FOTOHISTORIAS LIFE IN CALI AND BUENAVENTURA



This is part of a larger project in which we explore the experiences of migrants through participatory photography and conversational interviews in three distinct settings:

In the South

in Cali and Buenaventura, Colombia

At the Border

at the US-Mexico border, in Nogales, Arizona and Mexico

We invite you to interact with the exhibition and to share your thoughts and comments.

In the North

in Seattle, Washington



#fotohistorias



fotohistorias@uw.edu



www.fotohistorias.org





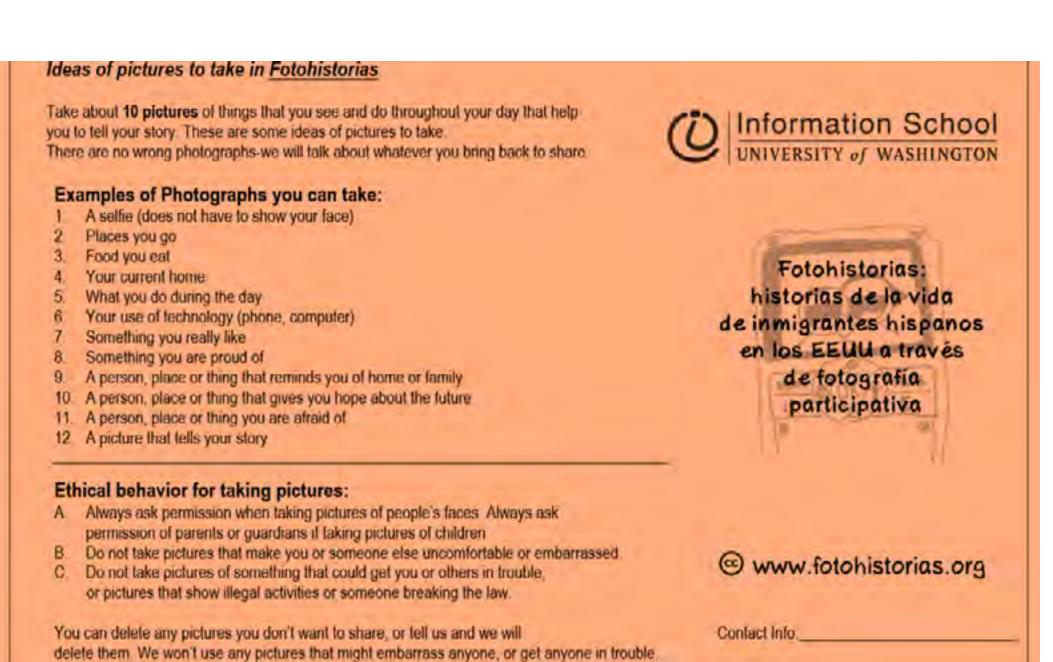
FOTOHISTORIAS RESEARCH METHODS AND RATIONALE

otohistorias uses participatory photography and conversational interviews as a way to elicit the life stories and experiences of migrants in different moments of their migration experience.

Inspired in other approaches such as "photovoice" and "photo elicitation," Fotohistorias combines the power of images with the depth of stories and conversation to explore the experience of migration with sensitivity and care.

Our research seeks to understand and re-value the experience of migrants from their own perspective. In particular we seek to answer the following research questions:

- How do immigrant day laborers, recently deported immigrants, and prospective immigrants to the US reflect their identity, values and culture through photos and stories?
- What are the essential elements of everyday life for immigrants at different times and locations in their migration journey?
- How are transience, identity, and culture reflected in the pictures taken and the stories told by immigrants?





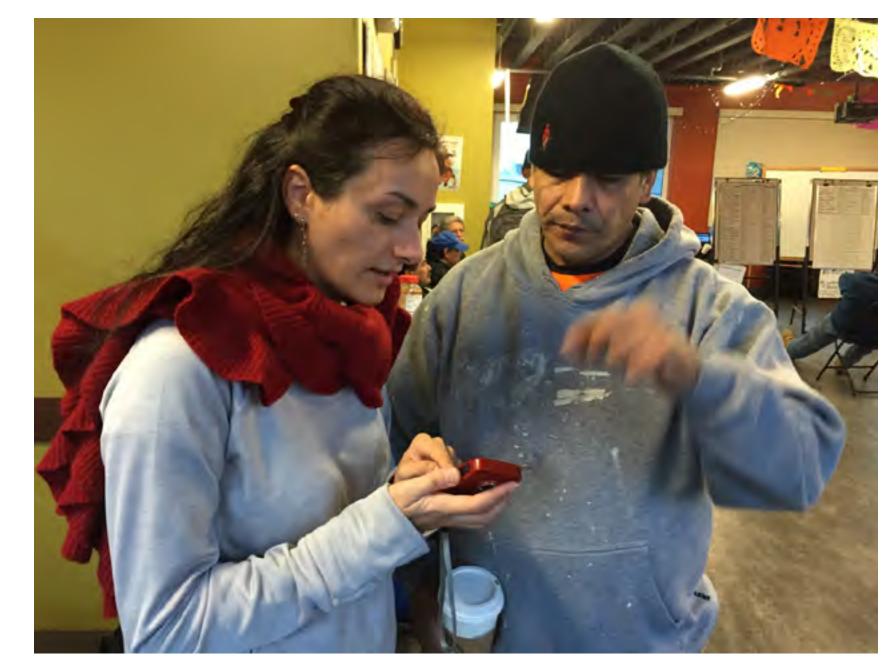














PHASES OF FOTOHISTORIAS

- 1. Collaboration with local organizations: Working in partnership with local organizations in each research location, we build on local relationships of trust to invite and encourage voluntary participation.
- 2. Invitation to take pictures: Participants borrow a basic digital camera (or can use their own) for a set time (between a day and a week).

Ethical behavior: participants are reminded to ask permission when taking pictures, especially of children, and not to take pictures that could be embarrassing or put someone in trouble.

Ideas of pictures to take (set goal of roughly 10): suggesting a specific list of ideas tends to work best, including a selfie, places you go, things you like to do, scenes that represent or remind you of home, etc.

Learn to use a digital camera (if needed): Very basic instructions building on Fearless Cards (training cards for very basic computer literacy for extremely marginalized populations, www.fearlesscards.org)

Variations (in Colombia): Discuss in small groups which pictures to take, then go take them, and talk about them on the spot. Discuss which pictures might be interest and talk about them, and later (ie, during the day) take them and briefly corroborate that they represent the conversation that had happened before.

3. Debriefing conversation: Participants bring back their pictures and we hold a conversation about their work.

Transfer pictures to our laptop using memory card or cable. Select photos to retain in the study, if needed (sometimes participants also take video, or take pictures of other things they don't want to include, or have duplicate images of same situation, or simply have too many pictures to talk about).

Open conversation about the photos, one by one. Question prompts include: what is this? Why did you take this picture? How do you feel when you see this picture? What has been left out of this picture? Etc.

Ask about how they felt about doing the photos and the conversation.

Offer to print one or two pictures if they want (portable printer on hand), or to share by email, text, Facebook, or memory stick.

4. Analysis and dissemination: Translation and transcription, coding, analysis. Dissemination through presentations, exhibitions, web site, book.

Coding of emerging themes using qualitative research software (Dedoose)

Selection of representative fragments and photos for each theme.

Copy edit texts for clarity and brevity.





CONTRIBUTIONS OF FOTOHISTORIAS PARTICIPATORY PHOTOGRAPHY APPROACH

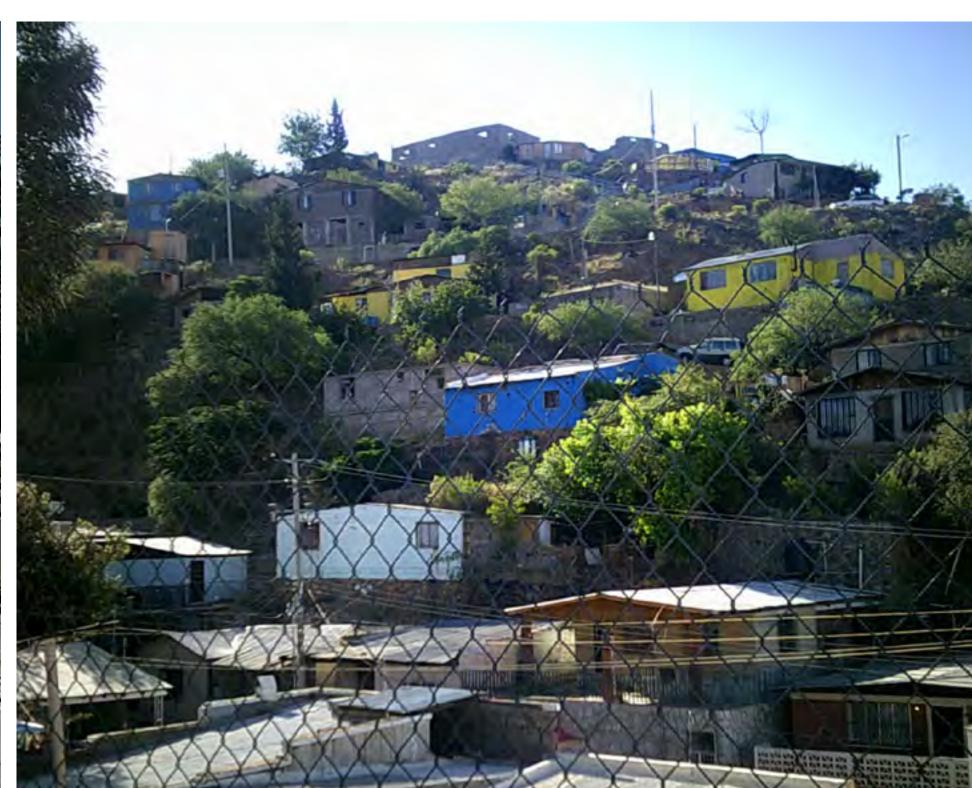
Fotohistorias combines the power of images and the richness of stories.

Together, they yield more depth and sensitivity than either photos or interviews alone. Fotohistorias helps elicit multiple perspectives and symbols from the same image or place, emphasizing how people's perceptions and feelings shape meaning and experience.

Fotohistorias participants frequently feel empowered, heard and valued, and gain a new perspective and agency over their current situation and context.



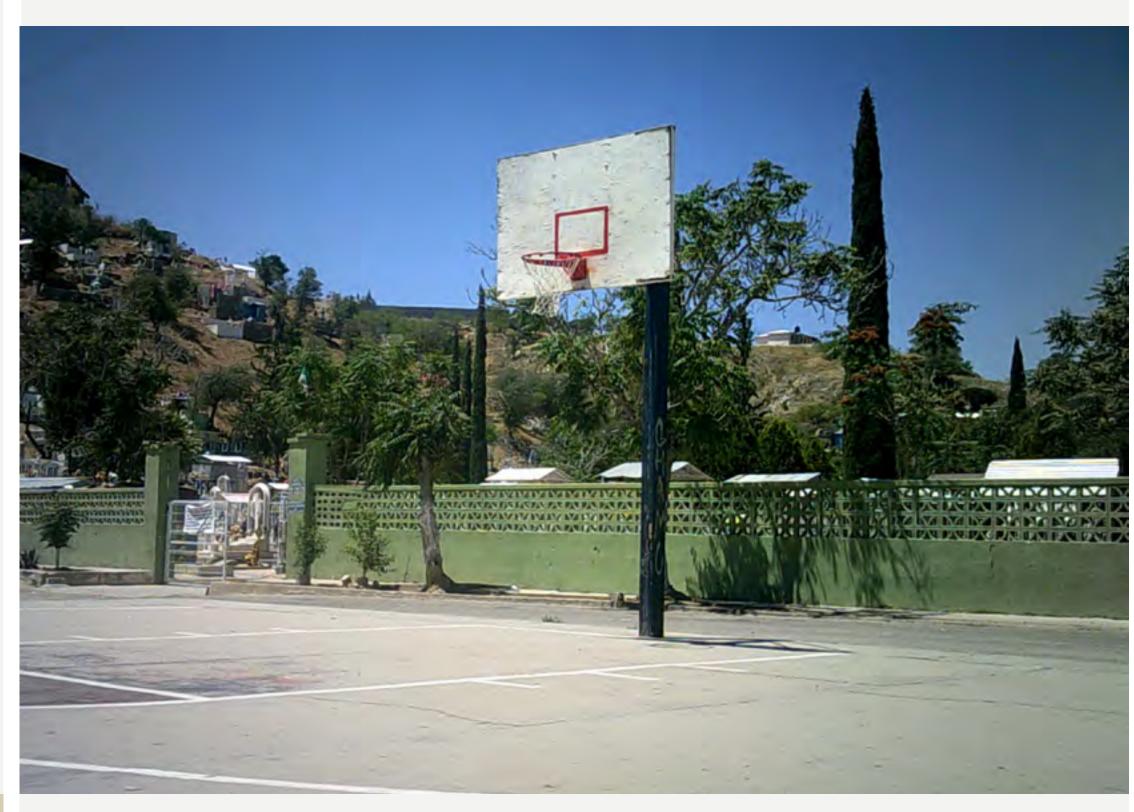




Sara: Why did you take this picture of the number 15?

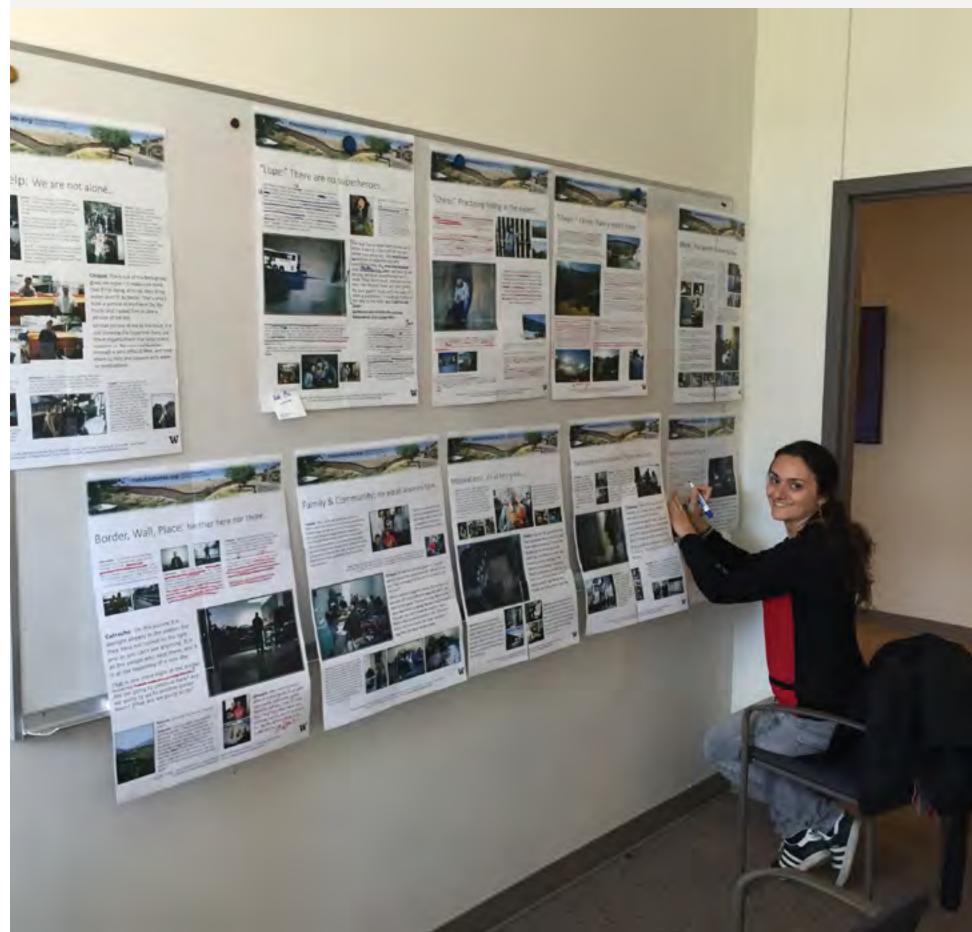
Gilda: Well, because next month I will turn 15 years of living in the United States, so for me, it's a number that means a lot. These 15 years have been of many memories, many joys, many sufferings, many sadness... as an immigrant in this country, the first few years after I got here, I never thought I would reach 15. I thought "I'm going to go back next year." And times went by and when I realized it, I had been all this time in the United States. Every morning when I wake up I feel that I've made it here. I long for my country, I dream about my country and going back to my country and my family. So that's why I wanted to bring this picture of the number 15. I cannot believe it myself.

Chapin: This is the basketball court, something that I'm a very big fan of. I play a lot of basketball. In Guatemala, basketball was my passion. I haven't played basketball for a month and I would like to play it again here. But I don't have a ball. My feet are itchy. I want to play but I cannot do it. So that's why I took that picture of the basketball court.

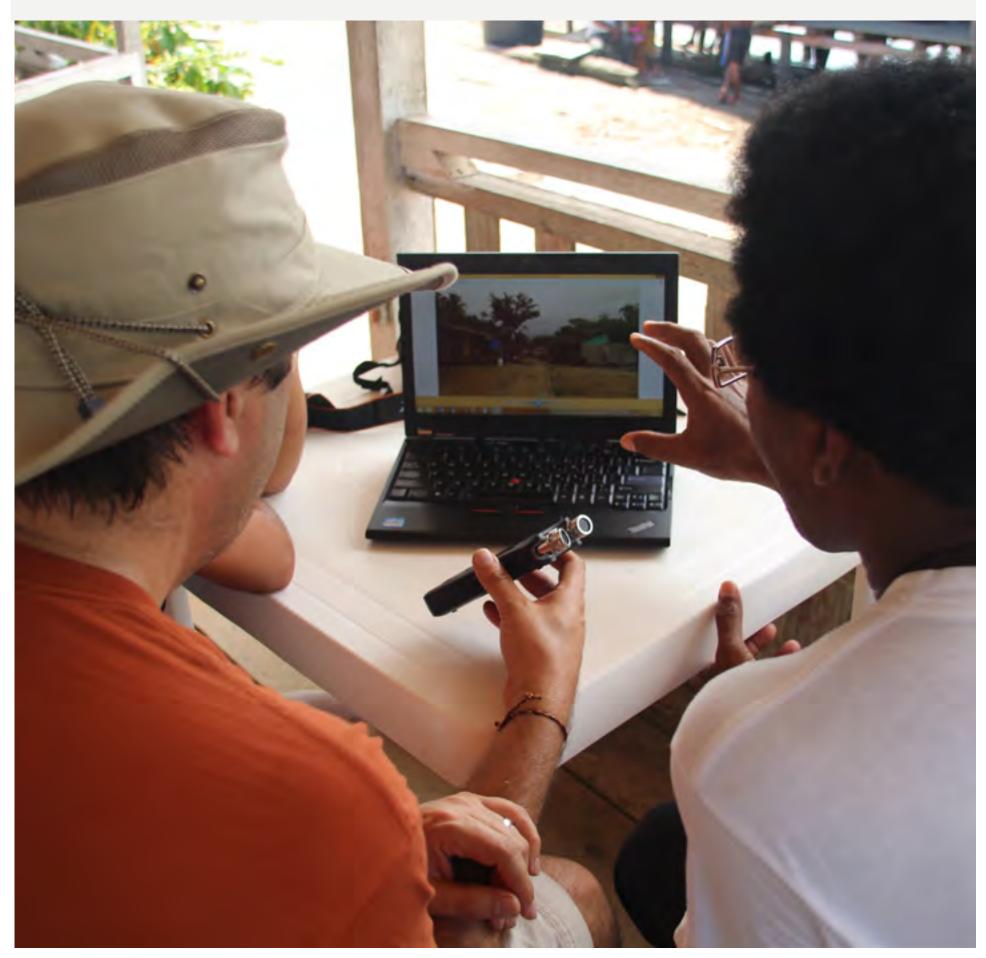


Ricardo: How did it feel to have a camera and to take pictures of your daily life here?

Lupe: Oh I liked it. I really liked it. Just thinking what is happening at this moment in my life. Well, that I'm no longer in detention, I'm not as angry as I was before, when I was in the CCA (Corrections Corp. of America). Now I'm free, I can value some other things that I did not think were as important. I look at their smiles, for example, and yes, we all have problems, but we also have to continue, we have to keep on going. When I saw that mountain, the little hill with the houses, I felt peace, tranquility, the inner peace that you need. So those are things that have helped me to meditate.



Chiapas: Here is a picture of the cemetery. It made me remember when I was crossing in the desert I saw a cemetery. It was just a lot of crosses. Maybe people die and they are left there. I was thinking it must be very sad to die in the desert, and be buried there, and your family doesn't know. You never go back home. You don't even have a coffin. That's very sad. So you take the risk of going, and sometimes you'll make it through, you could be captured, or you could also die of hunger or of thirst. So that's why I took this picture of the cemetery.







WORK & LIVELIHOOD



Porfirio

I cut this wood. This wood is to build a house, I am going to make a cut called 'mare'. For the house I cut the finest timber, I have to know wich is the finest timber.

Porfirio

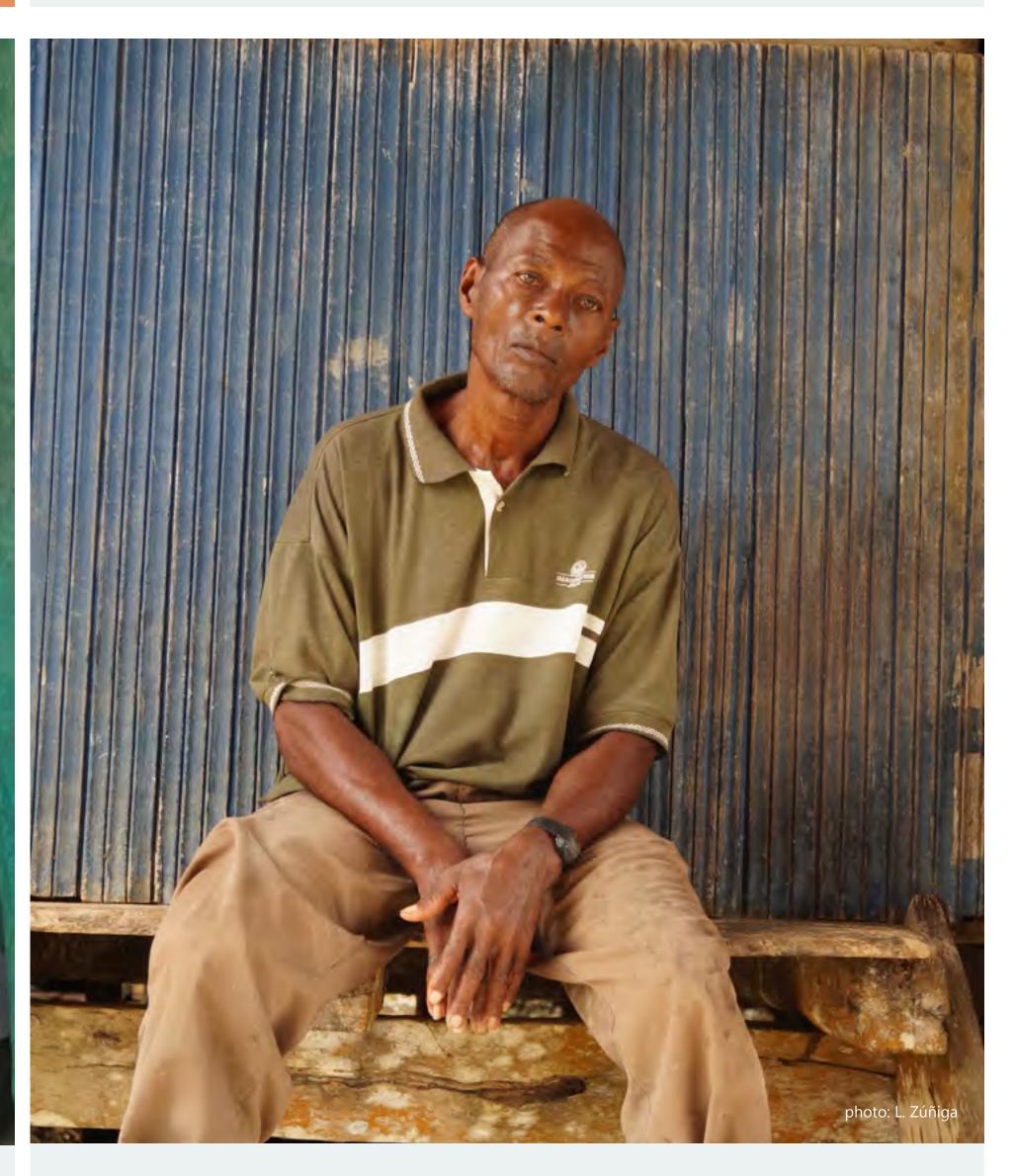
(Bahía Málaga)

When I was younger my life was about fishing. I used to fish with 'atarraya', 'trasmayo', 'espinel' and hooks, then I let the fishing and I start cuting wood, but I have not been cuting wood all my life. I used to comercialize fish before that.

(Bahía Málaga)







Hoovert

A 'Labriego' is a native person from the territory who does his traditional production practice, he collects the harvest he has planted, he gets plantains and bananas, and if his condition does not allow him to have a little engine, he will do with his canalete (paddle).

(Bahía Málaga)

Marco Antonio

A lot of people from my community live from recycling. Whoever doesn't have a job goes out specific days to recycle. This is an additional income for the family.

(Buenavista)

Fanny

This guy lives from agriculture, he grows plantains and 'chontaduro' and other produce to eat, that is his sustenance. He used to cut wood but now that land is a protected area, so wood cutting is not allowed. He said he is one of the settlers, but event though he arrived here more than 25 years ago, he arrived to a place with land that had already been broken, from the Valencia family.

(Bahía Málaga)





SECURITY & AUTHORITY





Paisa

We have had a lot of fights with the police because they came in a very rude way to damage two machines that we had working. Because of their rudeness, we brought another 10 machines. This is a community natural park, it doesn't have an owner. The police and the government are not owners of this park, neither is any person, this is for everyone. From the little ones to the oldest. There have been some grandparents coming to do excercise down here.

(Siloé)

David

When you have a camera and the police is beating people up, they regret they did it. The camera is like another gun. The problem is that it can work also as a shelter for kids to have violent fights because they feel safe. The bigger the camera, the more the respect or fear that people feel. It all depends on what people think about the object.

(Siloé)



Paisa

The truth is that the situtation has not been easy, the police claims to be the owner of these lands but they aren't, the real owner died a long time ago. We have managed to say no and no, to make them know this is ours, this land belongs to the community. We have being fighting for this for the past 16 or 17 years.

(Siloé)



Marco Antonio

I feel happy beacuse I know I've got something to sell. When I need money, I know by recycling I've got something to sell. Any cash you get for your products is useful. It's sad because the government is going to make this illegal.

(Buenavista)





MEMORY, CULTURE & IDENTITY





Hoovert

Men rely on women, from the first to the last moment of our lives. An important element in that relashinship is the security of having food, delicious and healthy food, which gives strength to our spirit and soul, strength to remember our purpose to preserve our territory. These women, whom we call "sazoneras", they are are kitchen wise.

(Bahía Málaga)

Pachita

I am a very proud black woman, like the 'currulao', I was born from the womb of a strong and pure black woman, proud to come from others of the same blackness. I come from a culture bound to joy, I am a descendant of those who broke the chains of slavery and planted freedom foreverin our veins.

(Bahía Málaga)



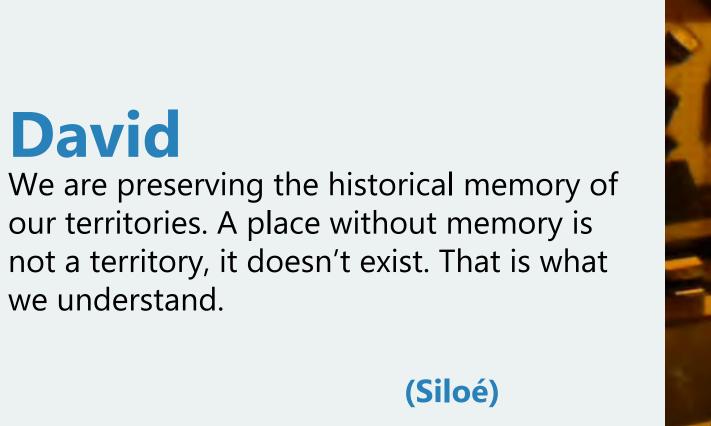
Pachita

That is what my friend ("comadre") said: the territory is life and if we leave we lose it, and it is the time to tell this to the people we love...

It is a shame, "comadre", I cannot go with you... I tell my husband but he does not want to understand...

We, the black communities, are oral by nature, that has been our tradition, we don't use written words. We are verse, song, poem.

(Bahía Málaga)





Juan Carlos

Here we have in first place we have the CRIC flag. After that, we have the ponchos that make us warm in both physical and spiritual ways beacuse they work as shields against bad energy. Those are our hats, they are tipical and cover us from the heat, they also work against bad ideas that come from the outside. Finally, we have the indiginous batons that represent the historical resistance of our people.





MEMORY & HOME



Pachita

I remembered that song:

"el mas bonito se me fue, oio pango, pangoé, el mas bonito se me fue".

I remeber when the sun rose I would make breakfast and he would go on his way, he would bring the best plantains, we had the girls... That is the true meaning of being rich, of having everything. And then, to have to leave it all, leave our territory because of the armed conflict.

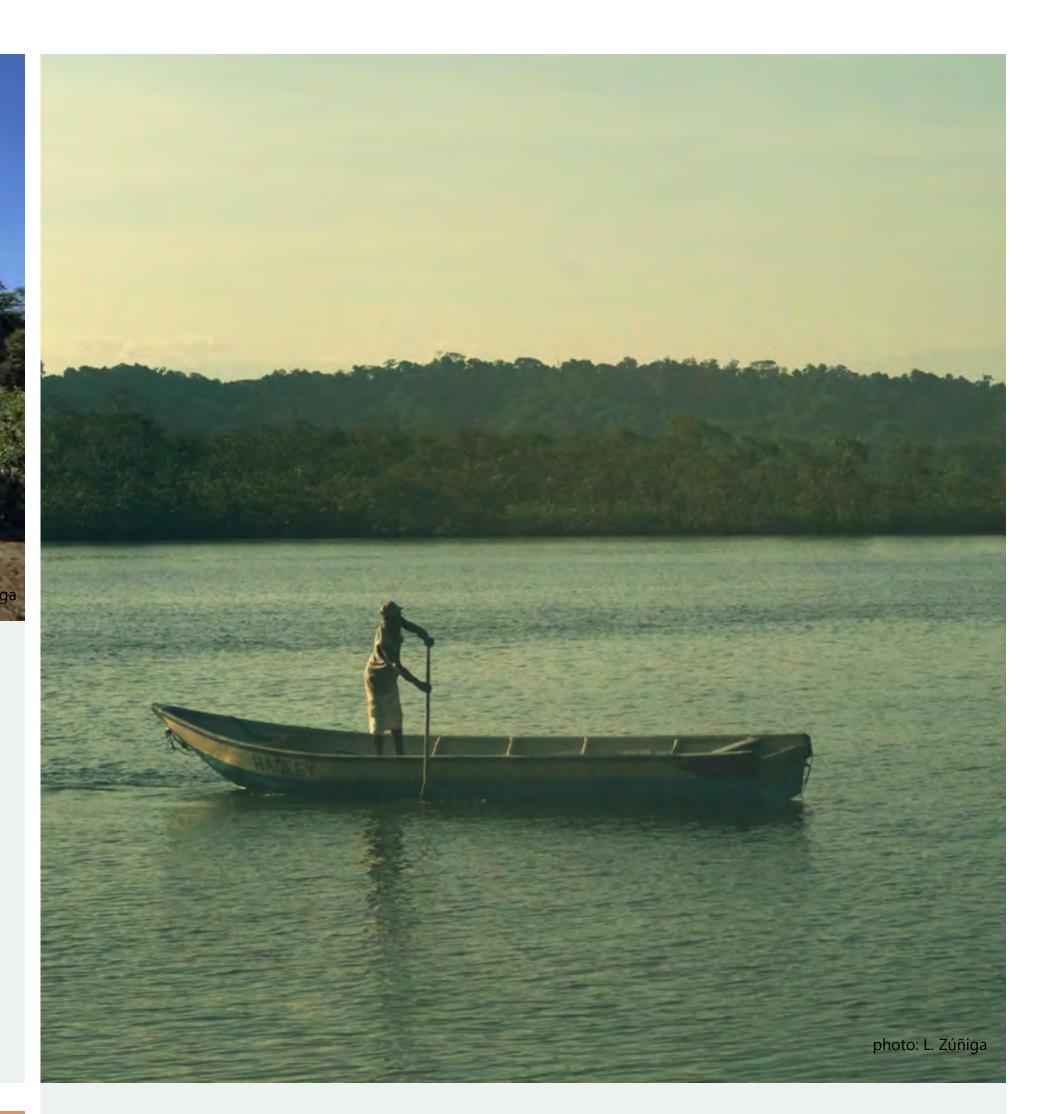
(Bahía Málaga)



Hoovert

The preservation of the territory is our main job. From 1998 to 2010 we have created 3 categories of reserve here: the natural regional park, composed of 25,000 hectares, with the CVC taking care of it. Second, a full management district with 7,703 hectares. Thirdly, we have the national natural marine park "Uramba Bahía Málaga". There is no other national park in Colombia that works for the preservation of people and their culture. This is the only park that has something like that.

(Bahía Málaga)



We are migrant women, we have created a school for cultural identity to help our people understand they don't have to leave, they can stay in their territory. We can travel, you know, but not because we are afraid. We see so many who have left or who don't know where to go.

(Bahía Málaga)

Pachita

I am migrating, even if I am in the same place, I am migrating. We can see that there are static people, like prisoners. Their minds migrate and they can not talk, they migrate in their imagination, inside, they don't know if they are from here or there, they don't know where they are.

(Bahía Málaga)



David

That's a good question because our work is more visible for the outside people than for the community. For example, the radio station is more visible for the community but in this moment it is not working. We know by Youtube that we are visited by almost 2,000 people each day. (Siloé)



Jorge

That's the place where we are, where we live: our neighborhood. That flag means the symbol of the indigenous council. The city: Cali.

(Buenavista)

David

The "Punto Digital" is a pretty name but one of the results is that the kids are no longer coming to the library. There is a problem, the computers are laptops so they must be locked. Kids and teens cannot be mixed together because supposedly they can take the laptops away. At the "Punto Digital" the security of the laptops is seen as more important than the educational process.





ENTERTAINMENT, ART & NATURE



Rocío

We talk to the kids, sometimes they listen. If not, we talk with their moms. We are trying to teach them that this park is for them. They get the message, if they destroy this park there will be no place to play. These kids are not rude, they get it. They take care of the park but sometimes they make some little damages.

(Siloé)

Hoovert

We built everithyng with our own hands. This is a very continuous picture, although lots of the young people of new generation, are going away from the country, and they are going deep in the scientific-tecnique topics, puting away the relationshio with nature.

(Bahía Málaga)



phrox s vargani

Marco Antonio

Here we see me with the city of Cali, the Council House, the store where you buy your things every day, and the soccer field. I go in the morning to do my recycling work, and when I come back I think they must be playing soccer already. And if they are not, I look for my friends to play.

(Buenavista)

Paisa

People come here to do sports and weight-lifting. Everything here has been given by someone. They tell us "take this", especially from "Nueva Luz" foundation. For example, there was a German guy who came here to visit and gave us tubes and netting for the goalposts.





LEARNING & SELF-IMPROVEMENT



Hoovert

Here we have female and male resistance and that creates what Chinese people called the yin and the yang: while men reflect resistance in a strong relationship with the land, women reflect that resistance in a more concrete relationship with the territory, where there is more water and posibilities to produce, or at home with parenting, transmitting oral tradition, educating the kids.

(Bahía Málaga)



ACIÓN CESA NO CON LO NACISIO SAGO SAGO



David

In our case, we became experts in sociology, social work, museums, history. If we work with some anthropologist or sociologist, we can work better than them here in Siloé because we know our people and our community but it doesn't mean that we have the professional skills that the university gives you. There is communitarian knowledge but the academic part is really important. (Siloé)

Jessica

Culturally, there is a belief that foundations are there to give you free things or free money. So when they come here and they see that we offer training and education, where people can study and learn new things, they go "hmmm."

(Siloé)

Juan Carlos

I went to the Cauca region to prepare myself in things I didn't know really well. Then I came to Cali with a main objective: make the indigenous guard stronger. But at the same time I tried to better understand the needs of Cali's indigenous community.





MOTIVATIONS: BETTER FUTURE





David

People must not ask for things for themselves, do you understand me? First, for everybody else. You are asking me, not directly but I can tell: "what do I live from?" When I can tell people have that question I say: "ask me the question!" So people offer me dollars or colombian pesos, and I tell them: "Thank you, but we are not going to make money in the name of Siloé." We are not going to make money in the name of the misery, violence and other problems of Siloé.

(Siloé)

Ferney

Today in Málaga, a lot of people have left and gone to Buenaventura because they have full-time electricity and they might offer better opportunities. But the truth is there is a systematic abandonment of the rural areas by the national government.

(Bahía Málaga)





Fanny

The "piangüa" route started as an alternative source of income. In the beginning people were buying 'piangüa to export to Ecuador. We started to look for a better solution, to open new paths in this business by ourselves, to make it our source of income.

Then some people came here, they wanted to know how we harvest the piangüa, what the job looked like, and that is how we started it as an ecotoursim activity.

(Bahía Málaga)

Samuel

I came here when I was 9 years old, when Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was killed. There was a special police force called "Chulavitas", a kind of community police. The major of Restrepo took my dad out of there. Then Don Pedro Antonio Ospina, someone who had a farm in front of ours and worked as a miner here in Siloé, asked my father to let me come here and make food for him while he mined for coal, so that is when I first came here.





IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE





We brought the electricity here. We payed to have the

problems but we were able to build and it is good.

has 11 square cm per inhabitatnt of public space.

connections made, and we brought the posts and all. This

is great work for youth to get organized. There have been

There are also some youth who do drugs, others cause trouble,

but overall they all respect this space for the children, they help

to build with the community, with the elders. Because Siloé only

(Siloé)

Juan Carlos

The corn is ours, our harvest and the name is really clear: "MAIS": "Movimiento Indígena Alternativo y Social" (Alternative and Social Indigenous Movement). Is what I have always said: this movement is not only for indigenous people but for every social field and everything it involves: afroamericans, peasants, Yanaconas (indigenous people). Because it has been clear for a long time: if we are not united, next wars are not going to be for land but for water, that's why we need to be united. What we are doing, our struggle for the freedom of mother earth is not just for us, it is for the whole continent.

(Buenavista)





Movimiento Alternativo Indígena y Social

Rocío

This was a blessing for us. A really nice project by the SIDOC Foundation. Really nice beacause before this was like a forest, and there was a tragedy. Some houses fell and people died. A woman called Armitage came here to paint the houses white and she had the idea of doing a park. We told her that was impossible because the government had said this land was unstable, but she took us to Medellín to show us how there was a park in every corner even though it is more hilly and unstable than here.

(Siloé)

Ferney

The links between the young and the old include the school, the leadership training, the preparations for generational change. The older leaders teach the younger ones, and this new leader has listened and learned, and he is the president of the community council.

(Bahía Málaga)

Juan Carlos

David

The indigenous movement is not just for indigenous people. It is for all kinds of persons: afro, peasants, mestizos... In the end, we are all indigenous, evem of we have different skin or eye color we are equal. We were all mixed in the Spanish conquest, nobody is pure, we were all mixed between different indigenous groups, and with whites and afros. That is why we are all indigenous, and our home is everyone's home.



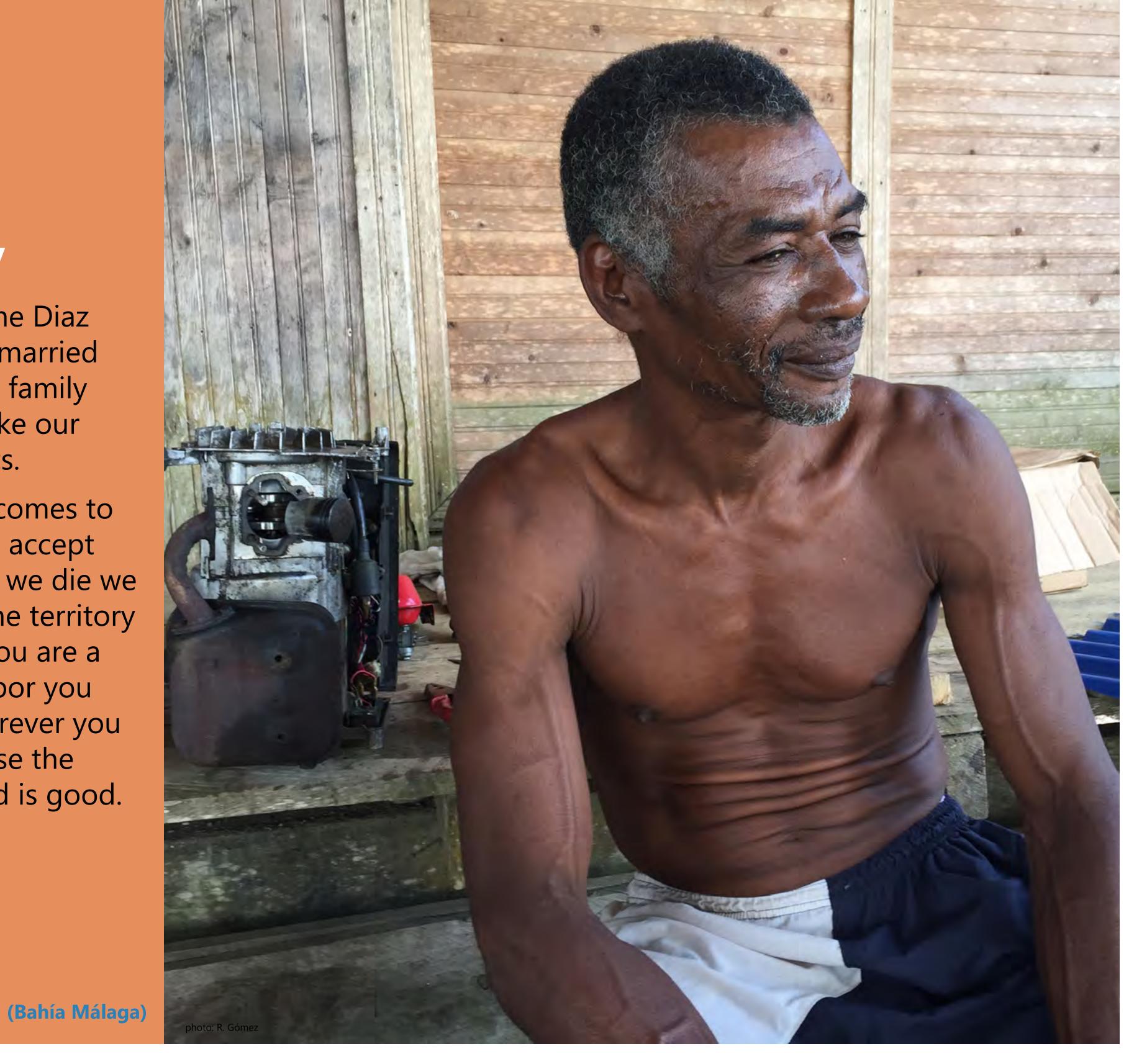


IDENTITY & COMMUNITY

Fanny

He is from the Diaz family, they married into a native family from here, like our grandparents.

If someone comes to live here, we accept them. When we die we don't take the territory with us. If you are a good neighbor you can live wherever you want, because the neigborhood is good.



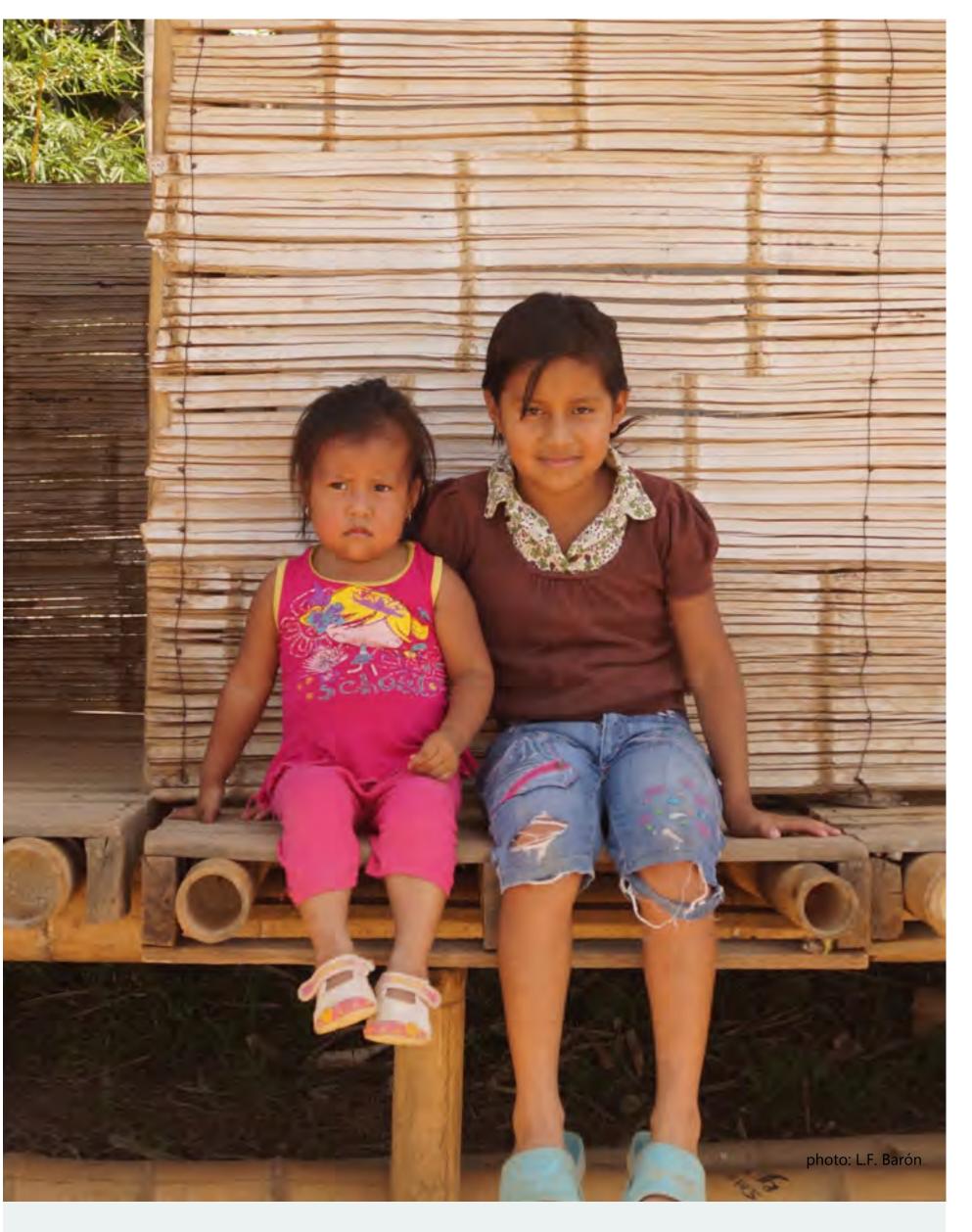


Fanny

When I was ten years old, my mother taught me how to make a corn wrap (*envuelto*). There are a lot of things you can do with corn. I learned to cook when I was 12 or 13 years old. Before they called us cooks, but now with study and thanks to the community council, they call us "*sazoneras*" (seasoning ladies).

(Bahía Málaga)





Juan Carlos

At first I didn't understand what it means to be an indigenous person. Now I understand it, and I have beeing teaching this meaning to my son. He gets it, he is just three years old but his memory is very developed.

(Buenavista)

Luz Marina

Our children are the most beautiful gift we have from god. Our home is our shelter where we protect ourselves from the sun, the cold, and the rain; it is where we rest, where we share happy moments with our family, where we share our meals. It is our refuge.





TERRITORY: A VIABLE FUTURE HERE





Hoovert

We are focused on building a future that allows us to support ourselves and to sustain the future generations that will maintain our territory. Territory is the place where the thoughts live, the thoughts of our elders, and those of our children. That is the most important thing. Other important prinicples and rights in our community are autonomy, participation, our own view of development, and self-determination. This is how we will improve colective welfare and how we can remain in our territory. To guarantee the generational renewal, so our children can tell our grandchildren: "This is where my grandfather lived, he planted this, he harvested this..."

(Bahía Málaga)

(Siloé)

Porfirio

We have lived here from wood cutting, but it was very controlled, because when we see a big tree we can cut it down, when is a small one we can not. That is what we call 'thinning', we take the big trees and let the small ones grow. Then we declared some areas as conservation zones and we don't cut wood there at all.

Now that we are a Community Council, we have legal title to around 35.000 hectares of colective territories. We are all owners of this territory, and we can work with the government to create projects that will give us our livelihoods.

(Bahía Málaga)





CXSCO HAMBURGXSCO CCNI VALPARAISO photo: L, Zúñiga

Luis Alberto

I work here even though life is safer in the indigenous reservation. But I love it here, and I do it for my children. I am very proud of my baton, it symbolizes my struggle for the indigenous community. The government is looking to show the bad side of the indigenous communities, but we are not all bad.

David

(Buenavista)

The cable car will be a way of transport for the community, and for the whole city. It will attract tourism, foreigners like you too, they won't need to walk all the way up here but come on the cable car. This will bring more investment in the community and in the territory, it will be a positive thing. Today's Siloé will change and today's Cali will change, when the cable car starts operation.

Hoovert

We had a clear idea of the economic model we wanted from the very beginning, and how it would include the black people with low literacy and education. Staying in our territory and building the future of well-being that we dream of is important, because we know we are not welcome elsewhere. We go to the city and women end up in bedrooms and kitchens, men in construction; or in the past people would go North, in the 80s and 90s. People would go as stowaways to the U.S., or more recently, to Central and South America. That is why we build our future here in our territory.

(Bahía Málaga)





TERRITORY: PLACE & CULTURE





David

It's an ancient tradition. The "Dablitos" rythms are really accelerated. If you try to write sheet music with it it will be very difficult. The real goal is to make noise so people will listen and give them money. That sound isn't nice, what is really good is to see it all together: the dance, the rythm, the noise. We are trying to make it easier for outsiders to understand and enjoy it. How can we make a successful fusion, like they did in Brazil?

(Siloé)

Ferney

This is the "Piangüímetro." The Piangüa Route is an ecotoursm destination, created and built by the women in the Bahía Málaga territories. It is a strategy to help improve the quality of life in the communities, to inclrease awareness of the environment, and to help preserve our natural resources by measuring the minimum size of shells that can be harvested.

(Bahía Málaga)







Yolima

In our territory it is different from here in the city. There the community comes together in the community house, it can be 200 or 300 people. We plant and harvest the food, then we bring it to the community house and it's distributed between the community. Some of it is sold, so the money helps buy other things.

(Buenavista)

Ferney

There has been a historical process, we understand that outside our territory there is unfair competition, we attack each other, the capitalist model absorbs us and we end up slaves of the model in the city. So, what I analyzed was that, to see how with the Community Council we can help improve the quality of life and thew well-being of the community.

(Bahía Málaga)

Hoovert

Schools need to improve. The malagueño that wants to grow and study won't see the oportunities here to make it so he will look for them outside. That is something we want to change.

(Bahía Málaga)





TERRITORY: WHERE IS HOME?





Ferney

For us, the territory is the place where our thoughts live, our place to live. It is related to our cultural identity, our spirit, and nature. Our territory is more than a tree or a piece of land. We have an intrinsic relation to our territory, a whole that is difficult to describe.

(Bahía Málaga)

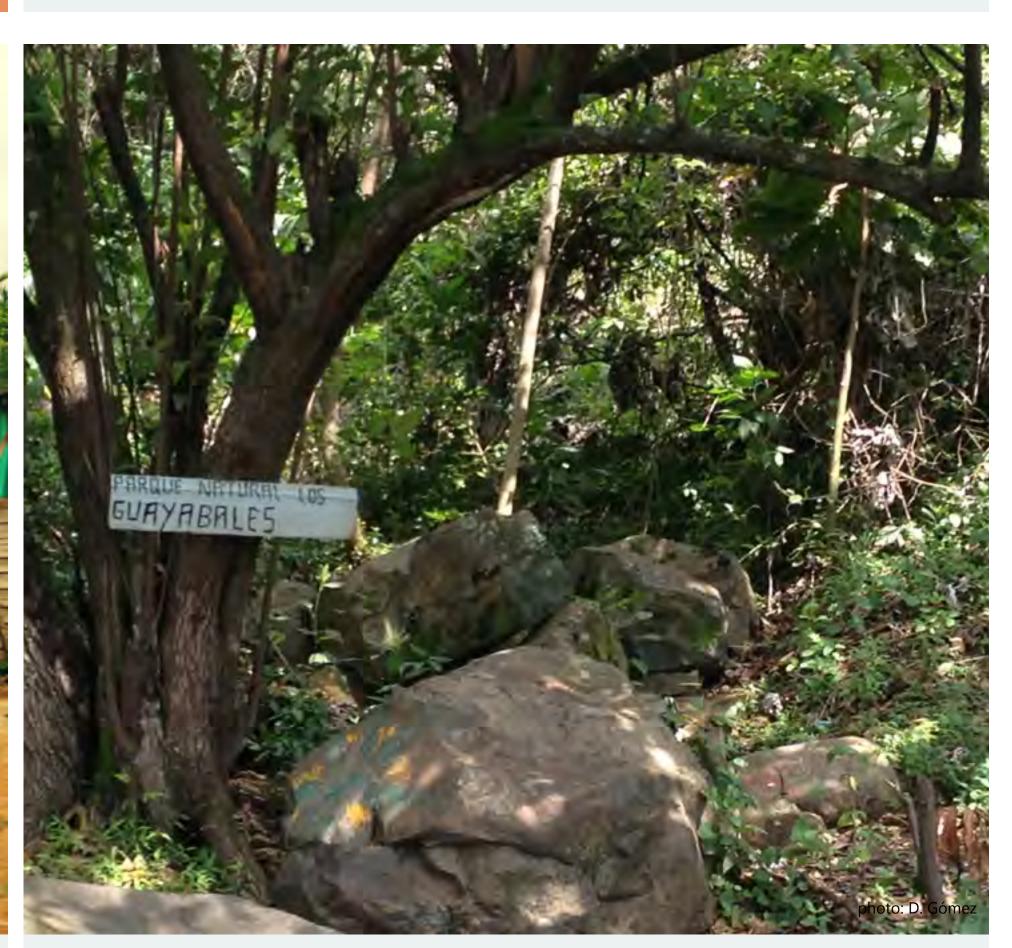
Pachita

An afro-descendant population without territory is nothing; the territory is where they develop their lives, where they do their songs, where they are happy. It is the place where they can sing and scream and make love and make noise in any way they want.

(Bahía Málaga)







Pachita

Where I was born, where I grew up, that is where my home is. It is sad and touching, it has been hard for me to be away. I had left in the past, when my daugther went to Chile, and one day they put her out on the street without her clothes or bags, nothing, her stuff stayed there.

When I see those people at the border (in the Fotohistorias exhibition, Life at the Border) I remember it is really painful, and it happened to my daughter too.

(Bahía Málaga)

Hoovert

What characterizes La Plata Bahía Málaga as an ancestral territory of our black community is that the population has been here since 1624. This community is the expression of the expansion and territorial appropriation of that black community, initially on the islands and then on the mainland, and its path to improve the living conditions of its people.

(Bahía Málaga)

David

Here we have a trail, made by the community. Do you want to walk the trail with us? It's exactly what our ancestors did, and what humanity has done through history: to live in community. Community means "Common", for everyone, and "unity", united. So, it's all about that. Here in Colombia it's called "minga" or "convite" and that's the way territories have been created.

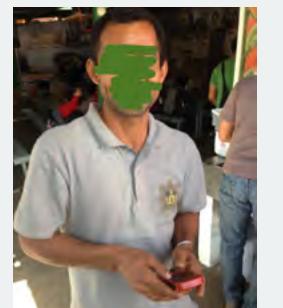


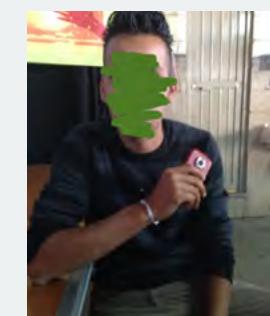


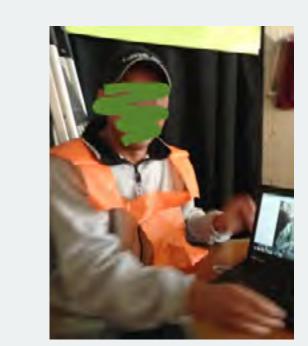
CAST OF CHARACTERS

Participants in Nogales

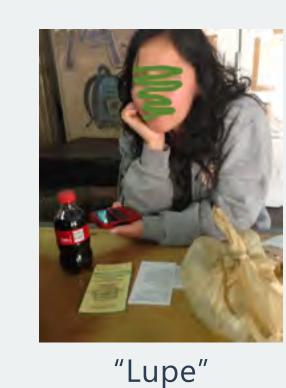
Anonymous migrants at El Comedor who shared their stories:







"Chino"



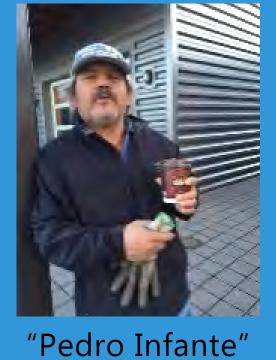
"Chapin" "Chavalo" "Catracho"

and former migrants, now staff at El Comedor:



Participants in Seattle

Day laborers members of Casa Latina:



"Chiapas"



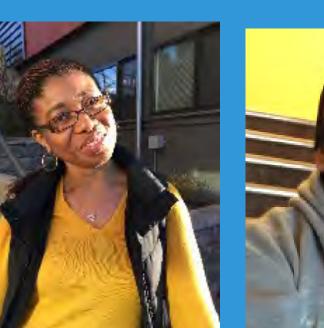


Blas













Jorge



Lourdes

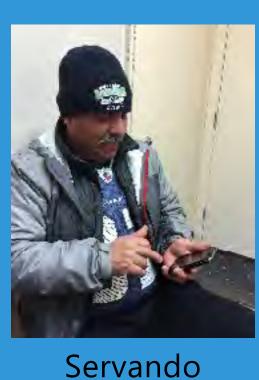








Gilda



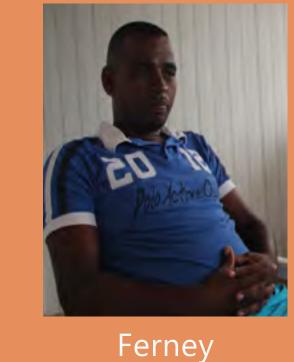
Jimmy



Participants in Cali-Buenaventura

Consejo Comunitario La Plata, Bahía Málaga











Comunidad Nasa de Buena Vista, Buitrera













Team in UW

Ricardo Gomez with contributions by:

- Sara Vannini
- Verónica Guajardo

Research Assistants:

- Bryce Newell
- Cherry Wang
- Chris Setzer
- Hadiza Ismaila
- Juan Carlos Rodríguez
- Katya Yefimova
- Korissa McGlocklin
- Mantra Roy
- Philip Reed
- Staci Fox

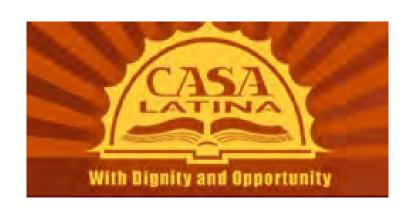
Collaborators in Nogales, Mexico

- El Comedor
- Kino Border Initiative



Collaborators in Seattle, WA

Casa Latina



Collaborators in Cali, Colombia

- Universidad Icesi
- Consejo Comunitario La Plata Bahía Málaga
- Comunidad Indígena Nasa de Buena Vista - Buitrera
- Fundación Nueva Luz, Siloé Cali
- Laura Marcela Zúñiga
- Luis Miguel Carvajal
- Luis Fernando Baron
- Natalia Escobar

Mauricio Beltrán

Oscar Ivan Trejos



