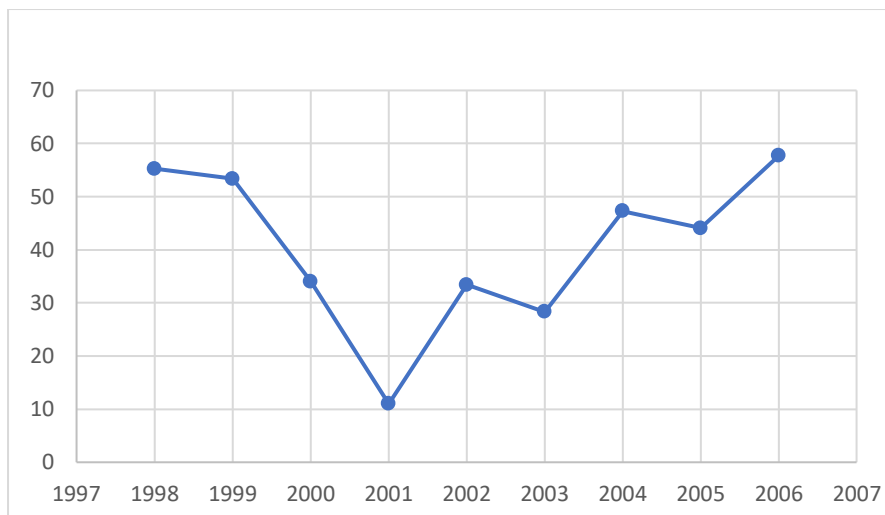


Figure 6.4 Violent events over time, Caloto



Additional data that would be useful for further investigation includes data on peace communities and conflict-related violence at a greater level of disaggregation. For peace communities, it would be ideal to obtain data on the day or week in which each peace community was initiated and terminated. For conflict-related violence it would be ideal to obtain data on the day or week at the village-level for each violent event.

6.6. Conclusion for chapter

In this chapter I analyse the conditions for peace community success in Colombia – drawing data from my peace communities dataset, the HRIHLO, the CEDE, and the

1993 census – to answer the final research question of this thesis: Under what conditions do peace communities attain success in conflict-affected territories? I expected to find that conflict-related violence would be lower in municipalities where peace communities that enjoy consistent NGO support are present compared to those with no peace communities, but what I find is that conflict-related violence is greater in municipalities with peace communities compared to those without them present, regardless of the consistency of NGO support. However, these results should be treated with caution as the data on violence is municipality wide, and so covers a substantially large area beyond the boundaries of the peace community. Whilst some peace communities amount to a single village, others cover upwards of 50 villages. Thus, the research design is a tough test of the theory, and further research is necessary to confirm or disconfirm the findings of this chapter, before concrete implications can follow for policymakers. These results may still give policymakers and practitioners pause for thought when considering whether to promote the initiation of new peace communities in conflict-affected territories.

In the previous chapter I examined the role of influential first movers in the emergence of the ATCC in Colombia. As one of the first peace communities in Colombia, the ATCC was formed entirely from the grassroots – its leaders only attracting the support of NGOs such as the International Red Cross after its initiation (ATCC#A147). Rather than target the community for perceived disloyalty in seeking neutrality from conflict, all armed actors agreed that the ATCC’s members could opt out of the conflict, conditional on the agreement of the other armed actors (Kaplan 2017). Moreover, for the next 13 years, there was virtually no conflict-related violence in the territory of the ATCC (Ibid.). Kaplan attributes the emergence and success of the ATCC to pre-existing social organization and cohesion, as well as the institutionalisation of norms of neutrality and nonviolence thereafter (Ibid.). However, its founders also deemed the role of the International Red Cross important, one of whom stated to me that their role, “gave credibility to the dialogues. The armed actors felt that if the Red Cross was there, they couldn’t do some things... a deterrence factor” (ATCC#A147). In the years that followed, in the view of the ATCC’s founders, the support of the International Red Cross was a contributing factor to the relative peace. Although by definition, the ATCC received inconsistent NGO support, the peace community was initially successful.

The experience of the ATCC is unusual compared to other peace communities that emerged in the absence of NGO support, in that it avoided backlash violence from local armed actors during its initiation.¹¹¹ A possible explanation for its initial success may be its relative size. Across the civil resistance, civil wars and peace communities literature, greater levels of participation have been found to improve the chances of success (Allouche and Jackson 2019; Anderson and Wallace 2013; Chenoweth and Stephen 2011; DeNardo 2014; Idler, Garrido and Mouly 2015; Lichbach 1994; Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Mouly, Garrido and Idler 2016; Mouly 2021; Sta. Maria 2000; Weinstein 2007; Wickham-Crowley 1992). As the seventh largest peace community in Colombia, with 37 villages under its area of influence, the ATCC enjoys a particularly high population of members.

Yet from around 2000, violence resurged in the territory of the ATCC, and continues to the present day. Kaplan's main explanation for the return to violence is that its members commitment to neutrality and nonviolence waned. In large part, Kaplan attributes this shift to the 2,000 migrants that joined the ATCC, attracted by its territory's tranquillity, who later violated the organization's rules (2017). An alternative explanation put forward by the ATCC founders is that after the organization was established, "some of the employees of the international cooperation started having particular interests in the ATCC and having relations with politicians. That led to corruption in the organization" (ATCC#A147). Thus, though NGOs remained in the territory of the ATCC their support may have become less straightforward, and their presence potentially less of a deterrent to local armed actors.

A useful next step to further investigate the relationship between NGO support and the success of peace communities, would be to compile a subnational panel dataset of NGO support across Colombia during the period of analysis in this chapter. Doing so opens up the possibility of including NGO support as a separate variable in the regression and including an interaction term between the presence of peace communities and the support of NGOs to different communities, with predicted probabilities. Further research is also necessary to assess whether certain NGO support types – such as accompaniment, or publicity – are particularly helpful to peace community objectives. Indeed, variation in the effectiveness of different NGO support

¹¹¹ For example, after the Asociación Campesina del Catatumbo (ASCAMCAT) was formed without NGO support, local conflict-related violence spiked (Chicaiza-Taramuel 2019).

types may help explain the divergent fortunes of the two peace communities discussed in the introduction to this chapter: CAVIDA and the CLWBD. Whilst CAVIDA enjoyed a consistent physical *accompaniment* during and following its initiation, the Community of Life and Work enjoyed inconsistent *publicity* during its lifetime (Amnesty International 2000; CJ 2020; Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution 2012; PBI Colombia 2017). Whilst the former appears to have had a protective effect, the latter appears to have been in response to the peace community's lack of success.

Also outside the scope of this chapter, but a fruitful avenue for further research, is investigation into the relative efficacy of peace communities vis a vie other collective options available to civilians – such as displacement or aligning with one armed actor or other. When all options available to civilians are fraught with risk and danger, which option offers the greatest protection?

In this chapter, I have measured the average relationship between the presence of peace communities and local conflict-related violence, to investigate the conditions under which peace communities achieve success. Yet, other possible measures of success offer promising avenues for future research. For example, since peace communities are typically formed with other objectives in mind, performance of these civilian groups against other indicators of success may yet prove effective. Further research is necessary to investigate whether, and under what conditions, peace communities are an effective means of achieving other goals common to many of these civilian groups, such as improving local living standards, protecting the local environment, or improving local farming rights. Moreover, despite the serious risks involved in forming and sustaining peace communities, their longevity may offer members what Elisabeth Wood terms the “pleasures of agency”: a sense of control, self-determination, and agency over their lives (2003). The “self-esteem, efficacy, and pride that comes from successful assertion of intention,” by acting together with others in pursuit of what seems proper, might be a valuable end for civilians in its own right (Wood 2003, 235). When success is conceptualised solely in terms of physical violence, the preliminary results of this chapter indicate that peace communities that emerge in the midst of conflict may tend to be failures. When success is conceptualised as sustenance in spite of serious challenges, many peace communities that suffer significant violence could instead be considered successes. Further research with interviews of peace community members should be conducted

to investigate whether such intrinsic motivations explain why peace communities often do sustain despite serious continued violence and threats. Moreover, the peace communities dataset that I developed is a valuable resource for further research into the conditions under which peace communities sustain despite serious challenges, for example through survival analyses.

In the next chapter, I bring together the results from this chapter with the results of the previous two empirical chapters to discuss the overall implications of the findings of this thesis for policy and theory.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

This dissertation explores the origins and fortunes of peace communities in conflict-affected territories. I have sought to ask and then answer three main research questions: Under what conditions do peace communities emerge? How do conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities? Under what conditions do peace communities attain success? To answer these research questions, I conducted a mixed methods research design, combining quantitative analysis of the new peace communities dataset that I developed with systematic process tracing of data obtained from semi-structured interviews and a review of community archives. Overall, the thesis findings suggest that peace communities are more likely to emerge when conflict-affected civilians face threats of collective targeting by local armed actors, and in territories where other peace communities already exist. I find that influential first movers with a preference for nonviolence are crucial to explaining how conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities. Furthermore, I expected to find that conflict-related violence would be lower in municipalities where peace communities that enjoy consistent NGO support are present compared to those with no peace communities, but what I find is that conflict-related violence is greater in municipalities with peace communities compared to those without them, regardless of the consistency of NGO support. As the design of chapter 6 is a tough test of the theory, due to data availability, this preliminary finding must be interpreted cautiously.

In the remainder of this chapter, I summarize the contributions of the thesis, provide a more detailed overview of the dissertation findings, and identify avenues for future research. Finally, I conclude with implications of this thesis for policymakers.

7.2. Summary of the contributions

This thesis makes several contributions to existing research. Firstly, the thesis clarifies and refines the meaning of peace communities by outlining the core attributes necessary for conceptual membership, building upon existing literature on peace communities, zones of peace and the broader literature of civil resistance (Chenoweth

and Lewis 2013; Masullo 2021; Mouly 2021; Mitchell and Allen 1997). To do so I propose five inclusion criteria. Peace communities involve the (i) community-based mobilization of civilians where they live (ii) in the midst of war; that involves the (ii) sustained and organized coordination of civilians engaged in (iv) nonviolent activities. Activities are (v) purposively aimed at ending or preventing conflict locally, but which may aspire beyond their village or municipality. This definition refines existing conceptualization by specifying which actors can create and sustain peace communities (civilian groups), where (in the conflict-affected territories where civilians live), and under what conditions (in the midst of violent conflict). My definition also introduces a temporal dimension by requiring that the activities of peace communities sustain over time.

During the 1990s, NGOs in Colombia had sought to promote the emergence of peace communities in conflict-affected territories (Bouvier 2006). Doing so was hoped to offer civilians some protection from violence, as well as a chance to assert their agency within the framework of international human rights. Some studies suggested that this phenomenon might offer civilians some protection from violence, though previous research into these questions has tended to be either normative or descriptive (e.g. Hancock and Mitchell 2007; Hernández Delgado 2004a, 2004b; Anderson and Wallace 2013). At the same time, a lack of systematic data on the emergence, location, and termination of peace communities prevented researchers from studying the effectiveness of peace communities with quantitative methods. To tackle this, I constructed the first group-level dataset of peace communities that emerge in the midst of war, which I intend to make publicly available following the completion of my dissertation. This new cross-national dataset is the main empirical contribution of the thesis.

The dataset contributes to the growing number of existing data collection efforts in the fields of conflict and peace research (Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; Carey, Mitchell and Lowe 2013; Carey, Mitchell and Paula 2022; Chenoweth 2008, Chenoweth and Lewis 2013, Chenoweth, Pinckney, and Lewis 2018; Cunningham, Gleditsch and Salehyan 2009; Zelina 2022). Existing datasets catalogue information on armed state and nonstate conflict actors, as well as nonviolent actors. What is missing from these resources are data that record the local mobilization of civilians in wartime contexts. The new dataset that I developed helps to fill this gap. For its construction, I developed reproducible search procedures to systematically identify

and document peace communities in countries around the world. I also contribute empirically with the collection of 28 semi-structured interviews, 18 informal discussions and 3 informal group discussions, during a six week field trip to Colombia in November and December 2019.

Analysing these data yield new findings that contribute to existing research on peace communities. Firstly, I show that peace communities tend to emerge in response to the threat of collective targeting, and thus that the incidence of such threats can indicate where new peace communities may arise. I also find that new peace communities are much more likely to emerge in territories where at least one peace community already exists. Secondly, mine is the first study to examine how some communities, and not others, develop the nonviolent capacity they need to form peace communities when facing collective threats. The finding that nonviolent first movers are crucial to the development of the nonviolent aptitude necessary for a community to do so, contributes to scholarly knowledge of the longer term processes underlying the emergence of peace communities, as well as the role that first movers play in mobilising collective action despite severe risks. Since the thesis identifies a crucial role of first movers in the emergence of peace communities, it also contributes to the civilian agency literature, which emphasizes the potential of ordinary people to effect change amidst conflict environments (Baines and Paddon 2012; Hallward, Masullo and Mouly 2017; Kaplan 2017; Krause 2018; Suarez 2017). Conceptually, I also contribute to the literature on first movers by developing a qualitative threshold for the term. This threshold may be used by scholars in the armed mobilization and social movement literatures to systematically identify first movers leading shifts to the prevailing state of affairs in differing contexts of collective action (Costalli and Ruggeri 2015; Leenders and Heydeman 2012; Leenders 2013). Thirdly, the thesis offers a novel theory of peace community success and offers an argument that the fortunes of peace communities should be assessed with reference to the primary objective these groups set for themselves; reducing local conflict-related violence. In doing so, the preliminary thesis findings results indicate that the existing literature on peace communities may have been somewhat optimistic about their protective potential. I find that conflict-related violence is greater in municipalities with peace communities compared to those without them present, regardless of the consistency of NGO support. Preliminary results are therefore not supportive of my expectation, though this part of the argument is difficult to test due to data limitations.

7.3. Summary of the findings and avenues for future research

A more detailed summary of the thesis findings is as follows. In the first part of the thesis, I argue that peace communities form in territories where civilians experience the threat of collective targeting, as those that remain must mobilize collectively for the group's survival. Furthermore, as collectively opting out of war is unlikely to be an apparent choice available to conflict-affected civilians, I argue that peace communities are more likely to emerge in territories where peace communities already exist as news spreads of an alternate approach to evading displacement through diffusion. Drawing from my peace communities dataset, the 1993 Colombian census, the Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Observatory (HRIHLO), and the Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE), the empirical analysis provides support for this overall argument. Consistent with my expectation, I find that the presence of at least one massacre in a municipality has a substantive and statistically significant association with the emergence of a new peace community. This offers strong support for the role of threats of collective targeting in explaining the emergence of peace communities as threats often predate actual targeting. I also find that the probability of a new peace community emerging is much higher in municipalities where peace communities already exist, supporting the second expectation.

What is lacking in the analysis I undertake in chapter 4 is an understanding of how some communities, but not others, are able to initiate peace communities under these conditions. This is the task of chapter 5. In the second part of the thesis, I argue that nonviolent first movers are crucial to explaining how conflict-affected civilians develop the nonviolent capacity necessary to initiate peace communities when facing threats of collective targeting where they live. I suggest that by opposing armed actors influential first movers can activate a sorting process in their communities that leads to selection bias for nonviolence in the remaining population. Moreover, those that stay must adapt to survive, which also increases the mobilizational capacity of the community. I hone in on the processes that lead conflict-affected civilians to initiate a peace community – rather than flee, align with one armed actor or another, or violently resist. I draw on archival, secondary source, historical and fieldwork interview data to assess the certainty and uniqueness of the expected observable manifestations of my

hypothesis, and its alternatives, in the case of the ATCC, in Colombia. Overall, I find that each part of the mechanism was present and functioned as expected in the case of the ATCC. First movers increased nonviolent preferences in the territory of the ATCC and their actions enhanced the community's mobilizational capacity over time, in part due to population sorting.

The second empirical chapter is a single case study. Thus, the results can only update confidence of the presence of the causal mechanism in the particular case of the ATCC. The qualitative threshold for nonviolent first movers, the scope conditions of the theory, and the case selection criteria are means of identifying other cases to which the theory is expected to apply. Future research could confirm the generalizability of the theory through further case studies, and by selecting peace communities from the new dataset I developed.

Taken together, chapters 4 and 5 offer insights into the conditions under which peace communities emerge, as well as the longer term processes by which certain communities develop the nonviolent capacity they need to do so. What remains unexplored by these chapters is an investigation into whether peace communities that do emerge enjoy success, and the conditions under which these civilian groups achieve it. This is the task of the chapter 6.

In the final empirical chapter of the thesis, I explore the role of NGOs in helping or hindering the success of peace communities. To do so, I draw on my dataset, the 1993 Colombian census, the HRIHLO, and the CEDE. I expected to find that consistent NGO support would be key to peace communities achieving their primary stated goal of reducing conflict-related violence where they live. In particular, I anticipated that incidents of violence by the FARC and paramilitaries would be lower in municipalities where peace communities with consistent NGO support were present. Underpinning the expectation for this overall relationship are three mechanisms. Consistent NGO support increases the time horizon over which armed actors can expect raised costs from attacking the community, may increase confidence in peace community members, and also signal stability in peace community commitments to nonviolence and neutrality and. However, the evidence does not support this overall expectation. In fact, what I find is that conflict-related violence is greater in municipalities with peace communities compared to those without them present regardless of the consistency of NGO support. However, these

findings should be treated with caution, given limitations in the data available for the analysis.

A limitation of the final empirical chapter is the presence of omitted variables, which may be correlated to the variables that are included and could thus bias the estimates of the relationships between variables. Oliver Kaplan's main finding from his book *Resisting War: How Communities Protect Themselves* is that pre-existing social organization and cohesion can be protective against civilian victimization in conflict-affected territories (2017). As a proxy for this in his book, he operationalises the independent variable in his regression analysis with a count of the number of local community councils in each municipality in Colombia in 1985. This data has previously been published by the Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) on their website, however the data was unavailable at the time of the thesis submission (1985, 1987). Household survey data from 1993 on the presence of local community councils is available on the website, though as the information is only available at the department level, it is not possible to map the number of local community councils to each municipality, the geographic unit of analysis for chapter 6.¹¹² I also requested access to the 1985 data from DANE, however the request was still outstanding at the thesis submission date. When accessible, future research could add a count of the number of junta councils in 1985 in each municipality as a control variable for pre-existing social cohesion and organization in each municipality, and then re-run the analysis in chapter 6 to verify the findings.

An additional limitation of the final empirical chapter pertains to my position as a community outsider. I derived my measures of success without seeking input from the conflict-affected civilians themselves, aiming to adopt a scientific perspective to identify appropriate indicators. Though this is not unusual practice for academic studies and practitioner evaluation of local peacebuilding efforts, externally derived indicators do not necessarily track the needs or goals that conflict-affected populations themselves prioritise (Firchow and Mac Ginty 2017). Instead, externally derived indicators are likely to reflect the priorities and experiences of academics or international agencies, which might include the need to justify research or programme expenditures to funders, or maximum measurement precision that is a hallmark of high-quality scientific research.

¹¹² There are 32 departments in Colombia, which are further organized into 1123 municipalities.

A potential solution has been developed by Pamima Firchow and Roger Mac Ginty, who developed the Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI). Their approach involves directly consulting with conflict-affected communities to derive indicators that are then used to evaluate and monitor the quality and impact of peacebuilding programmes (Firchow and Mac Ginty 2022). EPI methodology could also be used to develop community-based indicators by which to measure peace community success, and then monitor and evaluate progress against the bottom-up indicators over time. Doing so is highly time intensive and would be infeasible within the timeframe of this doctoral thesis. However, the EPI offers a fruitful opportunity for further research that could extend from the dataset I developed.

There are several further fruitful avenues for future research that follow from this thesis. For one, the results of the dissertation could be tested outside of the Colombian case. Extending the cross-national data to provide global coverage offers the opportunity to understand the relative rarity of peace communities as a phenomena of conflict dynamics.¹¹³ Secondly, I record borderline cases in the appendix to the peace communities codebook, where at least three of the five inclusion criteria were met. Further research could draw on the broader set of cases to develop a typology of collective mobilization of civilians during conflict. Thirdly, further research is needed to identify whether certain support types – accompaniment, mediation, publicity, or training and guidance – can offer protection for peace communities that emerge in conflict-affected territories. Such analysis is possible from the existing dataset, since I have created variables for each of these support types for each observation. Finally, future research could also investigate the protective effect of assistance by other peace community supporters – such as faith institutions and international organizations such as the UN – as a means of complementing and extending the initial analysis in this dissertation.

7.4. Implications for research on local peacebuilding

There are implications of this thesis for the academic field of local peacebuilding. Within this field there is a debate around the promise and limitations of ‘local’

¹¹³ As a single case extension to the existing dataset, the Philippines offers a promising avenue since more than 200 potential peace communities emerged during the conflict (Barter 2014).

peacebuilding, and the extent to which international actors can contribute to local levels of violence prevention and peacebuilding. In this literature, scholars such as Séverine Autesserre have critiqued the top-down international Peacebuilding architecture that international institutions such as the United Nations encompass, and instead make the case for bottom-up efforts that involve ordinary citizens (2021). The argument that local peacebuilding is crucial to reducing violence has been made by many other scholars (Anderson and Wallace 2013; Hughes, Öjendal, and Schierenbeck 2015; Lederach 1997; Leonardsson and Rudd 2015; McGuinness 2012; Mitchell and Hancock 2012; Odendaal 2013; Zelizer and Rubinstein 2009). Yet, there are also many examples where the involvement of international actors in local efforts for peace have been counterproductive. For example, in Afghanistan (Martin 2014), Congo (Autessere 2014) and Uganda (Branch 2011), the involvement of international actors has been found to lead to an increase in violence. With such unintended consequences, proponents of external intervention in local efforts for peace have been critiqued for “romanticisation of the local” (Mac Ginty 2011, 2015, 2017; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013).

Relatedly, scholars have long highlighted the potential moral hazard of outside intervention (Rowlands and Carmet 1998). Moral hazard is a phenomenon whereby protection against risk (such as through insurance) counterproductively promotes irresponsibility and risk-taking, and as a result increases the chance that the undesired outcome (what has been protected / insured against) actually takes place. Applied to external intervention, the involvement of international actors in supporting peace communities has the potential to create moral hazard by unintentionally providing strategic benefits to armed actors and raising hopes for further strategically advantageous intervention. For example, armed actors may deliberately provoke retaliation by another armed actor against a peace community, to attract international intervention, condemnation and publicity that supports their political goals, such as damage to the international reputation of a rival armed actor.

The finding of this thesis, that conflict-related violence is greater in municipalities with peace communities compared to those without them, regardless of the consistency of NGO support, is thus relevant to these debates. Counter to proponents of international intervention in local efforts for peace, the empirical evidence and analysis of chapter 6 does not support the expectation that external support helps the fortunes of conflict-affected civilians that form peace communities in

Colombia. Overall, this finding may suggest moral hazard at play in dynamics of international intervention to support peace communities. However, further research is necessary to investigate the mechanisms underlying the main finding of chapter 6.

7.5. Implications for policymakers and practitioners

There are two main implications for policymakers that follow from this thesis. Firstly, in territories where nonviolent first movers possess influence, communities may have developed a greater aptitude to form peace communities. As I find that these individuals can play a crucial role in initiating nonviolent collective action, practitioners may consider whether and how they may be supported to do so. However, I also find that conflict-related violence is greater on average in municipalities with peace communities compared to those without them present, regardless of the consistency of NGO support. Given data constraints, this part of the argument is challenging to test, though preliminary results are not supportive of the expectation that consistent NGO support helps peace communities achieve their primary objective of reducing local conflict-related violence. The results may still give policymakers and practitioners pause for thought when considering whether to promote the initiation of new peace communities in conflict-affected territories. Indeed, practitioners may wish to conduct their own assessments of the impact of NGO support in the communities they assist. Further research is necessary to confirm or disconfirm this preliminary thesis finding, before concrete implications for policymakers and practitioners can be drawn.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Codebook for the Peace Communities Dataset

Version 1.9 – March 2023

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1. Introduction

The Peace Communities Dataset provides information on the origins and fortunes of peace communities that emerge in conflict-affected territories. The dataset comprises communities that emerge during years of armed conflict that results in 25+ yearly battle deaths. Version 1.0 of the dataset will cover the time period from 1985 to 2021 in Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

This dataset compiles information on communities that are identified in academic literature, documentary, media and other publicly available sources to organize using nonviolent methods for the objective of local peace. The dataset has three levels: each village that joins a peace community, the peace community itself, and each coalition of peace communities. I include the UCDP conflict ID, Correlates of War (COW) code and the PRIO-Grid cell in which communities find themselves to allow for integration with the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), COW and PRIO-Grid datasets. Each village in the dataset is geolocated, with longitude and latitude provided. In Colombia, I have also mapped the shapefiles of each observation, and added the vereda, municipio and departamento codes to allow integration with QGIS and the Government of Colombia's National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE). To my knowledge, this is the first attempt to compile a systematic population of such communities.

Other labels used for peace communities include "nonviolent communities", "non-war communities", "pacifist communities", "unarmed communities", "neutral communities", "autonomous communities", "humanitarian zones", "biodiversity zones", "peasant workers associations", "peasant farmers associations", "populations in resistance", "peasants associations", "zones of peace", "peace zones", "peace territories", "civilian self-protection groups." Villages and towns that create peace communities may also meet the definition without being named as any of the above.

This dataset builds on original data-sources as well as already existing data-sources. Cases with insufficient information are detailed in section 5. Countries searched with nil cases observed are detailed in section 6. Borderline cases are detailed in section 7.

2. Operational definition of a peace community

There are five conditions that must be satisfied for candidates to be included in the dataset:

1. **Community-level mobilization:** the civilians located within a conflict-affected territory must be the main activists. To be identified as a peace community, the civilian group must be active and emerge in the conflict-affected territory in which participants live. Villages may have links to national and international NGOs or religious groups, yet such linked groups are themselves outside the scope for inclusion as an observation in the dataset and are instead mapped as supportive external actors. Observable in NGO reports, media reports, academic literature.
2. **Local peace:** The peace community must aim to end or prevent violence locally, and may also have aspirations beyond their village or municipality. Observable in the public statements of community representatives, membership documents (if applicable), NGO reports, media reports, academic literature.
3. **Sustained organization:** There must be evidence of a series of sustained and coordinated collective activities in pursuit of local peace. This does not mean that there needs to be an organization that represents the community, but there needs to be some sort of coordination between civilian collective actions over time, distinguishing events from a series of random mass gatherings or spontaneous protests within the community. For example, this may be observable through regular civilian meetings to consciously organize their activities with the specific objective of local peace in mind. Observable in NGO reports, media reports, academic literature.
4. **Nonviolent methods:** The actions of villagers must be predominantly nonviolent and, where the information is available, leaders must espouse adherence to nonviolent methods. Observable in public speeches, NGO reports, media reports, academic literature. Some

peace communities may commit members to nonviolence and develop rules that expel members who use violence to settle disputes. Observable in membership documents, interview data regarding oaths or ceremony and meeting minutes.

5. **Conflict location:** I only include peace communities that emerge within conflict-affected states in my dataset (using the UCDP definition of 25 battlefield deaths as the cut off for candidate communities). This may be checked with reference to the UCDP conflict-year for each candidate community. The dataset records the UCDP conflict ID to demonstrate that a candidate meets this requirement.

3. Variables

There are three levels of analysis in the dataset, each village that creates a peace community, each peace community, and each coalition of peace communities.

3.a. Basic information

Peace community ID (*pcid*)

This is a unique identifier for each peace community.

Village ID (*vid*)

This is a unique identifier for each village that joins a peace community.

Coder (*cod*)

The initials of the coder.

Region (*reg*)

This is the region where the peace community emerged. One of: Africa, North America, South America, Asia, Europe, Middle East.

Conflict ID (*conflictid*)

This is the UCDP conflict ID.

Country name (*cname*)

The country where the peace community emerged.

COW country code (*cow*)

This is the Correlates of War (COW) country code.

Location (*where_coordinates*)

Name of the location of the peace community, at the lowest administrative level detailed in the sources. Where village-level data is available for the peace community, each village is recorded here as a separate entry in the dataset.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in *where_coordiantes2*.

Location description (*where_description*)

This field records the text location of the peace community, as precisely as sources allow. Where applicable, this includes the name of a village included in the sources, but for which coordinates could not be found.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in *where_description2*.

DANE object ID (*objectid*)

For peace communities in Colombia, this is the DANE OBJECTID for each vereda included in the dataset.

Municipio code (*dptompio*)

For peace communities in Colombia, this is the DANE municipio code for each vereda included in the dataset.

Vereda code (*codigo_ver*)

For peace communities in Colombia, this is the DANE vereda code for each vereda included in the dataset.

Departamento code (*cod_dpt*)

For peace communities in Colombia, this is the DANE departamento code for each vereda included in the dataset.

First order Administrative Division (*adm_1*)

Name of the first order (largest) administrative division in which the peace community emerges. In Colombia, the spelling is derived from mapping to DANE administrative divisions, through QGIS. In other countries in the dataset, the spelling is derived from academic, NGO and news reports.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in *adm_1_2*.

Second order Administrative Division (*adm_2*)

Name of the second order administrative division in which the peace community emerges. In Colombia, the spelling of this order is derived from mapping to DANE administrative divisions, through QGIS. In other countries in the dataset, the spelling is derived from academic, NGO and news reports.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in *adm_2_2*.

Third order Administrative Division (*adm_3*)

Name of the third order administrative division in which the peace community emerges. This is typically a village. In Colombia, the spelling of this order is derived from mapping to DANE administrative divisions, through QGIS. In other countries in the dataset, the spelling is derived from academic, NGO and news reports.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in *adm_3_2*.

Longitude (*long*)

This field records the longitude in decimal degrees of each village where the peace community emerges, as precisely as sources allow.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in *longitude_2*.

Latitude (*lat*)

This field records the latitude in decimal degrees of each village where the peace community emerges, as precisely as sources allow.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in *latitude_2*.

Geospatial Shape (*geom_wkt*)

An Open Geospatial Consortium textual representation of the location of each individual point. Formatted as OGC WKT without SRID.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in *geom_wkt2*.

Mapping precision (*map_prec*)

This variable codes mapping precision. Note that when mapping peace community territory to DANE shapefiles through GIS, I followed several rules of consistency. The territory of each peace community was mapped as precisely within GIS as possible to the lowest administrative division in Colombia, the vereda, which in many cases delineates the boundaries of individual villages. This information is freely available for download from the DANE website (2022). In some instances, a vereda is named in the sources but cannot be traced via source maps to DANE or found via a google map search. In these cases, the variable is left blank as missing information.

I code the precision of the mapping exercise as follows:

1	Coordinates are the centroid of each vereda, derived from a precise match of sources to DANE vereda name. The exact name of each vereda in the peace community is derived from sources, and precisely matches DANE.
2	Coordinates are the centroid of each vereda, derived from a close match to the DANE vereda name. The exact name of each vereda in the peace

	<p>community is derived from sources, and closely matches DANE. Close matches are where one of the two words in a name per the sources match DANE (e.g. “El Tigre” per sources and “La Tigre” per DANE), or where the spelling is different by up to 2 letters in a name (e.g. “Carrizal” per sources and “Carizales” per DANE). Veredas are also matched by municipio and departamento.</p>
3	<p>Coordinates are the centroid of each vereda within the peace community, derived from visually mapping veredas from source maps to DANE geospatial data in QGIS.</p> <p>In these cases I first visually map the veredas that lie within the territory of the peace community to DANE through QGIS, relying on source maps. I map in all veredas in which at least 50% of the territory overlaps with the peace community. When the peace community comprises less than 5 veredas, and source maps indicate that the peace community covers less than 50% of the territory of each vereda, I map the vereda with the largest share covered by the peace community.</p>
3B	<p>B. In some cases, the names of veredas per sources do not match the mapped veredas in DANE. When source maps and DANE vereda names are in conflict, I rely on source maps to guide visual location mapping to GIS rather than strictly matching on vereda name. This is considered appropriate given that the names of veredas can change over time.</p>
3C	<p>C. In some instances, a vereda is named in the sources but the name does not match any of the veredas that have been mapped within GIS. In these cases I conduct a google maps search for the vereda to identify its coordinates. After this, I then map the google maps coordinates to the nearest vereda that lies within the territory of the peace community on QGIS.</p>
3D	<p>D. In some instances, a vereda is named in the sources and cannot be traced via source maps to veredas in DANE. In these cases I conduct a</p>

<p>3E</p> <p>3E</p> <p>3F</p>	<p>google maps search for the vereda to identify its coordinates. In these cases, adm_1, adm_2 and adm_3 are all derived from google maps rather than DANE.</p> <p>3E In some instances, a vereda is named in the sources but the name does not match any of the veredas that have been mapped within QGIS, and the vereda cannot be found via a google maps search. In these cases I randomly allocate veredas named in the sources to the veredas mapped within GIS which can otherwise not be matched. Random allocation is done after matching to adm_2 (the municipio level in Colombia). The coordinates are the centroid of each vereda included within the territory of the peace community, when mapped to DANE.</p> <p>3F Surplus veredas visually mapped within the territory of the peace community to DANE, but which are not named within sources consulted are each listed as a separate entry in the dataset for completeness. Where this is the case, the where_coordiantes variable will list the name of the peace community. The coordinates are the centroid of each vereda included within the territory of the peace community, when mapped to DANE.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Where sources indicate that the peace community comprises an entire municipio, coordinates are the centroid of each vereda within the municipio that is a precise match to the DANE municipio name.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Where sources indicate that the peace community comprises an entire resguardo, cabildo, or community council, coordinates are the centroid of each vereda within the resguardo, cabildo or community council that is precisely mapped in DANE.</p> <p>The boundaries are derived from the National Land Agency ANT Open Data Portal, which map the boundaries of resguardos, community councils and cabildos in Colombia (2022).</p>

6	In some instances, sources only name the location of the second order administrative division (this is the municipio in Colombia) in which a peace community is located, but the territory of the peace community does not comprise the entire territory of the administrative division. In this case the centroid of the second order administrative division is taken as the coordinates.
7	In some cases, a vereda can be traced to DANE, but the DANE data is missing location information. In these instances, I include the administrative information and DANE codes, but include location data from google maps.
8	In a very small number of cases, a coalition of peace communities occupy a group of veredas, yet it is unknown from the sources consulted which peace community is located in which vereda. In this case veredas are randomly allocated to peace communities. Where there are fewer veredas than peace communities, veredas will be randomly assigned to more than one peace community.

PRIO Grid Cell ID (*prio*)

The PRIO-Grid cell id (gid) in which the peace community emerged.

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. The second location details are recorded in priogrid_gid2.

Peace community name (*pcom*)

The name used in the source to identify the peace community. If the peace community is unnamed, I assign a descriptive name.

Peace community coalition (*pcom_co*)

Some peace communities are part of a coalition of two or more peace communities. Where the peace community is in a coalition with other peace communities, the name of the coalition organization is detailed here.

Name assigned by coder (*ncod*)

This variable indicates whether the peace community name was taken from the sources (1) or assigned by a coder (0).

Peace community coalition (*coalition*)

A peace community might comprise a single village. Other peace communities might comprise a coalition of villages that covers a larger territory. Coders should code “0” for single village. Coders should code “1” for villages that form part of a coalition of 2 or or more villages that create a peace community.

3b. Criteria for inclusion

Community-level mobilization (*com*)

The civilians located within a conflict-affected village, must be the main activists. To be identified as a peace community, the civilian group must emerge in the conflict-affected territories in which participants live and the community that live there must mobilize together as a group. This means that small groups of civilians acting together for local peace are excluded from the dataset. This also means that subsets of the community, such as youth groups that act alone, are also excluded. The group must be active, meaning that there is evidence of purposive activities such as meetings, public statements and participation in nonviolent forms of collective action such as marches. Communities may have links to national and international NGOs or religious groups, yet such linked groups are outside the scope for inclusion as an observation in the dataset. Instead they are included in the dataset as supportive external actors. This variable indicates with a 1 that the community meets this requirement, 0 that it does not.

Local peace goal (*peace*)

To be identified as a peace community, its members must aim to end, prevent or oppose physical conflict-related violence locally, where the civilians live. The group may also have aspirations beyond their village or municipality, though this is not a requirement. Observable in the public statements of community representatives that the community intends to oppose violence. Membership documents (if applicable), NGO reports, media reports and academic literature may also document this goal. This variable indicates with a 1 that the community meets this requirement, 0 that it does not. Note that a community may meet this definition, yet also engage in activities that may not be considered ethical, or may indicate that there are structural forms of

violence against some groups that live within its territory (e.g. unequal rights based on ethnicity/class/gender).

Sustained organization (*org*)

There must be evidence of sustained coordination between civilians, in pursuit of peace. This does not mean that there needs to be an organization, but there needs to be some sort of continuous coordination between civilian activities over time, distinguishing events from random mass gatherings or spontaneous protests. This may be observable through regular civilian meetings to consciously organize their activities with the specific objective of local peace in mind, or other activities that indicate a long term commitment to this strategy. Observable in NGO reports, media reports, academic literature. This variable indicates with a 1 that the community meets this requirement, 0 that it does not.

Nonviolent methods (*nonv*)

If an organization, membership may require commitment to nonviolence. Observable in membership documents, interview data regarding oaths or ceremony and community meeting minutes. If no organization, the coordinated activities of its members must be observed to be predominantly nonviolent and leaders must espouse adherence to nonviolent methods, if the information is available. Observable in public speeches by community representatives, NGO reports, media reports, academic literature. Unlike violent methods, nonviolent methods do not directly harm or threaten to harm the physical well-being of others. Examples of nonviolent methods include protests, civil disobedience, barring armed groups from passing through the territory of the community and publically denouncing the action of armed groups. This variable indicates with a 1 that the community meets this requirement, 0 that it does not.

Local conflict (*conflict*)

Were armed groups operating in and around the territory where the peace community emerged, or were armed groups approaching the area when the peace community was founded? If the answer to either of these questions is yes, code 1. Otherwise, code 0. Observable in NGO reports, academic literature or media reports which describe the circumstances in which the peace community was created.

3.c. Additional variables

Membership variables

Who are the principal members of the community? Observable in descriptions of communities in NGO reports, media reports, and academic literature. They may be:

<i>religious</i>	religious communities constituting a specific religious group within a territory (e.g. sources describe the community as a Catholic community, or as a mixture of Catholic and Muslims);
<i>peasant</i>	peasant communities constituting a farming group within a territory (e.g. sources describe the community as campesinos in Colombia);
<i>ethnic</i>	Communities in which sources indicate that civilians constitute a specific ethnic group within the territory (e.g. the sources describe the community as indigenous, or as a mixture of indigenous and afrodescendiente); or
<i>members_unknown</i>	where membership of the community cannot be determined from the source material.

Ethnicity subcategories (*indigena, afrodescendiente, mestizo*)

I also code a series of dichotomous variables for subcategories of *ethnic_com* in Colombia: *indigena*, *afrodescendiente* and *mestizo*. This categorisation is often observable in descriptions of communities in NGO reports, media reports, and academic literature. For example, a community may only be described as afrodescendiente in the source literature, in which case coders should code 1 for afrodescendiente, leaving the other subcategories blank.

Mixed membership (*mixed*)

Membership may be mixed, e.g. a community that is comprised of peasants and indigenous civilians. In this case, coders should code “1” for *peasant_com*, *ethnic_com* and *indigena*. Coders should also code “1” for the variable *mixed* where sources identify more than one category of membership in the community, and where

sources indicate that no single category accounts for more than 90% of members. Coders should also code “1” for mixed if there is variation within a category, e.g. a community comprised of a mixture of afrodescendiente and indigenous civilians. In this case coders should code “1” for *ethnic_com*, *indigena*, *afrodescendiente* and *mixed*.

Membership precision (*members_prec*)

An additional variable *precision* is included to describe the precision of identity group coding. Where all documents describe entire peace community as an identity group coded the precision variable is coded “1”. Where multiple identity groups are mentioned, the variable is coded “2.” When there is no identity group mentioned in sources, the variable is coded “3.” When the identity group coded is assumed, the variable is coded “4.” The identity group is coded 4 in the following two circumstances:

Firstly, unless stated otherwise in the sources reviewed, peace communities in Colombia coded as *peasant* communities are assumed to be *mestizo*. This is based on several considerations:

- According to the last Colombian census (2018), 9.34% of the population identified as Afro-Colombian and 4.31% as indigenous. The remaining 87.6%, the overwhelming majority, are mestizo/white.
- Mestizo is a blanket term used widely in Latin America for anyone of mixed European and indigenous descent.
- Very few people are exclusively of European descent within Colombia.
- Thus, it is highly likely that campesino communities that are not explicitly identified as afro-descendant or indigenous are mestizo.
- Oliver Kaplan (2017) identifies campesinos as “mestizo peasants” (p.13) and explains that this is almost always the case (p.334)
- Being the majority ethnic identity group, it is likely that mestizo peasants would identify as peasants before they identify as mestizos, as opposed to afro-descendant and indigenous communities, whom may be more likely to identify more prominently with their ethnic identity.
- Cases for which this assumption has been applied can be identified by the membership precision variable, detailed below.
- This assumption is not applied to peace communities whose membership is coded as “unknown.”

Secondly, unless stated otherwise in the sources reviewed, peace communities in Colombia that are described as cabildos or resguardos indigenas are assumed to be *indigena*. This is deemed reasonable since cabildos are councils of traditional indigeous authorities (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights) and resguardos indigenas are legally defined collective indigenous territories under Colombian law (Arango 2018). Each cabildo approximates a local community.

Refugee status (*exiled*)

This categorical variable captures the displacement status of the civilian groups that create a peace community, as accurately as sources permit. They may be:

1	Refugee communities and other exiled populations based outside of their home territory (< 5 years since the community arrived in their present territory).
2	Domestic civilian communities based in their home territory. Note that Villages are coded 2 if there is no mention of displacement in the sources examined.
3	Refugee communities that return to their home territory to create the peace community
4	Domestic civilian communities based in their home territory that attract refugee communities and other exiled populations into the community (in effect this is 2 + 1).
0	Unable to categorise displacement status of civilian group from source material.

Formation (*formation*)

How did the peace community form? This categorical variable codes two types:

1	Unilateral peace communities are formed without prior discussion, consultation or negotiation with any armed conflict actors
2	Pacted peace communities directly consult, discuss or negotiate with one or more armed conflict actors to create the peace community. For example. if peace communities discuss their intention to form a peace community with the state, this would be coded 2.
0	Unable to categorise from source material.

Prevent or end (*end*)

This variable indicates whether the peace community was created to prevent local violence “1”, or to end local violence “2”.

1	Preventative communities anticipate that violence may emerge locally, and act to prevent this occurrence. For example, a preventative peace community may form prior to the anticipated arrival of rebel groups to the territory.
2	Reactive communities respond to local violence that is already taking place. A reactive community may form a peace community following a period of violence in the territory of the community.
0	Unable to categorise from source material.

Prior noncooperation

Have civilians engaged in noncooperation with armed actors, prior to the emergence of the peace community? If yes, what form of noncooperation did this take? Noncooperation involves actions that push the boundaries of acceptable behaviour in the eyes of armed conflict actors.

There are eleven possible types of noncooperation recorded in this dataset. Coders should code “1” for each category of noncooperation the community engaged in prior to the peace community. Where no evidence is found for a category of prior noncooperation, coders should instead code “0” for that category. For example, if a community has engaged in protest and hunger strikes, they should code “1” for *prior_nonco3* and *prior_nonco10* in the data collection document, and “0” for all other categories.

<i>prior_nonco1</i>	None	Where no evidence of prior noncooperation is found from review of source documents, coders should code 1.
<i>prior_nonco2</i>	Everyday resistance	Everyday resistance involves individual forms of resistance with little coordination between civilians and are typically covert and informal. An example is anti-armed actor graffiti. Given the nature of everyday resistance, coding for

		this form of noncooperation may be challenging since these forms of resistance may not be documented.
<i>prior_nonco3</i>	Protest	Protest involves public demonstrations against armed actors, which are observable, public, collective (i.e. involve multiple civilians) and often organized.
<i>prior_nonco4</i>	Public denunciation	Public denunciations involve one or more civilians publically speaking out against armed actors, for example by going to the press to complain about their treatment of civilians.
<i>prior_nonco5</i>	Social noncooperation	Social noncooperation <i>prior_nonco6</i> is the refusal to engage in normal social relations with armed actors, for example by refusing to allow armed actors to join in social activities such as festivals in the territory.
<i>prior_nonco6</i>	No prior interaction with armed actors.	Armed conflict actors have not been present in the territory of the peace community prior to the peace community being created, therefore no prior interaction.
<i>prior_nonco7</i>	Prior cooperation	Civilians previously cooperated with armed actors, e.g. evidence that civilians provided information to armed conflict actors, shelter or food.
<i>prior_nonco8</i>	Prior violent noncooperation	Some villages might have reacted to armed conflict actors with the use of force, in the past, e.g. evidence that civilians engaged in clandestine attacks against armed conflict actors, or participated in violent riots that targeted armed conflict actors or their actions.

<i>prior_nonco9</i>	Previous attempt at creating a peace community	Some villages may have unsuccessfully sought to create a peace community in the past.
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NGO support to emerge (*ngo_emerged*)

This variable indicates whether one or more NGOs provided at least one form of support to the peace community when it was set up (i.e up to the first year of the peace community's existence).

Coders should code "1" if sources indicate that at least one NGO provided support to the peace community within the first year after its inception date. Where no evidence is found that the peace community received support from NGOs during its first year, coders should instead code "0."

NGO support during lifetime (*ngo_during*)

This variable indicates whether the peace community received support of NGOs during its lifetime. Coders should code "1" if sources indicate that at least one NGO provided support to the peace community during its lifetime (i.e. at least one year after its inception date and before its termination date). Where no evidence is found that the peace community received support from NGOs during its lifetime, coders should instead code "0."

NGO name (*ngo_name*)

If the peace community emerged with the support or assistance of NGOs, coders document their name(s) here. Otherwise the cell is left blank.

Types of NGO support

How did NGO(s) support or assist the community? When NGOs provide support to peace communities during their inception, that is during the first year after their inception date, coders code "1" for each of the following types of support:

<i>supportemerged_ngo1</i>	Introduced the idea of creating a peace community.
<i>supportemerged_ngo2</i>	Designed community institutions.
<i>supportemerged_ngo3</i>	Provided training.
<i>supportemerged_ngo4</i>	Provided guidance.
<i>supportemerged_ngo5</i>	Oversight and protective actions of the community, including mediating internal disputes.
<i>supportemerged_ngo6</i>	Publicity of community and/or the behaviour of armed groups.
<i>supportemerged_ngo7</i>	Accompaniment to visit other peace communities.
<i>supportemerged_ngo8</i>	Exchange ideas about strategies of nonviolence.
<i>supportemerged_ngo9</i>	Act as a mediator for the community and armed actors.
<i>supportemerged_ngo10</i>	Accompaniment of the peace community.

Coders should instead code “0” where no evidence is found that the peace community received each type of support during its first year.

When NGOs provide support to peace communities during the lifetime of the community, that is to say at least a year following their inception date, coders code “1” for each of the following types of support:

<i>support_ngo1</i>	Introduced the idea of creating a peace community.
<i>support_ngo2</i>	Designed community institutions.
<i>support_ngo3</i>	Provided training.
<i>support_ngo4</i>	Provided guidance.
<i>support_ngo5</i>	Oversight and protective actions of the community, including mediating internal disputes.
<i>support_ngo6</i>	Publicity of community and/or the behaviour of armed groups.
<i>support_ngo7</i>	Accompaniment to visit other peace communities.
<i>support_ngo8</i>	Exchange ideas about strategies of nonviolence.
<i>support_ngo9</i>	Act as a mediator for the community and armed actors.
<i>support_ngo10</i>	Accompaniment of the peace community.

Coders should instead code “0” where no evidence is found that the peace community received each type of support during its lifetime (> 1 year after inception).

Faith institution support to emerge (*faith_emerged*)

This variable indicates whether one or more faith institutions provided at least one form of support to the peace community when it was set up. Coders should code “1” if at least one faith institution supported the peace community while it was set up (i.e. during the first year from its inception date). Where no evidence is found that the peace community received support from faith institutions during its first year, coders should instead code “0.”

Faith support during lifetime (*faith_during*)

This variable indicates whether the peace community received support of faith institution(s) during its lifetime.

Coders should code “1” if sources indicate that at least one faith institution provided support to the peace community during its lifetime (i.e. at least one year after its inception date and before its termination date). Where no evidence is found that the peace community received support from faith institutions during its lifetime, coders should instead code “0.”

Faith institution name (*faith_name*)

If the peace community emerged with the support or assistance of one or more faith institutions, coders document their name(s) here. Otherwise the cell is left blank.

Types of support from faith institutions

How did faith institution(s) support or assist the community? When faith institutions provide support to peace communities during their inception, that is during the first year after their inception date, coders code “1” for each of the following types of support:

<i>supportemerged_fath1</i>	Introduced the idea of creating a peace community.
<i>supportemerged_fath2</i>	Designed community institutions.
<i>supportemerged_fath3</i>	Provided training.
<i>supportemerged_fath4</i>	Provided guidance.

<i>supportemerged_fath5</i>	Oversight and protective actions of the community, including mediating internal disputes.
<i>supportemerged_fath6</i>	Publicity of community and/or the behaviour of armed groups.
<i>supportemerged_fath7</i>	Accompaniment to visit other peace communities.
<i>supportemerged_fath8</i>	Exchange ideas about strategies of nonviolence.
<i>supportemerged_fath9</i>	Act as a mediator for the community and armed actors.
<i>supportemerged_faith10</i>	Accompany the peace community.

Coders should instead code “0” where no evidence is found that the peace community received each type of support during its initiation (< 1 year after inception).

When faith institutions provide support to peace communities during the lifetime of the community, that is to say at least a year following their inception date, coders code “1” for each of the following types of support:

<i>support_fath1</i>	Introduced the idea of creating a peace community.
<i>support_fath2</i>	Designed community institutions.
<i>support_fath3</i>	Provided training.
<i>support_fath4</i>	Provided guidance.
<i>support_fath5</i>	Oversight and protective actions of the community, including mediating internal disputes.
<i>support_fath6</i>	Publicity of community and/or the behaviour of armed groups.
<i>support_fath7</i>	Accompaniment to visit other peace communities.
<i>support_fath8</i>	Exchange ideas about strategies of nonviolence.
<i>support_fath9</i>	Act as a mediator for the community and armed actors.
<i>support_faith10</i>	Accompany the peace community.

Coders should instead code “0” where no evidence is found that the peace community received each type of support during its lifetime (> 1 year after inception).

Other supporter at inception (*other_emerged*)

This variable indicates whether the peace community emerged with the support of another external actor. “1” indicates that another external actor supported the peace community during its inception. An example of another actor might be another peace community, who, for example, provides training or guidance to civilians. Otherwise, code “0.”

Other name (*othername*)

If the peace community emerged with the support other actor(s), coders should document their name(s) here. There are two sets of variables which detail the names of other supportive actors: *othername_1* and *othername_2*. This enables users of the dataset to directly link the support types provided to the actor that provided the support.

Types of support from others

When others provide support to peace communities during their inception, that is during the first year after their inception date, coders code “1” for each of the following support types;

<i>supportemerged_other1</i>	Introduced the idea of creating a peace community.
<i>supportemerged_other2</i>	Designed community institutions.
<i>supportemerged_other3</i>	Provided training.
<i>supportemerged_other4</i>	Provided guidance.
<i>supportemerged_other5</i>	Oversight and protective actions of the community, including mediating internal disputes.
<i>supportemerged_other6</i>	Publicity of community and/or the behaviour of armed groups.
<i>supportemerged_other7</i>	Accompaniment to visit other peace communities.
<i>supportemerged_other8</i>	Exchange ideas about strategies of nonviolence.
<i>supportemerged_other9</i>	Act as a mediator for the community and armed actors.
<i>supportemerged_other10</i>	Accompany the peace community.
<i>supportemerged_other11</i>	Purchased land for the peace community.

Coders should instead code “0” where no evidence is found that the peace community received each type of support during its initiation (< 1 year after inception).

When others provide support to peace communities during the lifetime of the community, that is to say at least a year following their inception date, coders code “1” for each of the following support types:

<i>support_other1</i>	Introduced the idea of creating a peace community.
<i>support_other2</i>	Designed community institutions.
<i>support_other3</i>	Provided training.
<i>support_other4</i>	Provided guidance.
<i>support_other5</i>	Oversight and protective actions of the community, including mediating internal disputes.
<i>support_other6</i>	Publicity of community and/or the behaviour of armed groups.
<i>support_other7</i>	Accompaniment to visit other peace communities.
<i>support_other8</i>	Exchange ideas about strategies of nonviolence.
<i>support_other9</i>	Act as a mediator for the community and armed actors.
<i>support_other10</i>	Accompany the peace community.
<i>support_other11</i>	Purchased land for the peace community.

Coders should instead code “0” where no evidence is found that the peace community received each type of support during its lifetime (> 1 year after inception).

There are two sets of variables for each support type listed above, to enable users of the dataset to directly link the support types provided to the actor that provided that support: e.g. *supportemerged_other1* indicates that other actor 1 (whose name is documented with variable *othername_1*) introduced the idea of creating a peace community, and *supportemerged2_other1* refers to the second supportive actor (whose name is documented with the variable *othername_2*) introducing the idea of creating a peace community.

Details of peace community formation (*det_formed*)

This text field provides information about the origins of the peace community whenever available. For example, coders should aim to document the situations, events and circumstances which led to the peace community being formed. It may be difficult to find information about this. If no information is available this variable is left blank.

Date formed or first mentioned (*foundyear, foundmo, foundday*)

These three variables record the exact date when the peace community was formed or first mentioned in sources. The peace community might have been newly created on this date or an already existing community might have met all the criteria for inclusion on this date. For example, if a community announces that they will no longer permit the use of physical violence within the boundary of the peace community, then this variable codes the announcement date, not the earlier date in which conflict-affected civilians formed an organized community with the objective of creating peace.

The information on the creation of the peace community is as precise as possible. If a source refers to a time range rather than a specific date (e.g. referring to 'the 1990s' instead of a specific year), then the earliest time point of the given range is coded (e.g. 'the 1990s' is coded as 1990, etc). If sources record multiple dates, similarly the earliest time point will be recorded in the dataset.

Comments regarding date formed (*comm_formed*)

This variable indicates whether sources reported the exact day, month, year or decade. If different sources document different dates of formation, coders should note this here. For example, if the sources report the exact day, then write "exact day" in the data collection document.

Date moved to new location (*moveyear, movemo, moveday*)

Sometimes groups of civilians create a peace community in one location, and then move somewhere else whilst sustaining their strategy. In these cases, these three variables record the date the civilian group moved to location.

Termination of community (*termyear, termmo, termday*)

These three variables records the exact date when the peace community was terminated. The peace community might have officially disbanded on this date, or it might be the date when evidence suggests that the community no longer met all the criteria for inclusion. For example, if a community resorts to collective violence

because of recent threats by armed groups, then this variable codes the date of using violent methods. Collective violence does not include one-off violent events by a small number of civilians (< 5) from the community. Collective violence by > 5 civilians that subsequently break from the community also does not indicate the termination of the peace community, rather it indicates the emergence of an armed faction in the territory.

The information on the termination date of the peace community is as precise as possible. If a source refers to a time range rather than a specific date (e.g. referring to 'the 1990s' instead of a specific year), then the earliest time point of the given range is coded (e.g. 'the 1990s' is coded as 1990, etc). If sources record multiple dates, similarly the earliest time point will be recorded in the dataset. If the peace community is ongoing as of the data collection date, coders are asked to type 2021 for the duration year.

Ongoing (*ongoing*)

This dummy variable indicates with a "1" that the peace community is ongoing at the data collection date.

Duration (*duration*)

I calculate the duration in days of each peace community by subtracting the inception date from the termination date. I then convert duration in days, *duration_in_days* into duration in months, *duration_in_months*, and in years, *duration_in_years*. I include a dummy *unknown_duration* where either the inception or termination date is unknown. I have also created a series of dummies for each of the following duration categories:

<= 1 year

<= 5 years

> 5 years

> 10 years

> 15 years

> 20 years

> 25 years

> 30 years

Other goals (*other_goals*)

Peace communities are often formed with several goals in mind. This text box allows coders to document the other stated goals of the peace community.

Inspired by (*inspired_by*)

Some civilians adopt the strategy of creating a peace community upon hearing of another peace community's success. Where this is documented in the source materials reviewed, the name of the peace community that inspired the group of civilians is written in this cell.

Sources (*sources*)

This cell provides the citations for all of the sources consulted for this entry in the dataset. A link to each of the sources consulted is then provided in sources link_1 to sources link_14.

Number of sources (*sources_no*)

Number of total sources containing information that were consulted for this entry.

Coder notes (*coder_notes*)

This is a text box used by coders to leave notes on the case not captured by the coding structure.

4. Coding process

How evidence is recorded

Each coder records information in their own data collection document, following the template at all times. To improve transparency of the coding decisions made in this dataset, each coding decision is supported with one piece of information. Coders paste a link to the source document for each coding decision in a separate column of the database, as well as pasting the specific text from the source document that supports their decision. Only one item is required for each coding decision. For disputed information, coders rely on the most cited and/or most common estimates. Coders list all sources that were used to come to their decision within the dataset, using the Harvard referencing style.

5. Cases with insufficient information

Potential cases with insufficient information to determine inclusion are listed below.

Country	Community and/or Location with insufficient information	Notes
Colombia	Aguachica peace territory	There was a peace referendum in Aguachica which was successful, however unable to obtain evidence of sustained organization of the community in pursuit of peace.
Colombia	Arauquita (Arauca, Colombia)	
Colombia	Asamblea Municipal Constituyente de La Argentina (departamento: Huila)	La Argentina set up a Municipal Constituent Assembly. However, not all Constituent Assemblies have local peace as an objective (although some, like Tarso and Mogotes, did), and instead focus on fostering grassroots democracy projects to enfranchise local communities. This case is dismissed due to a lack of available information to code the inclusion criteria.
Colombia	Asamblea Municipal Constituyente de Tarqui	
Colombia	Asociación Campesina de Arauca (ACA)	
Colombia	Asociación Campesina del Sur del Caquetá (ASOCOSURC)	
Colombia	Asociación de Municipios de Alta Ariari - consists of Casillo, Dorado, Guamal, Frente de Oro, Lejana, Cubarral and San Martin	
Colombia	Asociación de Municipios de Antioquia Oriente - comprising 23 municipios	
Colombia	Barranquilla (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	Boyacá (including the communities of: Sogamoso, Tibasosa, Paipa, Cerinza)	
Colombia	Caramanta - (North Pacific)	
Colombia	Corinto peace territory	Described as a peace territory (García-Durán 2006, 9). However, no further information obtained through research.
Colombia	Corozal (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	Corozal (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	Corregimiento de Olival in Municipio de Suaita in Santander	
Colombia	Don Matias	
Colombia	Dosquebradas	
Colombia	Fundacion	
Colombia	Granada	

Country	Community and/or Location with insufficient information	Notes
Colombia	Guatapé	The objectives of movements in this area related to flooding and forced relocation (Bouvier 2009 282) rather than local peace. Unclear whether specific communities mobilized, or individuals from different communities participated in a broader movement. This was identified as a local initiative to deepen democracy (García-Durán 2006, 7). No further information identified through searches. Bouvier, B.M., 2006. Harbingers of Hope Peace Initiatives in Colombia. United States Institute of Peace: Special Report 169. Available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/697123F9F38170F2852571CC006938D5-usip-col-31jul.pdf
Colombia	Ipiales in Narino (Colombia – South Pacific / Western Cordillera)	
Colombia	La Montanita (Caquetá, Colombia)	
Colombia	Magangue	
Colombia	Malambo (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	Malambo (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	Marinilla	Described as one of REDEPAZ's 100 municipios on the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution Zones of Peace online database, however no further information could be obtained through desk research.
Colombia	Medellín peace territory	Described as a peace territory (García Duran 2006, 9). However, no further information obtained through research.
Colombia	Mocoa in Putumayo (Colombia – South Pacific / Western Cordillera)	
Colombia	Montenegro	
Colombia	Morales	Aheramiga is a human rights organization (rather than a community) that advises, strengthens, and creates Community Action Boards in places where the social fabric has been destroyed by violence. They work only at the request of other organizations in El Bagre and Nechi municipalities (Antioquia); and Santa Rosa del Sur, Arenales, Morales, Montecristo, and Tiquisio in Southern Bolivar. (PBI Colombia) No other information identified.
Colombia	Palenque de San Basilio / San Basilio de Palenque	An autonomous afrodescendiente community founded in the 1600s by escaped slaves ("palenque" is the Spanish term for such walled cities established by escaped slaves, similar to "quilombo" in Brazil). Inhabited by around 3,500 afrodescendiente people who still preserve ancestral traditions in their culture and community organizations/institutions, the village was incorporated as a UNESCO Heritage Site in the 2000s. https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/cultural-space-of-palenque-de-san-basilio-00102
Colombia	Pasto	
Colombia	Peace zone in Cuamba (Niassa province, Mozambique)	
Colombia	Perira	
Colombia	Plato (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	Proyecto Integral de Caloto	
Colombia	Proyecto Unidad Páez	

Country	Community and/or Location with insufficient information	Notes
Colombia	Puerto Asís	<p>Motivation behind civic mobilization in Puerto Asís does not mention peace but instead environmental demands and issues relating to health care, infrastructure, land, etc. (Exception 5/28/83 Presentation of Demands in Puerto Asís towards to Municipal Government relating to Human Rights and Paramilitary Presence). Available at: https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/between-guerrillas-state-i-cocalero-movement/docview/304698630/se-2?accountid=14511</p> <p>Table 6 on pp. 102-103 (pp. 126-127 in the pdf reader) of the link above lists civic strikes/threats/mobilizations/takeovers including dates, action, municipalities, opposing agency, motivation, and participants.</p>
Colombia	Puerto Leguizamo (Colombia – South Pacific / Western Cordillera)	
Colombia	Puerto Wilches peace territory, Columbia	
Colombia	Riachuelo, Charalá (municipio), Santander (departamento)	<p>Described by Esperanza Hernandez Delgado (2002) as a peace experience, however further research does not identify whether or not this meets the inclusion criteria. The majority of results relate to the creation of a process for reparations for victims, and discussions of sexual assault that residents faced during the conflict in this village.</p>
Colombia	Riosucio (Caldas)	
Colombia	Rivera	
Colombia	Sabanalarga (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	Sabanalarga (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	San Jacinto (Colombia - Caribe)	<p>There is insufficient information to classify this case. However, note that sources indicate that "San Jacinto was peaceful until the guerrilla forces arrived; once that happened, their presence drew the fire of the paramilitary forces. [...] many of the local residents left. The result was that the area became known as a coca zone, and broadly painted as sympathetic to the FARC-EP" (Paarlberg-Kvam 2016: 140).</p> <p>Paarlberg-Kvam, K. (2016). The key to peace is ours: Women's peacebuilding in twenty-first century Colombia (Order No. 10246927). Available from ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations and Theses</p>
Colombia	Santa Marta	
Colombia	Sibundoy (Colombia – South Pacific / Western Cordillera)	
Colombia	Sincelejo (Colombia - Caribe)	<p>No information on a peace community located in this area. However, there are numerous peacebuilding activities in Sincelejo as it is an important hub for meetings and exchange about peace efforts in the Montes de Maria region. Many NGOs and organizations (e.g. Sembrandopaz, Asvidas association, Caribbean Commission for Reconciliation (funded by USIP) are active there.</p>
Colombia	Sonson	
Colombia	Tulua in Valle de Cauca (Colombia – South Pacific / Western Cordillera)	<p>Described as Zona de Reserva Campesina (ZRC), similar to ASCAMCAT and ACVC. However, insufficient information through desk research.</p>

Country	Community and/or Location with insufficient information	Notes
Colombia	Ungía Peace Territory, Columbia	
Colombia	Uramita (Antioquia, Colombia)	
Colombia	Valencia (Cordoba, Colombia)	
Colombia	Villanueva (Colombia - Caribe)	
Colombia	Villavicencio peace territory	Described as a peace territory (García Duran 2006, 9). However, no further information obtained through research.
Colombia	Zona Indígena de Planadas	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Dungu and Faradje, villages situated in Hautuélé District, DRC	Local peace initiatives identified that do not appear to involve community as a whole, but rather segments of the community, such as children in Dungu. Insufficient information for Faradje.
Ivory Coast	Guidoubaï, Ivory Coast	
Ivory Coast	Soukoura village (and perhaps other villages located in the protected forest of Gouindebe Zagné), Ivory Coast, Africa	
Ivory Coast	Tabou, Ivory Coast	The community announced that they would register individuals coming in and out of communities, in order to preserve peace. (https://www.aip.ci/cote-divoire-aip-le-prefet-de-tabou-invite-la-population-a-la-vigilance-pour-preserver-la-paix-sociale/). However, not enough information to determine whether this initiative was sustained.
Mozambique	Golombi community	
Mozambique	Derre community	Derre is a small community. The chief's protection through magical powers resembles the mobilization by Capiteni in Golombi, Mozambique. Thirty women were identified as involved in the mobilization. However, it appears likely that rest of the community contributed to protection by reinforcing the belief in Gadinala's powers, thus scaring RENAMO. However, there is insufficient evidence for sustained organization and community mobilization in the sources reviewed, thus this case is excluded. Wilson, K. B. 1992. "Cults of Violence and Counter-Violence in Mozambique." <i>Journal of Southern African Studies</i>

Country	Community and/or Location with insufficient information	Notes
Syria	Maaloula, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria	<p>Lack of evidence for sustained organization, or evidence entire community involved. It seems as though the community negotiated its neutrality from the conflict, based on the statement by the Free Syrian Army on September 12, 2013 (Khaleej Times). Statement from the community leader that they decided that they would not be part of the war 20 months (prior to November 2012) when it started.</p> <p>"Maloula was initially caught between the contending forces of the Syrian government and the FSA, and later also the Islamist Jabhat al-Nusra front. Even with these pressures, unity was seen among the population in the reluctance of residents to classify themselves by religion, instead simply saying, "I am from Maloula" (Di Giovanni, 2012)</p> <p>https://www.khaleejtimes.com/region/syrian-rebels-announce-withdrawal-from-christian-town</p> <p>https://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/22/world/middleeast/maloula-is-a-diverse-haven-from-syrias-horrors.html</p> <p>https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/C91F87EFCD695C9A72180363BC71E9B8/9781316671887c9_p270-299_CBO.pdf/civilian_autonomy_around_the_world.pdf</p>

Country	Community and/or Location with insufficient information	Notes
Syria	Yabroud, Rif Dimashq governorate, Syria	<p>The city formed a civilian council to seek to prevent violence and developed internal conflict management procedures as well. This strategy sustained between 2011 and 2014, when the city was taken by the Syrian army. However, it seems that there is some contention as to whether the council was a civilian council, or in fact a form of rebel governance. I exclude the case on the basis of not having enough information for classification.</p> <p>http://www.icip-perlapau.cat/e-review/issue-18-november-2013/syria-nonviolence-war-time.htm</p> <p>https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/C91F87EFCD695C9A72180363BC71E9B8/9781316671887c9_p270-299_CBO.pdf/civilian_autonomy_around_the_world.pdf</p> <p>https://www.smh.com.au/world/syrian-government-forces-seize-town-in-deep-blow-to-opposition-20140317-hvjmz.html</p> <p>https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10358200/Inside-Syrias-model-town-Peace-until-al-Qaeda-arrived.html</p> <p>https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/in-syria-an-oasis-from-the-war/2012/07/15/gJQA96xCnW_story.html</p> <p>https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/10/world/middleeast/nuns-released-by-syrians-after-three-month-ordeal.html</p> <p>https://www.theguardian.com/world/middle-east-live/2011/nov/18/egypt-and-syria-protests-live-updates</p>

6. Borderline cases

Cases that met at least 3 of the inclusion criteria are listed below, by country.

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Afghanistan	Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers, Bamyan Province	<p>This is a segment of the community (youths), rather than the community as a whole.</p> <p>https://theleap.org/portfolio-items/we-are-the-peace-weve-been-waiting-for-meet-the-afghan-youth-peace-volunteers-2/</p>	Community mobilization
Afghanistan	Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers, Kabul Province	<p>This is a segment of the community (youths), rather than the community as a whole.</p> <p>https://theleap.org/portfolio-items/we-are-the-peace-weve-been-waiting-for-meet-the-afghan-youth-peace-volunteers-2/</p>	Community mobilization
Afghanistan	ArtLords	<p>This is an NGO.</p> <p>https://www.artlords.co/about-us/</p>	Community Mobilization

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Afghanistan	Kamdesh village, Nurestan	Armed resistance. Limited information available from research undertaken. Jaffe, Greg. 2009. "U.S. Plans to Shift Forces to Populated Areas of Afghanistan." The Washington Post, September 22, 2009. Cited in (as I cannot find the original article written by Jaffe): https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/202DAC78B0EB02BF94309C5AC0B192C3/9781316671887c1_p1-32_CBO.pdf/introduction_civilian_autonomy_in_civil_war.pdf	Nonviolent Methods Local Peace
Afghanistan	Nangahar	Armed resistance against the Taliban. https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB124801971283362873	Nonviolent Methods Local Peace
Afghanistan	People's Peace Movement - Helmand	Only a few hundred civilians involved, i.e., not a community. Refer to https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/blog_post/afghanistan-the-helmand-peace-march-two-years-on/	Community Mobilization
Afghanistan	Sanayee Development Organization (SDO)	This is an NGO. https://www.peaceinsight.org/en/organizations/sd/?location=afghanistanandtheme#Operational%20Areas . https://www.sanayee.org.af	Community mobilization
Afghanistan	Shuhada Organization	This is an NGO. https://www.devex.com/organizations/shuhada-organization-36721	Community Mobilization
Afghanistan	Villages in Helmand province	Armed resistance against foreign troops. https://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/03/world/asia/03helmand.html	Nonviolent Methods Local Peace
Afghanistan	Youth for Peace movement	This is a youth peace movement, relating to only one segment of society, and not to a specific community. https://www.developmentaid.org/#!/organizations/view/115565/youth-for-peace-movement	Community Mobilization
Colombia	Asociación Campesina de Buenos Aires (ASOCAB)	The Association of Peasants of Buenos Aires, ASOCAB, was legally created in 1998 with the objective of producing, marketing, and processing agricultural products; provide health services to the community and have political leadership in economic matters. (https://www-unidadvictimas-gov-co.translate.google.es/asocab/212?_x_tr_sl=esand_x_tr_tl=enand_x_tr_rl=enand_x_tr_pto=nui,sc)	Local Peace
Colombia	Caicedo – (North Pacific)	The community is organized to ensure the peasants are able to trade without being attacked	Local Peace
Colombia	Cartagena del Chaira (Caquetá, Colombia)	Sources suggest the town was demilitarised by the government in the late 1990s as a result of negotiations with the FARC, and previously was under control of the FARC. No evidence obtained to suggest a peace community in this location. https://www-proquest-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/docview/231019308/DA4C471277DB4E7APQ/1?accountid=14511	Community mobilization Sustained Organization
Colombia	Comité Cívico del Sur de Bolívar (CCSB)	The aims of the community are mostly about reconciliation/reintegration of demobilized soldiers/guerrilleros/paramilitaries and human rights protection.	Local Peace
Colombia	Florencia	Peace efforts do not appear to involve the community as a whole, rather relate to department-wide radio stations (initiated by RESANDER) that try to strengthen communities' peace efforts (broadcasting the 2016 peace agreement etc.) - the organising of these radio stations does not seem to stem from the communities. https://www-proquest-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/docview/2331815493/829DBA6DCA46459DPQ/1?accountid=14511	Community mobilization

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Colombia	Gamarra	Part of the PDPM (Magdalena Medio Peace and Development Programme), which is an NGO. Refer to: https://www-irenees-net.translate.goog/bdf_fiche-acteurs-159_es.html?_x_tr_sl=esand_x_tr_tl=enand_x_tr_hl=enand_x_tr_pto=nui,sc	Community mobilization
Colombia	La María Piendamó also known as the Territory of Peace, Dialogue, and Coexistence	This is a mediation institution relating to the peace agreement at the national rather than local level. " https://www-cric-colombia-org.translate.goog/portal/proyecto-politico/defensa-vida-ddhh-cric/territorio-de-dialogo-y-negociacion/?_x_tr_sl=esand_x_tr_tl=enand_x_tr_hl=enand_x_tr_pto=nui,sc	Local Peace
Colombia	Peasant Self-Defense Force of Córdoba and Urabá (Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá, or ACCU)	Armed resistance. Cante, F., Quehl, H. 2015. Handbook of Research on Transitional Justice and Peace Building in Turbulent Regions. [online]. IGI Global. Available at: < https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Handbook_of_Research_on_Transitional_Jus/DYZACwAAQBAJ?hl=enandgbpv=1 >. [Accessed on 7 June, 2021].	Nonviolent Methods Local Peace
Colombia	Red Juvenile Youth Network of Medellín	This is a youth network. https://peacepresence.org/what-we-do/red-juvenil/	Community mobilization.
Colombia	Sant Egidio organization (Mozambique)	"Sant Egidio is.... a religious group active in faith-based peace making. It is an international Catholic NGO that takes part in attempts at peace making in various conflicts in many parts of the world " (Bouta et al., 2005: 71)). This is an NGO, not a community group. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14662040802659033?needAccess=true	Community mobilization
Colombia	Sevilla (Colombia – South Pacific / Western Cordillera)	"Paz Diversa" is a community-founded NGO/foundation in Sevilla, Valle del Cauca. Its aims are to strengthen local democracy in the municipality, enfranchise citizens, and facilitate nonviolent resolution of disputes within the community. No mention of pursuing local peace in the context of the armed conflict. http://repositorio.utp.edu.co/dspace/bitstream/handle/11059/6424/3613R436.pdf	Community mobilization Local Peace
Colombia	Tierralta (Cordoba , Colombia)	Sources reviewed identified land issues as principal objective, no mention of community seeking local peace https://pbicolombia.org/2018/01/08/let-this-year-be-over-2017-be-gone-bad-old-years-eve-good-new-years-eve/ and https://pbicolombia.org/2017/05/11/what-happened-in-colombia-between-january-and-march-of-this-year/	Local Peace
Colombia	Valle del Cauca Workers Association (ASTRACA)	The objective of this association is agrarian reform rather than ending or preventing local violence. Multiple reports here: https://prensarural-org.translate.goog/spip/spip.php?auteur2079and_x_tr_sl=esand_x_tr_tl=enand_x_tr_hl=enand_x_tr_pto=sc	Local Peace
Democratic Republic of Congo	ARMMK	This is an NGO for survivors of a massacre. Peace Insight. Association Des Rescapes Des Massacres de Makobola (ARMMK). Peace Insight.	Community Mobilization
Democratic Republic of Congo	Barza Intercommunautaire	The leaders of the 9 ethnic groups in the territory meet together to seek to avoid escalation of conflicts. They represent the community, but no evidence of wider community involvement. The Barza was created after a conference in Goma that brought together many people from North Kivu to foster communication and reconciliation. People wanted to strengthen reconciliation and prevent future conflict by establishing a structure for communication.	Community Mobilization

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Democratic Republic of Congo	Centre Lokolé (Search for Common Ground - SFCG)	This is an NGO. Search for Common Ground (SFCG) - (known locally as Centre Lokolé) collaborates with 100 local partners including radio stations, youth associations, religious organizations, and civil society networks.	Community mobilization
Democratic Republic of Congo	Chirezi Foundation (FOCHI)	This is an NGO.	Community mobilization
Democratic Republic of Congo	Coalition des Volontaires pour la Paix et le Développement (DRC)	This is an NGO which encourages local peacebuilding initiatives, organizes seminars, and other activities. "CVPD organizes training workshops bringing together community leaders from different ethnic groups in North Kivu, particularly in Masisi, Nyiragongo and Goma." Therefore, does not meet the community mobilization criteria. https://www.peaceinsight.org/en/organizations/coalition-des-volontaires-pour-la-paix-et-le-developpement/?location=dr-congoandtheme	Community mobilization
Democratic Republic of Congo	Community Alert Network (CAN)	This is a top-down initiative, set up externally by a branch of the UN, MONUSCO, and a process which involves their continued engagement for it to function to protect civilians. It also includes at least the threat of force, since MONUSCO are a military branch. This is a network of Congolese individuals in conflict areas. The network is designed to keep track and alert about movements from armed groups as a form of self-defence. Local Protection Committees are groups of community members elected by the community, or identified by CLAs, who receive MONUSCO training, participate in monthly meetings, identify protection threats in their communities, and develop local protection plans.	Community mobilization Nonviolent methods
Democratic Republic of Congo	Nyabiondo village, Masisi, North Kivu province	This is an example of civilians seeking to protect themselves through coexistence with armed actors in their territory and self-defence. The community aim to prevent violence against civilians in their territory, but do not resist local conflict taking place where they live. Not neutral from armed actors. "APCLS militiamen, government soldiers and national police officers have peacefully coexisted in Nyabiondo for over 12 months." (International Alert, 2013) -> not the case in any of the surrounding villages, towns. "One of the chiefs in Nyabiondo explained: 'The APCLS say that they are here to protect civilians and their property. And when we advocate [speak against] their abuses, we utilise this sentence' (interview October 2014). Reminding armed groups about their main objective, which is supposedly to protect the population, is an important strategy employed to prevent or dissuade violent behaviour." (Suarez, 2017: 62) Suarez, C. (2017). "Living between Two Lions": Civilian Protection Strategies during Armed Violence in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. <i>Journal of Peacebuilding and Development</i> , 12(3), pp.54–67.	Community Mobilization Local Peace

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Democratic Republic of Congo	Sebele village	<p>This is an example of civilians seeking to protect themselves through coexistence with armed actors in their territory and self-defence. The community aim to prevent violence against civilians in their territory, but do not resist local conflict taking place where they live. Not neutral from armed actors.</p> <p>"community alert networks' developed direct lines of communication between individuals and MONUSCO bases deployed nearby" (Suarez, 2017: 64). "There was also sophisticated understanding of the actors and patterns of violence, which informed a series of self-protection strategies aimed at mitigating the variety of threats participants encountered. This involved developing tactics to assess indirect and direct threats, negotiating with, and influencing the behaviour of armed groups, and exploiting the presence of opposing armed groups to manipulate threat perceptions." (Suarez, 2017: 59-60)</p> <p>"In Sebele a farmer noted: 'The Mai [PARC-FAAL] warn us before they fight. They tell us so we can leave and protect ourselves' (interview May 2015). For instance, there was an armed confrontation between APCLS and FARDC in Nyabiondo in April 2015. Many participants noted that they knew in advance that APCLS was coming, some even tried to warn MONUSCO about this, but apparently no actions were taken to alleviate these concerns." (Suarez, 2017: 60)</p> <p>Suarez, C. (2017). "Living between Two Lions": Civilian Protection Strategies during Armed Violence in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. <i>Journal of Peacebuilding and Development</i>, 12(3), pp.54–67.</p> <p>"As one resident in Sebele explained: 'They [PARC-FAAL] are in the forest but their relatives are here, and they would tell them if they are serious or not [about coming to fight in Sebele]. We turn to these people for information' (interview May 2015)" (Suarez, 2017: 60)</p>	Community Mobilization Local Peace
Democratic Republic of Congo	Société civile de Maniema (SOCIMA)	<p>This is an NGO.</p> <p>https://www.radiookapi.net/2020/03/17/actualite/societe/maniema-le-gouverneur-suspend-toute-activite-de-la-societe-civile-sur</p>	Community Mobilization
Guatemala	Communities of People in Resistance (CPR) - Peten	<p>Civilians move to avoid violence - so the local peace inclusions criteria are not met.</p> <p>EPICA and CHRLA. 1993. Out of the Shadows: the Communities of Population in Resistance in Guatemala. <i>Social Justice</i> 20 (53-54):143–162.</p> <p>https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/29766759.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ae71d8fc6c2918f320f8c396ab104eb9f</p>	Local Peace
Guatemala	Communities of People in Resistance (CPR)- Ixcan/ Victoria 20 de enero	<p>Civilians move to avoid violence - so the local peace inclusions criteria is not met.</p> <p>EPICA and CHRLA. 1993. Out of the Shadows: the Communities of Population in Resistance in Guatemala. <i>Social Justice</i> 20 (53-54):143–162.</p> <p>https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/29766759.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ae71d8fc6c2918f320f8c396ab104eb9f</p>	Local Peace
Guatemala	Communities of People in Resistance (CPR)- Sierra	<p>Civilians move to avoid violence - so the local peace inclusions criteria is not met.</p> <p>EPICA and CHRLA. 1993. Out of the Shadows: the Communities of Population in Resistance in Guatemala. <i>Social Justice</i> 20 (53-54):143–162.</p> <p>https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/29766759.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ae71d8fc6c2918f320f8c396ab104eb9f</p>	Local Peace

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Guatemala	The Runujel Junam Council of Ethnic Communities (CERJ). Santa Cruz del Quiche, El Quiche Department	This is a human rights NGO https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/160000/amr340311997en.pdf	Community mobilization Local Peace
Iraq	Anbar Province	The community uses violent methods. https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/18/world/middleeast/18iraq.html	Nonviolent Methods Local Peace
Ivory Coast	Dio, Ivory Coast	The peacebuilding initiative was set up by NGO Verbatims. The NGO set up a peace committee of 10 young people in the village. This therefore only involves a segment of the population. (https://www.proquest.com/docview/2494831916/C5DD1816F66E4178PQ/2?accountid=14511)	Community mobilization
Ivory Coast	Duékoué, Ivory Coast	This is a very short-term effort by a small number in the community to prevent inter-communal violence. Within 2 months massive massacres took place. "a town, more about religious differences and conflicts and trying to harmonise them (especially Ahoua Toure and Yahi Octave)" (https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/21647259.2018.1491276?needAccess=true AND https://news.abidjan.net/h/408102.html)	Community mobilization Sustained organization
Ivory Coast	Gagnoa	Insufficient information to reliably classify this potential case. "The town of Gagnoa is an interesting example in both showing how members of the community were active in creating an island of peace but at the same time showing how fortunate circumstances helped this zone to exist." "Following his intervention, the Sub Governor managed to find a negotiated solution between the different communities" Jeremy Allouche and Paul Jackson (2019) Zones of peace and local peace processes in Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone, <i>Peacebuilding</i> , 7:1, 71-87, DOI: 10.1080/21647259.2018.14912 Evidence of one peace rally, which is insufficient to demonstrate sustained organization. See https://www.proquest.com/docview/2460980803/2B119A8AB9BE4184PQ/2?accountid=14511	Sustained organization
Ivory Coast	Guiglo, Ivory Coast	This is a UN initiative. No evidence of sustained organization. "The people of Petit Guiglo, in Guiglo, 530 km west of Abidjan have made a commitment to continue living together in peace. During an inter-communal sensitization meeting organized by the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire on Friday, 23 August 2013" (https://reliefweb.int/report/c%3%B4te-divoire/inhabitants-petit-guiglo-pledge-continue-peaceful-coexistence)	Community mobilization Sustained organization

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Ivory Coast	Yacoli Dabouo or Yacolidabouo	<p>This is a village council comprised of representatives of the different communities within it that seeks to prevent land-related conflict within the village. The aims of the council are to prevent local violence; however, the village is not within an armed conflict location.</p> <p>"Some rural communities realised the potential of land-related violence as soon as the war started in 2002 and putting in place clear and consensual mechanisms for the usage of land. This was the case of the village of Yacoli Dabouo" AND "Des appels au pardon et à la paix ont été lancés à l'endroit des populations de Yacolidabouo" (Appeals for forgiveness and peace were launched vis-a-vis the populations of Yacolidabouo)</p> <p>"A village council, representing the different communities, was put in place, to sensitise about the illegal nature of selling land. All the land-to-land management and tenure transactions were administered and recorded by the management committee and then sent to the sub-prefect office for registration. This means that any point of discords happening after these transactions can be arbitrated by the sub-prefect office in a more transparent and neutral way." "Le village est dirigé par deux entités, un chef de canton et ses notables, garants de la tradition et des us et coutumes, puis d'un Conseil pour le développement du village, chargé d'assurer les aspects opérationnels des projets déployés par la communauté. "M. Zadi Kessy a demandé que les femmes et les jeunes filles intègrent le Conseil du village", ce qui a permis à ces dernières, autrefois reléguées, d'avoir une voix aux chapitres des discussions sur les projets de développement de Yacolidabouo, indique le chef canton Ika Serebou."</p> <p>Jeremy Allouche and Paul Jackson (2019) Zones of peace and local peace processes in Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone, <i>Peacebuilding</i>, 7:1, 71-87, DOI: 10.1080/21647259.2018.14912 AND reliefweb.int: Côte d'Ivoire: PDCI walks out of cabinet, more die in ethnic clashes https://reliefweb.int/report/c/C3%B4te-divoire/c/C3%B4te-d-ivoire-pdci-walks-out-cabinet-more-die-ethnic-clashes</p>	Conflict Location
Mozambique	Gorongosa communities	<p>Communities conducted reconciliation ceremonies following conflict, rather than during conflict.</p> <p>Ambos, K., Large, J. and Marieke Wierda (2010). <i>Building a Future on Peace and Justice: Studies on Transnational justice, Peace and development, the Nuremberg Declaration on Peace and Justice</i>. Berlin: Springer.</p>	Local Conflict
Mozambique	Maringue Spiritual PC	<p>Purification rituals of ex-combatants that do not involve the entire community.</p> <p>"Rebecca's husband took her to a nyanga, who made the spirit speak. The spirit was appeased, as he was willing to "heal" with her so she could become a nyanga herself. Rebecca said she never completely recovered, as she was not able to have children and she still felt weak, because, as she explained, "the crime was too big." Nevertheless, there was some sort of appeasement as being a nyanga provided her with some income as well as a certain degree of respect (and perhaps fear) from other community members (cf. Igreja et al. 2008; Marlin 2001)." (Wiegink, 2018: 147)</p> <p>Wiegink, N. (2018). <i>Violent Spirits and a Messy Peace: Against Romanticizing Local Understandings and Practices of Peace in Mozambique</i>. In: <i>Ethnographic Peace Research</i>. Springer Link.</p>	Community mobilization Sustained organization
Mozambique	Maringue, Mozambique	Relates to practices of purification, cleansing and healing are ways that allow reintegration of former soldiers into communities.	Conflict Location Community mobilization

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Mozambique	Naprama	<p>"In July 1990, Manuel Antonio's army consisted of only 400 followers (Maier, 1990:12), by December 1990, the Naprama forces were estimated to be between 3 and 6,000 (Schiller, 1990). (Schiller, 1990; Wilson, 1992:562) And by December 1991, Manuel Antonio had pacified almost two-thirds of the country's north, allowing over 100,000 refugees to return to their homelands.)" (Archambault, 2005: 46) Second quote (translation): "It must therefore be admitted that only Naprama was a prophetic movement in its own right." and "Manuel Antonio would have benefited from the fact that his authority's court of law really transcended the locality. He was a stranger to the region and was therefore outside the local political-religious system" (Archambault, 2005: 48). This refers to a pacifying army, rather than a single community.</p> <p>"Decorated with red ribbons and armed with spears and machetes, they marched in Indian lines chanting religious hymns and carrying bells made of tin cans in the direction of the territory to be pacified. In addition to the songs and bells, guerrillas occupying the areas under 'attack' generally escaped, and Renamo was in full confrontation with Napram until 1991 (Schiller, 1990:H3)." Also, "certain requirements, such as the exclusive use of small arms, abstinence from sex prior to combat, the prohibition of looting or assaulting assets (Legrand, 1993:100), as well as the prohibition of attempting to dodge rifle bullets or flee during a battle" (Archambault, 2005: 45). Note that marching with weapons suggests a willingness to use violence, therefore nonviolent methods inclusion criteria not met.</p>	Community Mobilization Nonviolent methods
Mozambique	ProPaz (Associação Instituto de Promoção de Paz)	<p>PROPAZ was created by two groups - FRELIMO ex-combatants, and RENAMO ex-combatants, which was not resigned to only one community, but rather was a broader movement.</p> <p>Smith, R. and van der Merwe, H. (2006). Netherlands institute for Southern Africa Struggles in Peacetime Working with ex-combatants in Mozambique: their work, their frustrations, and successes. [online] Amsterdam: Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa.</p>	Community mobilization
Nigeria	MCDF (Nigeria)	<p>This is a charity created by a Christian pastor, James Movel Wuye, and a Muslim imam, Muhammed Nurayn Ashafa, former enemies who "made the decision to turn away from similar paths of violence and militancy. Instead, they embraced non-violence, reconciliation and the advocacy of peaceful relations between their communities, and sought to encourage others to join them in this goal" (Haynes, 2009: 67)</p> <p>https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14662040802659033?needAccess=true</p>	Community mobilization
Nigeria	Ukwa community	<p>The conflict that the Ukwa community do not participate in relates to local conflicts in neighbouring territories relating to the presence of oil companies operating, rather than a broader conflict relating to the country as a whole. In this case the communities in Ukwa do not arm themselves against the oil companies, unlike other neighbouring territories.</p> <p>There is also no evidence of sustained organization to prevent local violence. Education is mentioned in the report, but with insufficient information. From the sources reviewed, this appears to be a case of inaction, rather than a community taking action against conflict or to prevent conflict.</p> <p>Onuoha, A. and Lolo, L. (2004). Case Study of Ukwa People of the Oil-rich Niger Delta of Nigeria. Collaborative Learning Projects, pp.1–27.</p> <p>https://www.cdacollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Case-Study-of-Ukwa-People-of-the-Oil-rich-Niger-Delta-of-Nigeria.pdf</p>	Local Conflict Sustained Organization

Country	Community and/or location	Why borderline?	Inclusion criteria not met
Syria	Local Coordination Committees	<p>Individuals are part of a national network that participate in protests across entire country, rather than within communities. Civil disobedience methods used by the network include a series of nightly protests in Hama, refusal to pay water, electricity, and telephone bills in the Duma suburb of Damascus. The network called for a two-day general strike on 5–6 February 2012. The Local Coordination Committees of Syria started in March 2011 from local groups that published reports about protests during the Syrian uprising and developed into a national network involved in journalism about protests and the protests themselves. The groups had developed from informal networks of friends and colleagues involved in dissidence that had existed for many years. Prior to the uprising, Syrian activists had brought in mobile telephones, satellite modems and computers in anticipation of Arab Spring protests developing in Syria.</p> <p>https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/oso/9780190056896.001.0001/oso-9780190056896-chapter-2</p> <p>https://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/50426?lang=en</p> <p>https://www.webcitation.org/65EV9Q1sK?url=http://www.lccsyria.org/about</p> <p>https://www.cspps.org/reconciliation-syria</p>	Community mobilization

7. Dismissed cases

Potential cases identified through the search criteria, for which at least 3 inclusion criteria were not met are dismissed and listed below by country.

Country	Community and/or location	Why dismissed?	Inclusion criteria not met
Colombia	La Comunidad de San Egidio	<p>It is a global peace movement, so does not meet the local peace inclusion criteria, or community mobilization criteria. Not located in a conflict zone.</p> <p>Sources: https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30008/langID/en/THE-COMMUNITY.html https://advance.lexis.com/api/permalink/eb448ce3-602e-41e6-bc64-86867c816e65/?context=1519360</p>	Local Peace Conflict Location Community mobilization
Colombia	Tumaco, Colombia	<p>Governmental counter-insurgency strategy was implemented which set up a "Strategic Zone of Comprehensive Intervention", involving coordinated civil and military efforts to clear the areas of armed groups. Tumaco was among the first towns where this was implemented. This is not a peace community, it is government-led, does not involved sustained organization nor nonviolent methods.</p>	Community mobilization Sustained organization Nonviolent methods

Country	Community and/or location	Why dismissed?	Inclusion criteria not met
Democratic Republic of Congo	Kalehe, in South Kivu region, DRC	Village is located in the Groupement Mpinga Sud, as part of the Chefferie des Bahavu. The local "chef" or "mwami" (local leader) stated that, "Mwami did not cooperate with the RCD and had to flee during the war. Only after a peace agreement was in sight (and in the words of respondents, after the population exercised enough pressure) did the RCD who governed the area let him come back with his family to resume his traditional position. What followed was an uneasy cooperation, whereby the Mwami was generally seen as the one to represent the interests of the population vis-à-vis the occupiers. Focus group discussants and interviewees (except from (former) RCD cadres) mentioned the Mwami as the first actor to bring peace to the region."	Community mobilization Sustained organization Conflict location
Iraq	Yathrib, Saladin Province	Lack of evidence for community mobilization- leaders (39 tribal leaders, members of parliament etc) engaged in dialogue and discussion to seek a means by which various tribes within Yathrib can coexist peacefully. Only evidence of one public statement, not of ongoing activities to seek local peace within each of the communities represented in the statement. This initiative also takes place after conflict, rather than during. https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/iraq-announcement-peaceful-coexistence-and-stabilization-agreement-yathrib	Sustained organization Community mobilization Conflict Location
Syria	Yarmouk Camp, Damascus, Syria	No evidence of sustained organization or that civilians themselves are the main activists here. A ceasefire agreement was reached by Mokhtar Lamani, the representative of UN-Arab League peace envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, rather than the community. https://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Dec-21/199421-palestinian-refugees-reclaim-syrian-camp.ashx	Sustained organization Community mobilization Local Peace

7. Countries searched with nil cases identified

Countries searched with nil observations identified are listed below. Note that the list below includes countries in which potential cases were identified, yet which did not meet all inclusion criteria or for which insufficient information to classify the case was available through desk research.

- Guatemala
- Ivory Coast
- Mozambique
- Syria
- Iraq

Appendix 2. Interview data

Fieldwork interviewees

Only a small number of interview respondents were present at the onset of peace communities, and only one was present at the onset of the ATCC. Therefore, although the majority were not able to provide first-hand evidence, this does reduce the possibility of a motive for providing biased accounts. The small number of first-hand accounts in my fieldwork interview data is offset by the sizeable set of first-hand accounts that I have obtained from historical interview data, detailed below. In addition to this, analysis of ATCC community archive documents were used to make up for the limited number of fieldwork interviews with individuals present at the onset of the ATCC. 27 of my interviews took place in Colombia. 1 of my interviews was conducted online.

Table 1. Interview data from fieldwork

Date	Respondent
27.11.2019	● A001 and A002
27.11. 2019	● A003
28.11.2019	● A004
29.11.2019	● A005
2.12.2019	● A006
3.12.2019	● A007
3.12.2019	● A008
5.12.2019	● A009
5.12.2019	● A010
6.12.2019	● A011
9.12.2019	● A012
9.12.2019	● A013
9.12.2019	● A014
10.12.2019	● A015
10.12.2019	● A016
11.12.2019	● A017
13.12.2019	● A018

Date	Respondent
13.12.2019	• A019
13.12.2019	• A020; A004
14.12.2019	• A020
16.12.2019	• A021
16.12.2019	• A022
22.12.2019	• A023
22.12.2019	• A024
22.12.2019	• A025
22.12.2019	• A026
22.12.2019	• A027
14.06.2020	• A028

Historical interview data

The majority of the interview transcripts obtained from Alejandro Sanz de Santamaria were with the founders present at the onset of the ATCC in La India, and all interviews were conducted there between 1988 and 1990. The interviews were open-ended.

Table 2. Historical interview data

Date	Respondent(s)
22.12.1988	• ATTC#1 and ATTC#2
18.08.1989	• ATCC#3
Date unknown	• ATCC#4
17.02.1989	• ATCC#1
30.06.1989	• ATCC#5

Semi-structured interview questions

The following forms a general list of questions and follow-up questions to field work interview respondents, the answers to which served as empirical material for this paper. Because the interviews were conducted as part of my broader doctoral study, the questions reflected here were in most cases combined with questions probing into

other elements of peacebuilding in Colombia, and the universe of cases of peace communities in Colombia. Some terms in the questions were altered depending on which organization the participant belonged to, their position, and my own prior knowledge of their conflict experiences. While most of the questions were part of each interview, not every interview contained all of the below questions depending on the nature and level of the respondent's involvement in peace movements in conflict-affected communities. Some questions were not repeated in later interviews, depending on whether knowledge saturation of a specific topic had already been obtained at that stage of the research. In some cases, second interviews were held with additional questions, to obtain more refined and detailed data.

1. *To former and/or current peace leaders:*

- 1.1. Where have peace communities/peace movements emerged and been active in Colombia?
- 1.2. Why, in your view, have peace communities/peace movements emerged and been active in these particular areas? Why, in your view, did they emerge when they did?
- 1.3. Prior to your involvement in the peace community/peace movement have you been politically active? If so, in what ways?
- 1.4. Why did you initiate the peace community/peace movement?
- 1.5. Who else was involved in the decision? Who first suggested the idea, and then who made the final decision?
- 1.6. Did you consider alternative actions at the time? If yes, what were they?
- 1.7. Had you considered initiating a peace community/peace movement before then?
- 1.8. What were your primary aims? In your view, what were the primary aims of those that joined you?
- 1.9. Did knowledge of other peace communities or peace movements influence your decision? If so, how, and which ones were relevant? Did you have connections to other peace communities or peace movements at the time?
- 1.10. Were external actors such as NGOs or religious organizations involved in the decision to initiate the peace community/peace movement? If yes, how did they influence the decision?

- 1.11. What were your first steps in setting up the peace community/peace movement? Did you encourage others to join you? If so, how?
- 1.12. Did you face opposition or threats in response? How did this affect your decision to set up the peace community/peace movement?
- 1.13. What are the main threats facing those that initiate peace communities/peace movements? Do those that do not participate face different threats? If so, what are they?

2. *To members of NGOs and civil society organizations:*

- 2.1. Where have peace communities/peace movements emerged and been active in Colombia?
- 2.2. Why, in your view, have peace communities/peace movements emerged and been active in these particular areas? Why, in your view, did they emerge when they did?
- 2.3. Why, in your view, did peace communities/peace movements not emerge elsewhere in the country at the time?
- 2.4. How have external actors such as NGOs or religious organizations been involved in the initiation of peace communities/peace movements? If yes, which organizations have been involved in which peace communities/peace movements? And which have been most influential?
- 2.5. What, in your view, are the primary aims of peace communities/peace movements in Colombia?
- 2.6. Why, in your view, do ordinary people join peace communities/peace movements?
- 2.7. What are the main threats facing those that initiate peace communities/peace movements? Do those that do not participate face different threats? If so, what are they?

3. *To people who have lived in areas where peace communities have emerged:*

- 3.1. Why, in your view, did the peace community/peace movements/nonviolent resistance emerge where you live? Why, in your view, did it emerge when it did?

- 3.2. Were external actors such as NGOs or religious organizations involved in the initiation of peace community/peace movement? Which NGOs or religious organizations have been most influential?
- 3.3. What are your views about the involvement of external actors?
- 3.4. What, in your view, are the primary aims of peace communities/peace movements?
- 3.5. Did you join the peace community or nonviolent resistance? If so, why did you join? If not, why not?
- 3.6. Why, in your view, have others joined peace communities/peace movements?
- 3.7. What are the main threats facing those that initiate peace communities/peace movements? Do those that do not participate face different threats? If so, what are they?
- 3.8. What was happening where you live when the peace community emerged?

Appendix 3. Ethics approval 1.

APPROVED Low Risk Application16421/001

VPRO.Ethics <ethics@ucl.ac.uk>

Mon 2019-10-28 11:06 AM

To: Hodge, Jennifer <jennifer.hodge.18@ucl.ac.uk>

Cc: Bakke, Kristin <kmbakke@ucl.ac.uk>; Wright, Nicholas <nicholaswright@ucl.ac.uk>; Radaelli, Claudio <c.radaelli@ucl.ac.uk>

 1 attachments (392 KB)

APPROVED 16421001 application .pdf;

Dear Jennifer, I am pleased to confirm that your study has been ethically approved by one of the Joint Chairs of the UCL REC, Professor Lynn Ang. She thought it was a well-prepared and thorough application. Please find attached an approval letter signed by the REC Chair. However, could you please confirm that a risk assessment has been completed and if oral consent is used that it will be witnessed and/or recorded. With best wishes for the research, Helen

Helen Dougal
UCL Research Ethics Co-ordinator
Office of the Vice-Provost (Research)
University College London
2 Taviton Street, London, WC1H 0BT
Email: ethics@ucl.ac.uk

Please note that I work from home on **Fridays**. My contact details for each day are as follows:
Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday: 020 7679 8717 | (Internal extension 28717)
Friday: 020 8851 6191

From: Hodge, Jennifer <jennifer.hodge.18@ucl.ac.uk>
Sent: 08 October 2019 18:57
To: VPRO.Ethics <ethics@ucl.ac.uk>
Cc: Bakke, Kristin <kmbakke@ucl.ac.uk>; Wright, Nicholas <nicholas.wright@ucl.ac.uk>; Radaelli, Claudio <c.radaelli@ucl.ac.uk>
Subject: Low Risk Chair's Review - Jennifer Hodge
Dear UCL REC Chair Review,
Please find attached for your consideration my Low Risk ethics application for my PhD research project.

This has been signed off by the Principal Researcher, Professor Kristin M. Bakke. This has also been signed off by Professor Claudio Radaelli and Dr Nicholas Wright, Department of Political Science Research Ethics Committee.

I trust my submission today provides adequate time for review in line with the average 21 working day review process for Low Risk ethics applications. My flight to Colombia for the proposed field trip departs on Thursday 21 November, 32 working days following this submission.

Thank you for your help in this process.

All the best,
Jennifer

Ethics approval 2.

APPROVED: Ethics Extension 16421.001

VPRO.Ethics <ethics@ucl.ac.uk>

Wed 2020-10-14 12:03 PM

To: Hodge, Jennifer <jennifer.hodge.18@ucl.ac.uk>

Cc: Bakke, Kristin <kmbakke@ucl.ac.uk>

 1 attachments (92 KB)

Amendment_Approval_Request_Form_2018_JH.pdf;

Dear Jennifer

Thank you for keeping us updated. The REC has approved your attached extension request and the ethics approval of this study has therefore been extended to **28/10/2020**. Please take this email as confirmation of that approval.

IMPORTANT: For projects collecting personal data only

You should inform the Data Protection Team – data-protection@ucl.ac.uk of your proposed amendments, including requests to extend ethics approval for an additional period.

Best wishes,
Lola

Lola Alaska

Research Evaluation Administrator

Please note that my working week is split across Ethics and REF, meaning that I may not reply to your email immediately.

Office of the Vice-Provost (Research)

University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT

Email: l.alaska@ucl.ac.uk

Web: www.ucl.ac.uk/research

Please do not feel obliged to reply to this email outside of your normal working hours.

From: Hodge, Jennifer <jennifer.hodge.18@ucl.ac.uk>

Sent: 13 October 2020 11:05

To: VPRO.Ethics <ethics@ucl.ac.uk>

Cc: Bakke, Kristin <kmbakke@ucl.ac.uk>

Subject: Re: Final report of findings

Dear Helen,

Many thanks for your email.

The data collection for this project is still ongoing. Therefore, as requested I attach an Amendment Approval form for an extension, which has been signed by the Principal Researcher, Professor Kristin Bakke (in cc).

On 6th August the REC approved an amendment to the original study so that I can conduct interviews online. For ease of review, I attach the updated information sheet and consent form which I submitted with the prior amendment request.

Please let me know if you require any further information from me with regards this amendment.

Thank you for your help,

Jennifer

Jennifer Hodge
PhD Candidate in Political Science
Department of Political Science
University College London
29/30 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9QU
Twitter: @Jennifer_Hodge2

From: UCL Research Ethics Committee <ethics@ucl.ac.uk>
Sent: 09 October 2020 1:20 PM
To: Hodge, Jennifer <jennifer.hodge.18@ucl.ac.uk>
Subject: Final report of findings

Dear Miss Hodge,

Final report of findings

Ethics Application 16421/001: The Puzzle of Participation in Peace Movements

My records show that the data collection element of your research project was due to reach completion on 28 October 2020.

As detailed in the ethical approval letter you received from the Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee, I would be grateful if you could submit a brief report (a maximum of one side of A4) of your findings, which includes in particular issues relating to the ethical implications of the data collection element of your research i.e. issues obtaining consent, participants withdrawing from the research, confidentiality, protection of participants from physical and mental harm etc. Please note that we do not require a detailed summary of your research findings.

If data collection is still on-going and you wish to extend ethical approval for an additional year you will need to complete an Amendment Approval Request Form for the Chair's review. The form can be downloaded from the following link: <http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/responsibilities.php>

I look forward to receiving an electronic copy of your final report by return email shortly. **Please note that if I have not received a reply from you within 21 days of receipt of this email I will assume that the project has been completed and the status of your study on the ethics project database will be edited to reflect this.**

With best wishes, Helen

Helen Dougal
UCL Research Ethics Administrator
Office of the Vice-Provost (Research)
University College London
2 Taverton Street, London, WC1H 0BT
Email: ethics@ucl.ac.uk

Please note that I work from home on Thursdays. My contact details for each day are as follows:

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday: 020 7679 8717 | (Internal extension 28717)

Thursday: 020 8851 6191

Appendix 4. List of ATCC archive documents

Archive#1. Act No. 41 of the General Assembly on Renewal of the Directive and Presentation of reports on activities of the “Carare Peasant Association” – A.T.C.C. Orlando Gaitan, President of the A.T.C.C. Circa 1990.

Archive#2. Antecedents para la fundación de la A.T.C.C

Archive#3. ATCC Act of Individual Commitment of the Affiliate. Circa 2007.

Archive#4. Compilation of Testimonies, Carare Farmers Association. Session IX: The Community and Peace. The experience of the Carare Farmers Association. 1989.

Archive#5. First anniversary of the ATCC. Meeting in La India. Community statements after an anniversary mass. 22.05.1987.

Archive#6. History of the A.T.C.C. 26.02.1990.

Archive#7. Meeting minutes between the ATCC leader, the junta leaders of San Tropel and Santa Rosa (on border of the ATCC), and a Paramilitary Subcommander. 2001, in Santa Rosa, Cimitarra.

Archive#8. Meeting of the ATCC. Date unknown. Circa 1990.

Archive#9. Meeting of the peasants in the village La India with Bandits of the XI and XXIII groups of the FARC. The words of Josúe Vargas. Date unknown.

Archive#9. Quninto. Public address to the commander of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia FARC, Comondante Jerónimo. 1987. Exact date unknown.

Archive#10. Speech by the President of the ATCC to the Swedish Parliament. Stockholm. 09.12.1990.

Archive#11. Meeting minutes with the FARC 11.06.1987, ATCC Archives.

Archive#12. Association of Farmworkers of Carare ATCC. Act of Individual Commitment to the Affiliate. 1990.

Archive#13. Memorias Gran Foro para la paz de Cimitarra- Enero 15 y 16 de 1990

Archive#14. Interview with Father Luis Carlos Arbeláez Castaño. La India. June 30, 1989.

Appendix 5. Search procedure

1. Conduct keyword search of all annual reports for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention¹¹⁴. Reports here:
<https://dppa.un.org/en/peace-and-development-advisors-joint-undp-dppa-programme-building-national-capacities-conflict>
2. Conduct keyword search of all annual reports for the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR). The 2002 – 2011 reports can be downloaded here:
<https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/preventing-crisis--enabling-recovery--bcpr-annual-report-2011/>
3. Conducting a systematic search of keywords on the UNDP and United States Institute for Peace (USIP) websites to identify special reports on peace communities. Conduct keyword search within reports identified.
4. Conduct a systematic literature review for each country in the dataset. To do so:
 - a. Perform a keyword search of google scholar for each country.
<https://scholar.google.com/>. Review the top 10 items returned for each keyword.
 - b. Perform a keyword search of google books for each country.
<https://books.google.co.uk/>. Review the top 10 items returned for each keyword.
5. Review the following seminal volumes on cases of peace communities:
 - Anderson, Mary. B and Marshall Wallace. 2013. *Opting Out of War*. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
 - Kaplan, Oliver. 2017. *Resisting War: How Communities Protect Themselves*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 - Hancock, Landon E., and Christopher R. Mitchell, eds. 2007. *Zones of Peace*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.

The following keywords are used to identify potential cases: “peace zone*”, “peace communit*”, “peace committee*”, “populations in resistance”, “autonom* communit*”, “humanitarian zone*”, “peace territor*”, “nonwar communit*”, “nonviolent communit*”, “unarmed communit*”, “peace island*”, “local peacebuilding”, “refugees reclaim*”, “unite against rebels”, “opt* out of war”, “neutral communit*”, “zone* of peace”, “grassroots peacebuilding”, “local peace initiative*”, “peace mobilization”, “alternative* to violence”, “vill* resist*”, “stay neutral” “peacebuilding in war*”, “vill* refuse*”, “autonomy*”, “resist* pressure”, “pacif* resist*”, “oasis from war”, “counter-violence” “infrastructure* for peace”. These terms were compiled through an extensive examination of case studies and LexisNexis reports.

¹¹⁴ Since its inception in 2004, the Programme has engaged in more than 60 countries. The Joint Programme’s efforts focus on building existing and emerging national and local capacities.

Searches were conducted in English for all cases. In addition, searches were conducted in Spanish in Colombia, Guatemala, in Portuguese in Mozambique, and in French in Democratic Republic of Congo and Ivory Coast. No additional language searches were conducted in Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq due to a lack of local language skills within the research team. The official language of Nigeria and Sierra Leone is English.

Appendix 6. Pilot search procedures for local and international news

International Media Search Protocol

Step 1:

- In google, for each media outlet, and each Department of Colombia type the following:
 - Site:[media site] “Colombia” “[Department]” “nonviolent communit*” OR “non-war communit*” OR “pacifist communit*” OR “unarmed communit*” OR “neutral communit*” OR “autonomous communit*” OR “humanitarian zone*” OR “biodiversity zone*” OR “peasant workers association*” OR “peasant farmers association*” OR “populations in resistance” OR “peasants association*” OR “zones of peace” OR “peace zone*” OR “peace territor*” OR “civilian self-protection group*”
- Perform this search for each of the following international sources:
 - o BBC Monitoring: International reports, <https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/>
 - o Associated Press <https://apnews.com/>
 - o Associated Press International
 - o Associated Press online
 - o Agence France Presse <https://www.afp.com/en>
 - o Xinhua <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/>

For example, for the first search type the following:

Site:<https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/> “Colombia” “Vichada” “nonviolent communit*” OR “non-war communit*” OR “pacifist communit*” OR “unarmed communit*” OR “neutral communit*” OR “autonomous communit*” OR “humanitarian zone*” OR “biodiversity zone*” OR “peasant workers association*” OR “peasant farmers association*” OR “populations in resistance” OR “peasants association*” OR “zones of peace” OR “peace zone*” OR “peace territor*” OR “civilian self-protection group*”.

Step 2: Evaluate the documents returned.

- Coders must first assess whether a candidate community meets the criteria for inclusion before filling in other details in the dataset.

- For all borderline communities and peace communities identified, save the sources used in the dataset to Microsoft Teams.

Save academic literature for each potential case on Microsoft Teams in the country folder. Articles should be named as “Country Author Year”.

Coders may identify potential cases outside of their regional/country scope. When this happens, do not discard this information. Share the relevant documents with other team members with this responsibility, or if there are none, share with me.

Local news search protocol

Step 1:

- First translate into Spanish the following terms:

English	Spanish
nonviolent community	
non-war community	
pacifist community	
unarmed community	
neutral community	
autonomous community	
humanitarian zone	
biodiversity zone	
peasant workers association	
peasant farmers association	
populations in resistance	
peasants association	
zones of peace	
peace zone	
peace territory	
Civilian self-protection group	

Step 2:

- Change each term into a searchable term. In english for example, we would want to search for nonviolent communit* because searching for this term will return both nonviolent community and nonviolent communities:

English	Spanish
nonviolent communit*	
non-war communit*	
pacifist communit*	
unarmed communit*	
neutral communit*	
autonomous communit*	

humanitarian zone*	
biodiversity zone*	
peasant workers association*	
peasant farmers association*	
populations in resistance*	
peasants association*	
zones of peace*	
peace zone*	
peace territor*	
Civilian self-protection group*	

Step 3:

1. In google, for each local media outlet, type the following (but changing the English searchable words to the Spanish language version identified in Step 2):
2. Site:[media site] "Colombia" "[Department]" "nonviolent communit*" OR "non-war communit*" OR "pacifist communit*" OR "unarmed communit*" OR "neutral communit*" OR "autonomous communit*" OR "humanitarian zone*" OR "biodiversity zone*" OR "peasant workers association*" OR "peasant farmers association*" OR "populations in resistance" OR "peasants association*" OR "zones of peace" OR "peace zone*" OR "peace territor*" OR "civilian self-protection group*".

<i>El Colombiano</i>	Medellín	www.elcolombiano.com
El Bogotano	Bogotá	www.elbogotano.com.co
<i>La Crónica del Quindío</i>	Armenia	www.cronicadelquindio.com
<i>Diario de Occidente</i>	Cali	www.diariooccidente.com.co
<i>El Diario de Otún</i>	Pereira	www.eldiario.com.co
<i>Diario del Huila</i>	Huila	www.diariodelhuila.com
<i>El Diario del Sur</i>	Pasto	www.diariodelsur.com.co
<i>Diario Deportivo</i>	Bogotá	www.diariodeportivo.com
<i>El Espectador</i>	Bogotá	www.elespectador.com

<i>El Espacio</i>	Bogotá	www.lespacio.co
<i>El Frente</i>	Bucaramanga	www.elfrente.com.co
<i>El Herald</i>	Barranquilla	www.elheraldo.com.co
<i>Hoy Diario del Magdalena</i>	Santa Marta	www.hoydiariodelmagdalena.com.co
<i>El Informador</i>	Santa Marta	www.el-informador.com
<i>La Libertad</i>	Barranquilla	www.lalibertad.com.co
<i>El Meridiano de Córdoba</i>	Montería	www.elmeridianodecordoba.com.co
<i>El Mundo</i>	Medellín	www.elmundo.com
<i>La Nación (Colombia)</i>	Neiva	www.lanacion.com.co
<i>Jurídica al Día</i>	Popayán	www.juridicaaldia.com
<i>El Liberal</i>	Popayán	www.elliberal.com.co
<i>Magangué Hoy</i>	Magangué	www.maganguehoy.com
<i>El Meridiano de Sucre</i>	Sincelejo	www.elmeridianodesucre.com.co
<i>El Nuevo Día</i>	Ibagué	www.elnuevodia.com.co
<i>Nuevo Estadio</i>	Manizales	www.nuevoestadio.com.co
<i>El Nuevo Siglo</i>	Bogotá	www.elnuevosiglo.com.co
<i>El Opinión</i>	Cúcuta	www.laopinion.com.co
<i>El País</i>	Cali	www.elpais.com.co
<i>El País Vallenato</i>	Valledupar	www.elpaisvallenato.com
<i>La Patria</i>	Manizales	www.lapatria.com
<i>Portafolio</i>	Bogotá	www.portafolio.com.co
<i>El Porvenir</i>	Cartagena	www.elporvenir.com.co
<i>El Pílon</i>	Valledupar	www.elpilon.com.co
<i>La República</i>	Bogotá	www.larepublica.com.co
<i>La Tarde</i>	Pereira	www.latarde.com
<i>The Bogotá Post</i>	Bogotá	www.thebogotapost.com/

<i>The City Paper Bogotá</i>	Bogotá	www.thecitypaperbogota.com
<i>El Tiempo</i>	Bogotá	www.eltiempo.com
<i>El Universal</i>	Cartagena	www.eluniversal.com.co
<i>Colombia Focus</i>	Cocorná	www.colombiafocus.com
<i>Colombia Reports</i>	Medellín	www.colombiareports.com
<i>Vanguardia</i>	Bucaramanga	www.vanguardia.com
<i>Vanguardia Valledupar</i>	Valledupar	www.vanguardiavalledupar.com

So for example, the first search would be:

- Site:www.elcolombiano.com “Colombia” “Vichada” “nonviolent communit*” OR “non-war communit*” OR “pacifist communit*” OR “unarmed communit*” OR “neutral communit*” OR “autonomous communit*” OR “humanitarian zone*” OR “biodiversity zone*” OR “peasant workers association*” OR “peasant farmers association*” OR “populations in resistance” OR “peasants association*” OR “zones of peace” OR “peace zone*” OR “peace territor*” OR “civilian self-protection group*”.

Evaluate the documents returned.

- Coders must first assess whether a candidate community meets the criteria for inclusion before filling in other details in the dataset.
- For all borderline communities and peace communities identified, save the sources used in the dataset to Microsoft Teams.

Coders may identify potential cases outside of their regional/country scope. When this happens, do not discard this information. Share the relevant documents with other team members with this responsibility, or if there are none, share with me.

Appendix 7. Full models for each independent variable

Table 1: Massacres (binary) and the probability of a new peace community

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Emergence of a new peace community			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Massacre (binary)	1.743*** (0.400)	1.910*** (0.417)	1.424*** (0.460)	1.518*** (0.486)
Existing peace community (binary) t-1				6.545*** (1.114)
Distance		-2.209 (3.624)	-2.166 (3.618)	-3.396 (3.977)
Elevation		-0.294 (0.262)	-0.234 (0.269)	-0.244 (0.281)
Paved roads 1995		0.0005 (0.002)	-0.0001 (0.002)	-0.0005 (0.002)
NBI		0.015 (0.010)	0.015 (0.011)	0.016 (0.012)
ICA		-0.0003 (0.001)	-0.0002 (0.001)	-0.0002 (0.001)
Population 1993 (log)		-0.174*** (0.058)	-0.209*** (0.062)	-0.224*** (0.062)
FARC events			-0.004 (0.010)	0.0002 (0.010)
Paramilitary events			-0.069 (0.062)	-0.065 (0.063)
FARC events, t-1			-0.012 (0.016)	-0.028 (0.022)
Paramilitary events, t-1			0.024 (0.025)	0.026 (0.023)
Massacres (binary), t-1			0.384 (0.535)	0.388 (0.566)
Contested			1.805*** (0.501)	1.620*** (0.531)
Contested, t-1	2		0.170 (0.510)	0.401 (0.540)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-174.066	-166.978	-158.155	-144.878
Akaike Inf. Crit.	352.132	349.957	346.311	321.755

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2: Prior year peace community and probability of new peace community

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Emergence of new peace community			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Existing peace community (binary), t-1	6.248*** (0.935)	6.450*** (0.968)	6.411*** (1.077)	6.545*** (1.114)
Massacres, binary				1.518*** (0.486)
Distance		-3.378 (3.928)	-4.169 (4.018)	-3.396 (3.977)
Elevation		-0.354 (0.269)	-0.236 (0.280)	-0.244 (0.281)
Paved road 1995		0.001 (0.002)	-0.0001 (0.002)	-0.0005 (0.002)
NBI		0.015 (0.011)	0.016 (0.011)	0.016 (0.012)
ICA		-0.0001 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.001)	-0.0002 (0.001)
Population 1993 (log)		-0.167*** (0.061)	-0.209*** (0.062)	-0.224*** (0.062)
FARC events			0.003 (0.009)	0.0002 (0.010)
Paramilitary events			-0.038 (0.060)	-0.065 (0.063)
FARC events, t-1			-0.031 (0.023)	-0.028 (0.022)
Paramilitary events, t-1			0.019 (0.022)	0.026 (0.023)
Massacre (binary), t-1			0.568 (0.553)	0.388 (0.566)
Contested			1.921*** (0.505)	1.620*** (0.531)
Contested, t-1	2		0.394 (0.534)	0.401 (0.540)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-167.613	-161.071	-149.324	-144.878
Akaike Inf. Crit.	339.226	338.142	328.647	321.755

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 8. Robustness tests with massacres as a count variable

Table 1: Massacres and the probability of a new peace community

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Emergence of a new peace community			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Massacres	0.172** (0.068)	0.199*** (0.072)	0.096 (0.090)	0.092 (0.091)
Existing peace community (binary), t-1				6.497*** (1.090)
Distance		-1.964 (3.565)	-2.528 (3.602)	-3.744 (3.981)
Elevation		-0.319 (0.259)	-0.219 (0.269)	-0.228 (0.281)
Paved road 1995		0.001 (0.002)	-0.0001 (0.002)	-0.0004 (0.002)
NBI		0.016 (0.010)	0.017 (0.011)	0.017 (0.012)
ICA		-0.0001 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.001)
Population 1993 (log)		-0.156*** (0.059)	-0.196*** (0.061)	-0.212*** (0.062)
FARC events			-0.002 (0.010)	0.003 (0.009)
Paramilitary events			-0.043 (0.057)	-0.040 (0.058)
FARC events, t-1			-0.015 (0.018)	-0.033 (0.024)
Paramilitary events, t-1			0.017 (0.027)	0.020 (0.024)
Massacre, t-1			0.122 (0.106)	0.148 (0.105)
Contested			2.086*** (0.478)	1.948*** (0.502)
Contested, t-1	2		0.210 (0.505)	0.453 (0.533)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-180.028	-173.478	-161.591	-148.230
Akaike Inf. Crit.	364.055	362.955	353.182	328.461

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2: Existing peace communities and the probability of a new peace community

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Emergence of new peace community			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Existing peace community (binary), t-1	6.248*** (0.935)	6.450*** (0.968)	6.499*** (1.082)	6.497*** (1.090)
Massacres				0.092 (0.091)
Distance		-3.378 (3.928)	-3.935 (3.993)	-3.744 (3.981)
Elevation		-0.354 (0.269)	-0.230 (0.281)	-0.228 (0.281)
Paved road 1995		0.001 (0.002)	-0.0003 (0.002)	-0.0004 (0.002)
NBI		0.015 (0.011)	0.017 (0.012)	0.017 (0.012)
ICA		-0.0001 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.001)
Population 1993 (log)		-0.167*** (0.061)	-0.210*** (0.062)	-0.212*** (0.062)
FARC events			0.003 (0.009)	0.003 (0.009)
Paramilitary events			-0.037 (0.058)	-0.040 (0.058)
FARC events, t-1			-0.033 (0.024)	-0.033 (0.024)
Paramilitary events, t-1			0.020 (0.023)	0.020 (0.024)
Massacres, t-1			0.174** (0.083)	0.148 (0.105)
Contested			1.960*** (0.501)	1.948*** (0.502)
Contested, t-1			0.447 (0.529)	0.453 (0.533)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-167.613	-161.071	-148.650	-148.230
Akaike Inf. Crit.	339.226	338.142	327.299	328.461

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

2

Show side panel

Table 3. Summary statistics of massacres as a count variable

	Mean	Media n	SD	Min	Max	N
Massacres, t-1	0.1561	0	0.7256472	0	29	8,298
Massacres	0.1561	0	0.7256472	0	29	8,298

Appendix 9. Empirical evidence, certainty, uniqueness and causal test

Observable implication (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
Nonviolent framing, C₁	
<p>1. References in historical accounts and interview data to first mover speech acts, demonstrating resolve to resist armed actor demands and conflict dynamics with nonviolent action</p>	<p>High certainty: references to first mover speech acts must be found in the empirical record to prove this occurred – as by definition such high risk action should be recalled in interview data and historical accounts</p> <p>Low uniqueness: First movers may reference resolve to use nonviolent action as a consequence of <u>civilians having no other option</u></p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the hoop test, <i>confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p> <p>[Updated assessment: as the alternative hypothesis fails the hoop test, I update this test to high uniqueness, therefore my hypothesis does pass the double decisive test] Confidence in hypothesis is increased</p>
<p>2. References in historical accounts and interview data to first mover framing peaceful repertoires of contention as preferable to combat armed actor incursions within their communities</p>	<p>High certainty: references to first mover peaceful preferences must be found in the empirical record to prove their presence – forthright framing of preferences should be recalled in interview data or historical accounts</p> <p>Low uniqueness: First movers may frame nonviolent action as preferable as a consequence of <u>civilians having no other option</u></p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the hoop test, <i>confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p> <p>[Updated assessment: as the alternative hypothesis fails the hoop test, I update this test to high uniqueness, therefore my hypothesis does pass the double decisive test] Confidence in hypothesis is increased</p>
Nonviolent preferences, Y_{1A}	
<p>3. Community speeches and meeting minutes reference greater commitment to nonviolence after first mover.</p>	<p>Low certainty: The community started recording meeting minutes and speeches when initiating the ATCC, therefore evidence of normative frames may not be available prior to the action of the first mover</p>

Observable implication (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
	<p>Low uniqueness: An increase in nonviolent preferences may be observed after the first mover <u>if they act at in response to civilians having no other option</u></p> <p>Evidence not found: the hypothesis does not pass the straw in the wind test. <i>Confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p> <p>[Updated assessment: as the alternative hypothesis fails the hoop test, I update this test to high uniqueness, therefore my hypothesis does not pass the smoking gun test] <i>Confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>
<p>4. Development of community rules requiring adherence to nonviolence after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased nonviolent preferences of the community, besides developing new rules, such as in speeches of influential members of the community</p> <p>Low uniqueness: An increase in nonviolent preferences may be observed after the first mover if they act at <u>in response to civilians having no other option</u></p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the straw in the wind test. <i>Confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p> <p>[Updated assessment: as the alternative hypothesis fails the hoop test, I update this test to high uniqueness, therefore my hypothesis does pass the smoking gun test] Confidence in hypothesis is significantly increased</p>
<p>5. Community does not increase weaponry or weapons training after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased nonviolent preferences, besides the community not increasing military capacity, such as the development of new rules requiring adherence to nonviolence after the first mover</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons a community does not increase its military, such as due to resource constraints</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the straw in the wind test, <i>confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>
<p>6. Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover, framing and nonviolent preferences</p>	<p>Low certainty: interview data may not explicitly reference nonviolent preferences as an outcome of framing by first mover</p>

Observable implication (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
	<p>High uniqueness: if found, the evidence cannot be explained by an alternative hypothesis</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the smoking gun test, confidence in hypothesis significantly increased</p>
Alternative explanation, A ₁	
<p>7. Civilians have little knowledge or experience with weaponry, resources, and networks to buy them. Armed actors likely to outgun civilians. Observable in community meeting minutes and interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: whether or not civilians have little experience with weaponry must be determined for this alternative explanation for the emergence of nonviolent preferences to be plausible</p> <p>Low uniqueness: if found, the evidence can be explained by the first mover hypothesis, since civilians may attempt other strategies such as evasion</p> <p>Evidence found: the alternative hypothesis does pass the hoop test. Confidence in alternative hypothesis not updated</p>
<p>8. Civilians have difficulty travelling outside of the territory, either due to a lack of resources or due to geographic remoteness and inaccessibility. Observable in interview data, community meeting minutes, regional economic and geographic data</p>	<p>High certainty: the location and lack of resources must be found in the empirical record to prove this occurred – as if lack of resources or state presence leads to the development of nonviolent preferences, this lack should be significant enough to be recalled in interview data and historical accounts. Location data are static and thus must be found in the geographical data</p> <p>Low uniqueness: if found, the evidence can be explained by the first mover hypothesis, since civilians may attempt other strategies such as evasion</p> <p>Evidence found: the alternative hypothesis does pass the hoop test, confidence in alternative hypothesis not updated</p>
<p>9. Civilians have skills that are not transferable to other locations nearby, to which they could flee. Observable in meeting minutes, community documents, data on local industries, interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: whether or not local industries are transferable elsewhere must be determined as the alternative hypothesis states that civilians have no other options available</p> <p>Low uniqueness: if found, the evidence may be explained by the first mover hypothesis, if other strategies such as evasion are possible</p> <p>Evidence found: the alternative hypothesis does not pass the hoop test</p>

Observable implication (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
<p>10. Civilians have been victimized by all armed actors in the past. Observable in meeting minutes, community documents and interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: references to victimization by all armed actors should be recalled in interview data or historical accounts.</p> <p>Low uniqueness: if found this evidence may make pacts with any of the armed actors unlikely, but not necessarily lead to the development of nonviolent preferences.</p> <p>Evidence found: the alternative hypothesis does pass the hoop test, confidence in alternative hypothesis is reduced</p>
Sorting C₂	
<p>11. Armed actor responds with coercive repression after first mover action. Referenced in media outlets, historical accounts, and interview data</p>	<p>Low certainty: references to armed actor repression is not necessary for the population sorting to occur after the first mover. The first mover action alone may inspire population sorting in anticipation of armed actor retaliation, or if some civilians prefer alternative actions, such as armed mobilization or loyalty to the armed actor they may leave afterwards</p> <p>Low uniqueness: armed actors may target a community due to strategic interactions with other armed actors located in the region</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does not pass the straw-in-the-wind test, confidence in hypothesis not updated</p>
<p>12. Some civilians flee, if they have the resources and networks to do so. Referenced in media, historical accounts and interview data, migration trends after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: references to civilian exit is not alone necessary for population sorting to occur, civilians with lower resolve for nonviolent resistance may alternatively join the armed actor or seek to initiate armed resistance</p> <p>Low uniqueness: civilian exit may be explained by coercive repression of armed actors prior to first mover action</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the straw-in-the-wind test, confidence in hypothesis not updated</p>
<p>13. Some civilians join the armed actor after first mover. Referenced in media outlets, historical accounts and interview data</p>	<p>Low certainty: references to civilians joining the armed actor is alone not necessary for population sorting to occur, civilians with lower resolve for nonviolent resistance may alternatively flee or seek to initiate armed resistance</p>

Observable implication (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
	<p>Low uniqueness: civilians joining armed actor may be explained by coercive repression of armed actors prior to first mover action, prior loyalties to armed actor</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the straw-in-the-wind test, <i>confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>
<p>14. Some civilians with exit options remain. Referenced in media outlets, historical accounts and interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: for selection bias for resistance to emerge in remaining populations, some civilians with exit options must remain despite actual coercion from armed actors or its threat</p> <p>Low uniqueness: civilians with exit options may stay due to personal ties, loyalties, collaboration with armed actors, or due to the presence of supportive NGOs</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the hoop test. <i>Confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>
<p>15. Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover action and selection bias for nonviolent resistance in population that remains over time</p>	<p>Low certainty: the connection between civilian decisions to flee, join an armed actor, seek to initiate armed resistance or remain despite exit options may not explicitly reference the role of the community frames for contentious behaviour after the first mover, and their willingness or ability to participate within these bounds</p> <p>High uniqueness: if found, the evidence cannot be explained by another hypothesis</p> <p>Evidence not found: the hypothesis does not pass the smoking gun test. <i>Confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>
<p>Mobilizational capacity, Y_{1B}</p>	
<p>16. Increased frequency in community meetings and community projects across distinct within-community groups</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased interpersonal trust between within-community groups after the first mover, such as new economic ties across within-community groups</p>

Observable implication (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
	<p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons for increased meetings, such as there being an emergency</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass straw-in-the-wind test. <i>Confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>
<p>17. New economic ties emerge across within-community groups after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased interpersonal trust between within-community groups after the first mover, such as new within-community group projects</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons for new economic ties across within-community groups after first mover, such as development grants being offered for specific project types</p> <p>Evidence not found: the hypothesis does not pass straw-in-the-wind test. <i>Confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>
<p>18. References in interviews to an increase in trust between within-community groups after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased interpersonal trust between within-community groups after the first mover, such as the development of new economic ties or new within-community group projects</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons for increased trust after the actions of the first mover, such as an increase in meetings to deal with an emergency</p> <p>Evidence not found: the hypothesis does not pass straw-in-the-wind test, <i>confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>
<p>19. Development of ties to NGOs offering nonviolent solidarity after first mover</p>	<p>Low certainty: there may be other evidence of increased nonviolent capacity, besides developing ties to NGOs, such as an increase in community projects and meetings</p> <p>Low uniqueness: there may be other reasons why an NGO might offer nonviolent solidarity after first mover, such as seeking to support a community in an emergency</p>

Observable implication (kind of evidence)	Certainty uniqueness and causal test
	Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the straw-in-the-wind test , <i>confidence in hypothesis not updated</i>
<p>20. Interview data confirms hypothesized connection between first mover and increased mobilizational capacity in the population that remains</p>	<p>Low certainty: interview data may not explicitly reference increased mobilizational capacity as an outcome of nonviolent framing by first mover</p> <p>High uniqueness: if found, the evidence cannot be explained by an alternative hypothesis</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the smoking gun test, <i>confidence in hypothesis significantly increased</i></p>
Alternative explanation, A ₂	
<p>21. The community is supported to form a peace community by external allies such as NOGs, who provide technical assistance to boost mobilizational capacity. Observable in meeting minutes and interview data</p>	<p>High certainty: reference to external support must be found in the empirical record to prove this occurred – as by definition such external support that develops mobilizational capacity should be significant enough to be recalled in interview data and historical accounts</p> <p>High uniqueness: if found, the references cannot be explained by another hypothesis</p> <p>Evidence not found: the hypothesis does not pass the double decisive test, <i>confidence in alternative hypothesis is reduced</i></p>
<p>22. Community lacks resources and are located in periphery with a weak state presence. Observable in interview data, community meeting minutes, regional economic and geographic data</p>	<p>High certainty: the location and lack of resources and state presence must be found in the empirical record to prove this occurred – as if lack of resources or state presence leads to the development of mobilizational capacity, this lack should be significant enough to be recalled in interview data and historical accounts. Location data are static and thus must be found in the geographical data</p> <p>Low uniqueness: mobilizational capacity may be developed due to a number of alternative means – such as through external support - in remote communities</p> <p>Evidence found: the hypothesis does pass the hoop test, <i>confidence in hypothesis not updated</i></p>

Source: own table

Appendix 10. Summary statistics of independent and dependent variables

	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max	N
Peace community	0.035	0.000	0.183	0.000	1.000	8,298
Peace community, consistent support	0.003	0.000	0.054	0.000	1.000	8,298
Peace community, inconsistent support	0.021	0.000	0.143	0.000	1.000	8,298
Peace community – no support	0.011	0.000	0.105	0.000	1.000	8,298
Violent events	8.947	1.000	36.800	0.000	1150.000	8,298

Appendix 11. Main results with naïve models

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Number of violent events			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Peace community presence	0.420*** (0.145)		0.503*** (0.096)	
Peace community, consistent support		-0.164 (0.498)		0.673** (0.330)
Peace community, no support		0.845*** (0.253)		0.393** (0.164)
Peace community, inconsistent		0.172 (0.186)		0.538*** (0.124)
Distance			-0.373 (0.349)	-0.409 (0.352)
Elevation			-0.008 (0.016)	-0.008 (0.016)
Paved roads			0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
NBI			0.005*** (0.001)	0.005*** (0.001)
ICA			0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00000 (0.00000)
Population (log) 1993			0.074*** (0.011)	0.075*** (0.011)
Violent events, t-1			0.073*** (0.0005)	0.073*** (0.0005)
Massacres, t-1			0.125*** (0.024)	0.125*** (0.024)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
Akaike Inf. Crit.	40,538.950	40,536.830	35,212.430	35,215.610

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 12. Negative binomial with year fixed effects and naive models

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Violent events			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Peace community, presence	0.358*** (0.088)		0.511*** (0.0574)	
Peace community, consistent support		-0.109 (0.205)		0.675** (0.210)
Peace community, no support		0.543*** (0.146)		0.381*** (0.098)
Peace community, inconsistent support		0.281* (0.120)		0.555*** (0.064)
Distance			-0.490* (0.203)	-0.535* (1.139)
Elevation			-0.017* (0.008)	-0.016* (0.008)
Paved road			0.002*** (0.000)	-0.002*** (0.00)
NBI			0.006*** (0.001)	0.006*** (0.001)
ICA			-0.00000 (0.00001)	-0.00000 (0.00001)
Population (log) 1993			0.095*** (0.014)	0.095*** (0.032)
Violent events, t-1			0.059*** (0.015)	0.059*** (0.015)
Massacre, t-1			0.0895** (0.030)	0.0895*** (0.030)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
R ²	0.0005	0.001	0.977	0.978
Adjusted R ²	-0.001	-0.0004	0.977	0.978

Appendix 13. Ordinary least squares with log of the number of violent events

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Log of number of violent evetns	
	(1)	(2)
Peace community, binary	0.208*** (0.026)	
Peace community with consistent support, binary		0.081 (0.087)
Peace community with inconsistent support, binary		0.228*** (0.033)
Peace community with no support, binary		0.202*** (0.044)
Distance	-0.238*** (0.089)	-0.246*** (0.090)
Elevation	-0.0001 (0.004)	-0.0003 (0.004)
Paved road 1995	0.001*** (0.0001)	0.001*** (0.0001)
NBI	0.002*** (0.0002)	0.002*** (0.0002)
ICA	0.00000** (0.00000)	0.00000** (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.026*** (0.002)	0.026*** (0.003)
Violent events, t-1	0.009*** (0.0001)	0.010*** (0.0001)
Massacre, t-1	0.082*** (0.007)	0.082*** (0.007)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-4,599.439	-4,598.149
Akaike Inf. Crit.	9,218.879	9,220.298
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Appendix 14. Ordinary least squares with log of violent events and year fixed effects

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Log number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Peace community (binary)	0.208*** (0.024)	
Peace community, consistent support		0.089 (0.082)
Peace community, inconsistent support		0.232*** (0.031)
Peace community, no support		0.194*** (0.042)
Distance	-0.252*** (0.084)	-0.262*** (0.085)
Elevation	-0.001 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.004)
Paved road 1995	0.001*** (0.0001)	0.001*** (0.0001)
NBI	0.002*** (0.0002)	0.002*** (0.0002)
ICA	0.00000*** (0.00000)	0.00000*** (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.028*** (0.002)	0.027*** (0.002)
Violent events, t-1	0.009*** (0.0001)	0.009*** (0.0001)
Massacres, t-1	0.073*** (0.006)	0.074*** (0.006)
Observations	8,298	8,298
R ²	0.429	0.430
Adjusted R ²	0.428	0.428
F Statistic	692.521*** (df = 9; 8280)	566.925*** (df = 11; 8278)
<i>Note:</i>	5	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 15. Binary logistic regression with naive models

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Violent events, binary			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Peace community presence	0.956*** (0.135)		0.307 (0.242)	
Peace community, consistent support		0.636 (0.434)		0.493 (0.722)
Peace community, no support		1.041*** (0.242)		0.256 (0.432)
Peace community, inconsistent		0.958*** (0.174)		0.300 (0.317)
Distance			0.349 (0.724)	0.350 (0.729)
Elevation			-0.010 (0.041)	-0.009 (0.041)
Paved road			0.001** (0.001)	0.001** (0.001)
NBI			0.0003 (0.002)	0.0003 (0.002)
ICA			0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)
Population (log) 1993			0.013 (0.020)	0.014 (0.020)
Violent events, t-1			2.462*** (0.065)	2.462*** (0.065)
Massacres, t-1			0.134 (0.108)	0.135 (0.108)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-5,715.669	-5,715.343	-1,188.599	-1,188.507
Akaike Inf. Crit.	11,435.340	11,438.690	2,397.199	2,401.015

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 16. Negative binomial, count of peace communities and violent events

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Peace communities (count)	0.195*** (0.043)	
Consistent support, count		0.352** (0.176)
Inonsistent support, count		0.422*** (0.113)
No support, count		0.182** (0.088)
Distance	-0.179 (0.347)	-0.312 (0.351)
Elevation	-0.008 (0.016)	-0.009 (0.016)
Paved road, 1995	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
NBI	0.005*** (0.001)	0.005*** (0.001)
ICA	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00000 (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.073*** (0.011)	0.074*** (0.011)
Violent events, t-1	0.073*** (0.0005)	0.073*** (0.0005)
Massacre, t-1	0.129*** (0.024)	0.128*** (0.024)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-17,603.100	-17,600.180
θ	0.460*** (0.010)	0.460*** (0.010)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	35,226.190	35,224.360
<i>Note:</i>	2 *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Appendix 17. Negative binomial, count of villages in peace communities in a municipality and violent events

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Number of villages in peace communities	0.043*** (0.009)	
Villages in pcs, consistent support		0.269** (0.133)
Villages in pcs, inconsistent support		0.060*** (0.017)
Villages in pcs, no support		0.085*** (0.031)
Distance	-0.163 (0.346)	-0.189 (0.347)
Elevation	-0.007 (0.016)	-0.007 (0.016)
Paved road 1995	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
NBI	0.005*** (0.001)	0.005*** (0.001)
ICA	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00000 (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.076*** (0.011)	0.077*** (0.011)
Violent events, t-1	0.073*** (0.0005)	0.073*** (0.0005)
Massacre, t-1	0.130*** (0.024)	0.129*** (0.024)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-17,598.460	-17,597.840
θ	0.461*** (0.010)	0.461*** (0.010)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	35,216.920	35,219.680
<i>Note:</i>	2	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 18. Negative binomial, with size of peace communities present and violent events

These models account for the size of the peace communities present in each municipality. To create the independent variables, I sum the total number of villages that comprise each peace community together.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Peace community, total villages	0.002*** (0.001)	
Consistent support, total peace community villages		0.036* (0.020)
Inconsistent support, total peace community villages		0.002*** (0.001)
No support, total peace community villages		0.013*** (0.005)
Distance	-0.166 (0.347)	-0.164 (0.347)
Elevation	-0.008 (0.016)	-0.008 (0.016)
Paved road 1995	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
NBI	0.005*** (0.001)	0.005*** (0.001)
ICA	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00000 (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.073*** (0.011)	0.075*** (0.011)
Violent events, t-1	0.074*** (0.0005)	0.073*** (0.0005)
Massacres, t-1	0.133*** (0.024)	0.131*** (0.024)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-17,606.480	-17,602.020
θ	0.459*** (0.010)	0.460*** (0.010)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	35,232.960	35,228.040

Note:

2

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 19. OLS, count of peace communities in a municipality and log of violent events

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Log of number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Peace communities (count)	0.078*** (0.012)	
Peace communities with consistent support		0.032** (0.016)
Peace communities with inconsistent support		0.178*** (0.030)
Peace communities with no support		0.113*** (0.022)
Distance	-0.191** (0.088)	-0.228** (0.089)
Elevation	-0.0002 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.004)
Paved road 1995	0.001*** (0.0001)	0.001*** (0.0001)
NBI	0.002*** (0.0002)	0.002*** (0.0002)
ICA	0.00000** (0.00000)	0.00000** (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.026*** (0.002)	0.026*** (0.002)
Violent events, t-1	0.010*** (0.0001)	0.009*** (0.0001)
Massacres, t-1	0.083*** (0.007)	0.083*** (0.007)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-4,610.703	-4,600.286
Akaike Inf. Crit.	9,241.406	9,224.571
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Appendix 20. OLS, count of villages in peace communities in a municipality and log of violent events

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Number of violent events (log)	
	(1)	(2)
Number of peace community villages	0.018*** (0.002)	
Consistent support, villages		0.063* (0.035)
Inconsistent support, villages		0.023*** (0.005)
No support, villages		0.051*** (0.009)
Distance	-0.180** (0.088)	-0.181** (0.088)
Elevation	0.00004 (0.004)	-0.0002 (0.004)
Paved road 1995	0.001*** (0.0001)	0.001*** (0.0001)
NBI	0.002*** (0.0002)	0.002*** (0.0002)
ICA	0.00000** (0.00000)	0.00000** (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.026*** (0.002)	0.026*** (0.003)
Violent events, t-1	0.009*** (0.0001)	0.009*** (0.0001)
Massacres, t-1	0.083*** (0.007)	0.083*** (0.007)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-4,604.736	-4,600.441
Akaike Inf. Crit.	9,229.472	9,224.882
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Appendix 21. Negative binomial, main model, excluding peace communities comprising a single village

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Peace community presence (binary)	0.577*** (0.110)	
Peace community, consistent support		0.547 (0.420)
Peace community, inconsistent support		0.549*** (0.127)
Peace community, no support		0.691*** (0.249)
Distance	-0.429 (0.350)	-0.410 (0.352)
Elevation	-0.008 (0.016)	-0.008 (0.016)
Paved roads 1995	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
NBI	0.005*** (0.001)	0.005*** (0.001)
ICA	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00000 (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.076*** (0.011)	0.076*** (0.011)
Violent events, t-1	0.073*** (0.0005)	0.073*** (0.0005)
Massacre, t-1	0.129*** (0.024)	0.129*** (0.024)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-17,595.790	-17,595.650
θ	0.461*** (0.010)	0.461*** (0.010)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	35,211.580	35,215.310
<i>Note:</i>	3	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 22. Negative binomial, count of peace communities in municipalities and number of violent events, excluding peace communities comprising a single village

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Peace community (count)	0.440*** (0.086)	
Consistent support, count		0.538 (0.420)
Inconsistent support, count		0.429*** (0.115)
No support, count		0.330** (0.131)
Distance	-0.349 (0.349)	-0.308 (0.351)
Elevation	-0.009 (0.016)	-0.009 (0.016)
Paved road 1995	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
NBI	0.005*** (0.001)	0.005*** (0.001)
ICA	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00000 (0.00000)
Population (log) 1993	0.076*** (0.011)	0.076*** (0.011)
Violence, t-1	0.073*** (0.0005)	0.073*** (0.0005)
Massacre, t-1	0.129*** (0.024)	0.129*** (0.024)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-17,598.430	-17,600.280
θ	0.461*** (0.010)	0.460*** (0.010)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	35,216.860	35,224.560
<i>Note:</i>	4 *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Appendix 23. Negative binomial, count of villages in peace communities and number of violent events, excluding peace communities comprising a single village

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Number of violent events	
	(1)	(2)
Number of villages in a peace community	0.047*** (0.010)	
Consistent support, peace community villages		0.307 (0.197)
Inconsistent support, peace community villages		0.059*** (0.017)
No support, peace community villages		0.145*** (0.053)
Distance	-0.161 (0.346)	-0.174 (0.347)
Elevation	-0.007 (0.016)	-0.007 (0.016)
Paved roads 1995	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
NBI	0.005*** (0.001)	0.005*** (0.001)
ICA	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.00000 (0.00000)
Population 1993 (log)	0.077*** (0.011)	0.077*** (0.011)
Violent events, t-1	0.073*** (0.0005)	0.073*** (0.0005)
Massacre, t-1	0.132*** (0.024)	0.131*** (0.024)
Observations	8,298	8,298
Log Likelihood	-17,599.800	-17,598.790
θ	0.460*** (0.010)	0.461*** (0.010)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	35,219.590	35,221.570

Note:

4

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 24. Negative binomial, main model, massacres as the dependent variable

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Massacres			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Peace community presence	0.413* (0.217)		0.535*** (0.179)	
Peace community, consistent support		0.489 (0.728)		1.526*** (0.584)
Peace community, no support		0.964*** (0.351)		0.492* (0.270)
Peace community, inconsistent support		-0.100 (0.306)		0.431* (0.254)
Distance			-1.649** (0.766)	-1.678** (0.778)
Elevation			-0.061 (0.042)	-0.059 (0.042)
Paved roads			0.002*** (0.0004)	0.002*** (0.0004)
NBI			-0.0003 (0.002)	-0.0004 (0.002)
ICA			0.00001*** (0.00000)	0.00001*** (0.00000)
Population (log) 1993			0.281*** (0.037)	0.281*** (0.037)
Violent events, t-1			0.009*** (0.001)	0.009*** (0.001)
Massacres, t-1			0.425*** (0.031)	0.425*** (0.031)
Observations	8,298	8,298	8,298	8,298
Akaike Inf. Crit.	6,852.267	6,850.726	6,070.426	6,071.853

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01