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**Alternative Development in Colombia:
The practice and theory of alternative
development programmes**

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List of Acronyms

AD	Alternative Development
APISIERRA	Asociación de Apicultores de La Sierra (Beekeeping Association of the Sierra)
ADAM	Areas de Desarrollo Alternative Municipal (Municipal Areas of Alternative Development)
CORPOURABA	Corporation de Desarrollo Sostenible de Urabá (Sustainable Development Corporation of Urabá)
DEVIDA	The National Drug Commission of Perú
ECOSOC	Economic Social Council of United States
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombian (Revolutionary Colombian armed forces)
FUPAD	Fundación Pan-American para el Desarrollo
INCB	International Narcotics on Control Board
INCUAGRO	Incubadora de Producción y Comercialización Agropecuaria (Incubator of Production and Agriculture Commercialization)
MIDAS	Más Inversion Desarrollo Alternativo Sostenible (More Investment for alternative sustainable development)
NGO	Non Governmental Institution
PFGB	Forest-Warden Families (Proyecto Familias Guardabosques)
PPP	Productive Project Program (Programa de proyecto productivos)
PNR	Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación (National Plan of Rehabilitation)
PLANTE	Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Alternativo (Alternative Development Plan)
PATA	Plan Nacional Ambiental (National Environmental Plan)
PDAR	Plan Desarrollo Alternativo Regional Bolivia (Regional Development Plan)
SS/E	Monitoring and Evaluation System. Project Col/03/48
TNI	Transnational Institute
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Section
USAID	United States International Cooperation
UNODC	United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime
UNODD	United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime by the Spanish translation

Abstract

This paper analyses how alternative development programmes have been established in Colombia as a strategy to eliminate coca crops, this based on a central question; to what extent alternative development programmes are compatible with the discourse of alternative development?

In order to answer this question, Chapter Two presents a theoretical framework which contextualises the beginning of alternative development in Colombia and its implications along the period as a counter point of mainstream development taking into account the elements such as empowerment, participation, gender , environment to assess alternative development. Chapter Three illustrates the use of alternative development approach as anti-drug policies and its practices in other countries. Chapter Four exemplifies four cases of alternative development programmes in Colombia located in the areas of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Urabá region and Guaviare. Chapter Five presents a general analysis of the research paper focusing in answering the central question based on the elements used to assess alternative development programmes and their relations with the practices in other countries following by the final conclusions of the paper.

Keywords

Alternative Development, participation, empowerment, mainstream development.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Latin America has been one of the most important discussion points for international organizations and first world governments. As well as Burma, Laos, China, Afghanistan and other countries, where the ending of poppy production is one of the main goals still to be accomplished. According to the last drug report in 2008 of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, the land area in Colombia devoted to the growing of coca, the raw material used in the production of cocaine, rose 27% for the year. The two other major cocaine producers, Bolivia and Perú, saw a decrease in land given over to coca plantations. (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2008).

According to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) alternative development has been defined as “a process to prevent and eliminate the illicit cultivation of plants containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances through specifically designed rural development measures in the context of sustained national economic growth and sustainable development efforts in countries taking action against drugs, recognizing the particular socio-cultural characteristics of the target communities and groups, within the framework of a comprehensive and permanent solution to the problem of illicit drugs.”

1.1 Background

In conjunction with the international community, the Colombian government has been struggling against drugs traffic and the cultivation of illicit coca crops over the last three decades. Colombia has been in a civil war for the last 40 years that brought terrible consequences to the Colombian society, therefore international aid has been directed to finance social investment and reinforce grassroots processes by the establishment of alternative development programs aimed to prevent and eliminate the cultivation of coca crops.

The first attempts in Alternative Development in Colombia began during the administration of then-President Belisario Betancur who oversaw law 35 in 1982, called the National Rehabilitation Plan (PNR). This law aimed to promote peace and create options for rehabilitation for those involved in the civil war and the illegal drugs trade. In this context the roots of Alternative Development in Colombia were conceived as substitution of one crop for another.

Following the violence and chaos of the 1980's and 1990's, the government of the former president Andres Pastrana in 2000, oversaw the establishment of a controversial plan by the Colombian and the US government, designed to jumpstart a peace process, with the leftwing rebels and far-right paramilitary death squads, strengthen the economy and reinforcement national institutions and democracy (Cabieses 2001).

Others (Camacho Guizado 2004), (Estrada Alvarez 2001), (Molano Bravo 2004), (Agenda Ciudadana 2000), (Salazar 2001) consider certain issues regarding Plan Colombia, for instance the economic strategy which was an enormous plan aimed to enforce the economic situation in Colombia.

The beginning of the plan suggested something similar to the Marshall Plan in Europe. Plan Colombia¹ is one of the biggest investments in anti-drug policies around the world (Cabieses 2001). Plan Colombia was an investment in its first stage of US\$ 7.1 billion, where US\$ 1.6 billion were contributed by the US Government, and the remaining US\$ 3 thousand billion by EU and the rest us\$3 thousand million by the Colombian government. However 80 per cent of the contribution of the US government was designated to strength the Colombian military forces and 20 per cent was left for social development (De Roux S.J 2001), which prompted criticism from certain sectors in the U.S. and Colombia about North American military presence in Colombia.

Table 1 Cost of Plan Colombia

Donator	Investment
US Government	23% -(80% of the total designated to Military purposes)
Colombian Government	42%
EU Countries	35%
Total	100%

Source: Own construction based on (De Roux S.J 2001)

1.2 Justification

Critics have complained about what they say are adverse outcomes of Plan Colombia, such as air spraying such as air spraying fumigations,² expected to eradicate coca crops in Colombia and also in the neighbouring countries affecting not only public health but the environment and the destruction of many licit crops³ that belong to peasants in the Andean region and Colombia.

Plan Colombia as a result also prompted the emergence of alternative development programmes. However the financial resources given over to the programs were dwarfed compared to military funding in the plan. (Cabieses 2001). These programmes, Productive Project Program (PPP) and Forest Warden Program (PFGB) created by the Colombian government, seek to help

¹ The Plan Colombia was designed in ten specific strategies: i) Economic strategic that generates employment and deep reinforcement of the state, ii) Fiscal and financial strategy that includes austerity adjustment measures in order to make progress and recover good status of Colombia in the international financial markets iii) Peace process strategy that assure commitment from the armed groups to end the conflict iv) Modernization of the armed forces of Colombia and the restructures of the national defence v) Judicial strategy and human rights vi) Antinarcotics strategy in partner with other countries that are involved with drugs (consuming and producing) vii) Alternative development programmes to substitute illegal crops viii) social participation xiv) human development x) Share responsibility, integrate action and balance treatment to the drugs problem.(Estrada Alvarez 2001)

² (See testimonies about interdiction policies and Plan Colombia in the South of the country in Colombia. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVq8AHjYSH0>)

³ (See testimonies of aerial spraying on alternative development crops at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atLNs55Hpg0&feature=related>)

communities by encouraging farmers to switch from illicit crops to legal crops. These programs also try to encourage awareness in the community that the long term programmes will bring positive effects to the people. Therefore these programmes became instruments to construct sustainable conditions for local development and income generation in zones that are affected by the armed conflict and the cultivation of illicit crops.

The socio-economic objectives in Plan Colombia have turned out to be secondary to the anti-narcotics strategy, which basically promoted the fight against the drugs trafficking in Colombia through the enforcement measures carry out by the military forces. Therefore in order to accomplish the goals for Plan Colombia after eradication of coca crops, International development agencies were looking to improve social and economic conditions in illicit crop areas by assisting coca producing farmers who voluntary agreed to follow the programmes that alternative development agencies were offering.

1.3 Objectives of the Research Paper

This paper will analyzes and describes the process of Alternative Development and its practices in Colombia since the 80's, focusing of the implementation of alternative development programmes aimed at eradicating coca crops in Colombia.

Secondly this research attempts to look at the programmes by closely analysing the practice within, taking into account elements that legitimise the exercise of alternative development as a discourse as well as the actors that are involved such as the Colombian government, institutions, private sector, public sector, development agencies and communities.

Finally, analyses of how compatible the alternative programmes are with the purposes of alternative development discourse.

1.4 Research Questions

The central question of this research paper is aimed to answer:

Are alternatives programs compatible with the alternative development discourse?

Sub- questions

- i. How is Alternative Development understood within mainstream development?
- ii. Why alternative development emerged as a counter point of mainstream development?
- iii. What is the use of alternative development as a concept in Colombia?
- iv. Why the outcomes of the alternatives programmes that have been established in Colombia are not the same in all the areas where illicit crops were grown?
- v. What is the difference between practice and discourse in alternative development programmes in Colombia?

1.5 Methodology

The present research was conducted as a qualitative investigation. Semi-structured interviews with different stakeholders involved in alternative development in Colombia as well as critics about the subject and academics who write about the matter.

It is important to mention that I have chosen this methodology in order to cover the most principal topics in the research question and other sub-questions; however this methodology could have some limitations that I will explain in the next section

The primary data was collected by doing semi structured interviews with managers and directors of the Alternative programmes in Colombia, as well as interviews with people in charge of international cooperation; who fund these programmes in Colombia. In addition, interviews with non- governmental organizations that have evaluated these programmes since their establishment.

The chosen criteria to select the cases in Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, The Urabá region and Guaviare presented in this document were based on the experiences, conflict zone backgrounds, important geographic locations and the ethnic diversity of these regions. However, it is important to mention that these programmes are implemented in nearly the country keeping in mind that the locations of these regions do not represent the totality of the entire program; rather they cover the elements of alternative development discourse discussed in this paper.

The secondary data used included official documents and reports from the governmental and non-governmental organizations, articles from journals, books, newspapers and magazines. as well as testimonial on video and other relevant documentaries.

1.6 Limitations

It is important to mention that most of these programmes are in conflict areas in Colombia and so it could be difficult to interview the communities that are running these programmes.

1.7 Structure of the Paper

This paper provides an analysis of how alternative development programmes have been included as weapon against the cultivation of illicit crops in Colombia. Chapter Two presents a theoretical framework which contextualises the beginning of alternative development in Colombia and its implications along the period taking into account the element to assess alternative development discourse. Chapter Three revises the use of alternative development as a concept and its practices in others countries. Chapter Four illustrates four cases of alternatives development programmes in Colombia. Chapter five will present the general analysis of the research paper focusing in answering the central question based on the elements used to assess alternative development programmes and their relation with the practice in other

countries. The final portion will consist of the conclusions of the research paper.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

Development throughout its evolution has evoked many debates among academics; therefore new approaches such as alternative development became central points of discussion in order to achieve better practices and outcomes in developing countries.

The focus of this chapter is to analyse how alternative development is understood in the development arena and why it became an alternative to mainstream development. This is based on the notions of Morally Justified and People Centred approaches.

Furthermore this chapter reviews elements of alternative development that underpin the discourse.

2.1 Is Alternative Development a new model?

Mainstream development as a concept has been discussed from different perceptions in which every one of these have had their own definition of development (Nederveen Pieterse 2001). For instance, taking the notion of Development Economics in 1940, 'development' is understood as economic growth and industrialization, Nederveen Pieterse (2001) illustrates other examples such as; the Modernization Theory in the 1950's 'development' is seen as economic growth and political and social modernization, during the 1980's Neoliberalism refers to "development" as economic growth, structural reforms and deregulations and in the 1970's the notion of Alternative Development defines 'development' as human flourishing.

According with these statements above (Nederveen Pieterse, 2001 62:3), defines development as "the organized intervention on collective affairs according to standards of improvement". Meaning with this that the improvements and interventions depend on the conditions of culture and the history of power relations and therefore 'development' is the negotiations of these two.

Therefore mainstream development has had many critiques since the 1970's. These have included the fact that development measures are not indicators of economic growth as they once were and do not belong in econometrics models alongside of the actual debate on developmental strategies.

Academic minds including (Friedman 1992), (Korten 1990), (Nederveen Pieterse 1998), (Chambers 2005) among many others have criticised this economic definition of development. What is development? How can we measure it? How can we achieve it? What criteria should be used? All these questions have reshaped the debate on development.

The question of alternative development as a new paradigm in development theory has risen to prominence in recent years. A point of dissension among scholars active in the alternative development debate has

been the definition of alternative development and whether or not it can achieve the goals that mainstream development has attained. Nevertheless the purpose of in this chapter is to illustrate how alternative development is defined from different perspectives and how this theory is understood in the overall debate. To be able to understand the concept of alternative development it is necessary to see the origins and why it became an ideal for a new change or “new development’.

During the 1960’s the emergence of social movements that were aimed to stand up for new rights, green opportunities and peace started as core issues of political agendas around the world (Friedman 1992). The Cocoyoc declaration (Mexico 1974), the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment (1972) and the International Foundation for Development Alternatives (IFDA) brought together new ideas of “basic needs” and the environmental resources that sustain the system, where the concept of self-reliance, importance of people rather than economics, endogeneity and ecological sustainability became elements to construct the third system⁴. (Friedman 1992:3)

Development is no longer simply viewed as GDP growth, and human development is seen as a more appropriate goal and measure of development, by the same token this means that alternative development has become less distinct from conventional development discourse and practice , since “alternatives have been absorbed into mainstream development” Nederveen Pieterse (1998) refers to alternatives as agents, methods and objectives of development, by which agents fill the role of NGO’s by methods and means of community participation. The inclusion of the objectives demonstrates the self-reliance crucial to meet basic needs and lead to a better quality of life.

Scholars active in the development debate agree that a “different development” as mentioned by Hettne (1990) in Nederveen Pieterse (1998) consider the combination of basic needs, self-reliance, sustainable and endogenous development. These elements are part of an alternative possibly considered a new paradigm. This is currently being debated in academic circles. (Nederveen Pieterse 1998) mentioned that ‘Alternative development is development from below. In this context ‘below’ refers (to) both ‘community’ and NGOs reaffirming that these features are necessary to enforce development. Are these alternatives a counterpoint of mainstream development? There must be alternatives in order for people to have a better life.

2.2 Notions of Alternative development

Having explained what alternative development is in the previous section, it is relevant now to understand how the concept of morality and the people centred approach comes to the discussion table.

⁴ Third system is not only an analogy to the third world it refers to the inclusion of grouping actively serving people’s interest, as well as the political and cultural militants who, while not belonging directly to the grassroots, endeavor to express people’s views and to join their struggle (IFDA in Friedman 1992:3)

Morally Justified approach

Alternative development as an ideology claiming improvements in the imbalances on economic, social and political power, centred in people rather than economic growth. Sutton (1998) in Friedman (1992) characterized alternative development as more than just a set of prescriptions; as an ideology, containing a moral justification, where reasoning can only be understood under a moral contextualization. Therefore these imbalances have to be supported by the idea on looking after human rights, citizens rights and the human flourishing that Friedman (1992) mentioned.

Therefore everyone has the right to a favourable conditions of living for themselves and their family, such as food, clothing and housing, where the exclusion of these violations on the declaration of human rights. On the other hand the concept of citizen rights is something that concerns states and their capacity of inclusion rather than exclusion of this one. Finally human flourishing refers to a human being's capacity of being fully human, in which these rights mentioned make possible the human flourishing. (Friedman 1992).

People Centred approach

Poverty, environmental destruction and communal violence are the biggest problems that in the global context, only economic growth can resolve (Korten 1992). The first argument claims that 'poverty and underdevelopment is a result of an insufficient capital investment to overcome problems of productivity and unemployment'. Traditional development continuously needs a flow of capital investment to influence market forces. Korten's argument leads to a growth with equity theory that describes the inclusion of basic human needs and human resource development as failures of growth development. This is in line with (Nederveen Pieterse 1998) who coined the term "growth plus" which contains the elements of redistribution, participation and human development activity.

Nonetheless, (Korten 1992) argues that a people-centred approach can achieve results when there is a central point from which 'people' influence growth. Structures and legal frameworks are constructed around people and most of all require structural reforms. The main apparatus called the 'state' is capable of meeting the basic needs of the people as well as accomplishing equal redistribution of resources that can eventually lead to quality of life improvement.

The following table shows an analysis of the different implications of development as economic growth approach and people centred approach bases on Korten's analyses.

Table 2 Growth Vs People Centred approach

<i>Growth- Centred approach</i>	<i>People Centred approach</i>
Economics at the services of multinationals	Place economics at the services of the people
Concentration of Power	Redistribution of power
Expansion of the economic, and not equal redistribution of resources	Reallocation of natural resources and wealth
If one looks after growth, equity will look after it self	Take care of equity first and the provision of the productive tools it will generate and appropriate growth that will take care of itself
Use of local resources to global markets.	Use of local resources to developing and producing for local markets
Economic growth has favoured industrials sector. The model tends to treat environment as limitless resource and waste dump.	Build a global system of interlinked with a large environmental and economical self-reliant to meet the own basic needs.

Source: Own construction base on Korten's discussion (Korten 1992)

2.3 Criteria to analyse Alternative Development

The purpose of this section is to provide a theoretical view, however the next chapter will focus on the analyses in terms of the situation with the alternative development programmes in Colombia.

Environmental Sustainability

Looking at the origins of why alternative development ideology started to appear in the development arena. It is important to mention that one of the most important outcomes of the Cocoyoc and Stockholm conferences were the bridge to establish the United Nations Environment programme (UNEP) and the topic of the global concern which Friedman (1992) has called the ‘outer limits’ of the planet resources that sustain the economic growth. Environmental degradation and the lack of enough natural resources to accomplish the basic needs as food and water for the poor are in serious risk. Korten (1992) has singled out the environment as one of the biggest problems in the global context to be resolved. Climate change is becoming the most important issue to be discussed in the political agendas and it is obvious that economic growth is causing this disaster with an increase of more multinational companies exploiting the natural resources.

Participation

Since the establishment of alternative development as an ideology in the 1970's, the term of participation is very important for the inclusion of the poor. According to the International Foundation for Alternative Development (1978:4) the way to achieve alternative development is through ‘New development strategies which cannot be conceived and carried out without the participation of social actors in all phases’ Its validity will stem only from genuine participation of people in the identification of issues, in the formulation of recommendations and in their implementation’. However the forms of participation are not the same in all the scenarios. (Hickey and Mohan 2004) have pointed out different participation approaches; but for the purpose

of this case, it is relevant to mention what kind of participation alternative development requires. Participation as a right of citizenship to be realized in multi-level, political communities where the level of engagement is focused principally on communities and civic society.

On the other hand (Chambers 2005) has used rhetoric as methodology to open up the concept of what participation means and to be able to develop this section, it is relevant to point out the three ways used by Chambers to contextualize local participation. Table 2 shows a diagram base on Chambers ideas in which the left arrow represents the top down approach represented by the governments and institutions listed by Chambers (2005) as ‘development committees and block grants’ and the right arrow represents the actions for the bottom up approach originated from those among the communities ‘the self-help and demands’.

Table 3 Participation

Participation	Rhetoric
Who participates?	The government staff and the organizations and community local people
What institutions are involved	Regional Institutions, local institution and governmental institutions
The Objectives and functions of participation	Local objectives, generation of new ideas into proposal that can benefit the communities

Source, own construction based on Participation: Review, Reflections and Future. Chambers (2005:87)

Empowerment

Taking into account the last two elements of alternative development it is important to mention that empowerment as an outcome of participation is difficult to separate from the similar definitions of motivation, self-reliance, self-control, self-influence, self-leader-ship, authority delegation, self-efficacy and job enrichment, Lee and Koh (2001).

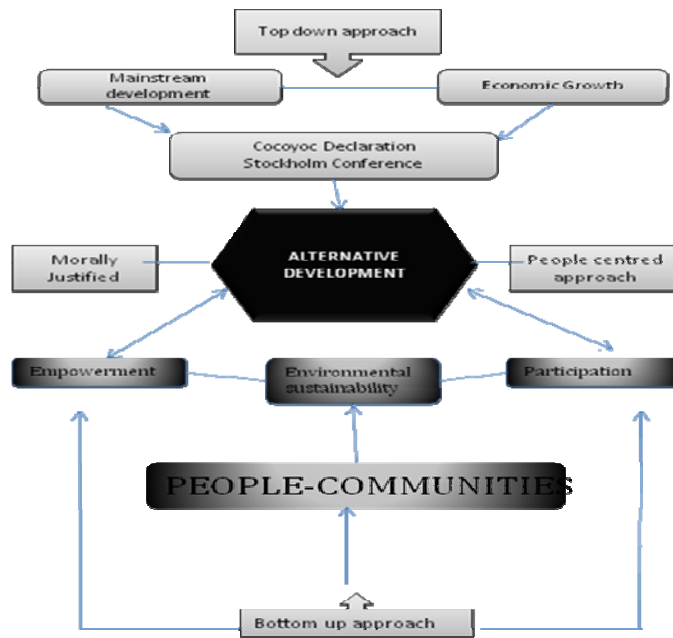
However the meanings of empowerment in the development arena have been discussed as ‘empowerment as various skills to promote subordinates capabilities based on trust’ Boren (1994) in Lee and Koh (2001), ‘empowerment as given freedom’ Harari (1994) in Lee and Koh (2001), but finally Lee and Koh (2001) defined empowerment as ‘the psychological state of a subordinate perceiving four dimensions of meaningfulness, competence self-determination and impact, which is affected by empowering behaviours of the supervisor’

According to Friedman (1992) alternative development is concern with empowerment of households and their members as individuals capable of being part of society and having a voice not only for political actions but for collective actions as well. From this point of view alternatives development programmes are advocating for these purposes in terms of self-initiative to organize themselves where people are in the position of exercise the choices and the own will. Also Chambers (2005:74) has mentioned that the result of empowerment is the emergent self-organizing networks from bottom up process (this can be seen in the presentation of the case studies in chapter four).

2.4 Overall Analytical framework

The following diagram provides an idea of how alternative development originated in the 1970's as a counter point to mainstream development and also the different elements that contain alternative development discourse seen from different perspectives such as People centred approach and Morally Justified approach. It is important to mention that the elements of participation, empowerment and environmental sustainability, mentioned in this diagram have also been used by mainstream development as tools of legitimization to justify their actions. For the purpose of this research these three elements are essential to sustain the bottom up approach.

Figure 1 Overall Analytical framework



Source: Own construction base on the theoretical analysis.

The sum of all the theories discussed above has clarified that alternative development as an ideology must be capable of transforming people's lives by their own initiative, using elements of participation, empowerment and environmental sustainability in order to generate development by a bottom up approach.

Chapter 3

Analysis of the use of Alternative Development as a Concept

This chapter illustrates the analysis of how alternative development has been understood as a concept, taking into account different perspectives. This section also explains how Alternative Development as a concept has emerged as a way to eradicate production of the raw materials for the production of drugs. Finally it provides a general view of the role of alternative development in other countries.

3.1 Perspective of Alternative Development by United Nations

Drug production around the world has caused terrible damage in societies. A possible solution leads to development intervention, which has generated new processes with outcomes on social impacts, restructuring of national policies as well as national development plans. These development interventions intending to eradicate coca crops and to stop drug production are tasks that belong to those governments that are involved in production and consumption of drugs.

Accordingly, alternative development as a concept was developed by the United Nations in order to create a strategy aimed to find an alternative for the cultivation of raw material for the productions of drugs.

The first attempts made by United Nations to reduce the cultivation of illicit drugs crops such as coca⁵ and poppy, was to provide an alternative to produce other profitable products instead, which in the first stages was called substitution of illicit crops⁶. However after the thin implementations of these policies, the lack of infrastructure, strengthens of institutions and communities as well as the generation of sustainable incomes, became later know as Alternative Development by United Nations. (Feldafing declaration 2002).

As a concept alternative development has evolved during this period in Colombia. In its first stage in 1986, the inclusion of small development projects in the regions of Cauca, Putumayo, Guaviare, Caquetá and Nariño in Colombia (García Miranda 2001), where the initial proposal was the substitution of one crop for another as peasants would no longer grow illicit crops. These programmes were conceived as agro-assistance models. The Colombian government did not take into account at the time that these

⁵ It is important to mention that the cultivation of coca crops in the Andean region mostly in Bolivia and Perú is part of the indigenous culture. Coca is been present for centuries in these communities. Therefore is relevant to make the difference of cultivation of coca for the production of cocaine and the cultivation of coca as a part of a culture.

⁶ Illicit crops refer to the harvest of any raw material to produce drugs.

programmes must be followed with social and infrastructure support from the government and international aid agencies.

Therefore in the Action Plan by the United Nations in its twentieth session in the General Assembly Alternative Development was defined as “a process to prevent and eliminate the illicit cultivation of plants containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances through specifically designed rural development measures in the context of sustained national economic growth and sustainable development efforts in countries taking action against drugs, recognising the particular socio-cultural characteristics of the target communities and groups, within the framework of a comprehensive and permanent solution to the problem of illicit drugs” (UNGASS 1998).

Consequently following the concept of alternative development implemented by United Nations, The National Plan of Alternative Development⁷ in Colombia was established and had four general objectives: The streamlining of the eradication process of illicit crops and denying further acreage to coca cultivation, the sustainable income and employment to peasant communities currently cultivating coca, the strengthening of the institutional development process and the fortification of the national government and the advocacy for social capital and community participation. Consequently, Alvaro Uribe’s administration released the National Plan of Alternative Development (República De Colombia 2003)

This plan was aimed to contribute to the consolidation of democratic security aiming towards a ‘communitarian state’ as a component of the strategy for development in conflict zones. However after more than ten years of implementation this goal is not totally yet complete.

3.2 Alternative Development Vs Conflict

The conflict originated in the 1940’s due to social inequalities throughout the country. Over, the past half century, no Colombian citizen has avoided the conflict’s terrible consequences. The gross inequality between the haves and have nots was mirrored by the composition of the political parties. The Conservative Party was the patron of the wealthy while the Liberal Party’s ranks were filled by the working masses of Colombia. The assassination in 1948 of Jorge Eliezer Gaitán, a popular Liberal Party politician, was the spark for the violence that ensued between the members of both parties through the country, known as “the age of violence”. According to (Vargas Meza 2003) the conflict in Colombia has evolved from an ideological fight over social inequality to a conflict perpetuated by the illicit gains derived from narcotics distribution and the drive to expand the illegal enterprises associated with narco-trafficking.

Revolutionary armed conflicts require steady sources of funding; often this funding is provided by illicit activities by the revolutionaries; these illicit activities are screened from view in order to legitimize the goals and motivations for the conflict to continue. This cycle has perpetuated itself in

⁷ National Program Alternative Development CONPES 3218 document (2003)

Colombia over a long period of time. Similar conflicts with similar histories have taken place around the world, to include those in Perú, Afghanistan and SE Asia.

Ricardo Vargas (Vargas Meza 2003) also states that the conflict in Colombia has unique characteristics. Hostage taking and extortion, a predatory activity with significant impact on the population, is a major source of funding. The FARC and similar armed groups rely heavily on this activity to buy arms and sustain its fighting force and force readiness. A second avenue of funding is the appropriation of natural resources such as fuel deposits or land holdings and later on in the 1990's the production of cocaine. The third characteristic includes the extortion of public and private enterprise. Multi-national corporations including Chiquita Banana in 2007, admitted to paying off armed groups including, AUC, FARC and ELN between 1989 and 2004 in the Urabá, banana region in Colombia (Tenthoff 2008).

Manuel Marulanda Velez (a.k.a. Tirofijo) founded the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) by in 1964 as the military wing of the Colombian Communist Party. This guerrilla movement moved onto the cocaine trade during the 1980s for the purposes of fundraising while remaining closely tied to the Communist Party. According to Colombian government sources, the FARC currently has approximately 8,000 members, down from up to 16,000 in 2001, making it the largest and oldest insurgent group in Latin America.

A close look at the link between alternative development programs and the armed conflict in Colombia reveals that the insurgents have always relied on the local communities for safe passage and supplies while the residents have been negatively affected by the presence of the armed groups and the obstacles they present to the communities in their attempt to follow through on the alternative development programs. These programs are thus compromised by the inability of the national government to resolve the conflict. The massive internal displacement that has taken place in Colombia during this period of conflict as well as the levels of emigration to other countries have placed Colombia at the top of the list for displaced citizens worldwide.

3.3 Alternative Development as a counter-drug policy

A variety of different points of interest relating to Alternative Development and United Nation's views has defined new parameters to redefine policies frameworks, so taking into account the UN's counter-narcotics branch, UNGASS has defined this approach to alternative development as:

“ A process to prevent and eliminate the illicit cultivation of plants containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances through specifically designed rural developmental measures in the context of sustained national economic growth and sustainable development efforts in countries taken actions against drugs , recognizing the particular socio-cultural characteristics of the target communities and groups, within the framework of a

comprehensive a permanent solution to the problem of illicit drugs.” (UNGASS 1998)

This definition of alternative development illustrates three important points. The anti-drug campaign, its social and economic aspects and the vital role the affected population plays in the alternative development program cycle.

A closer look reveals that alternative development programs have been managed as counter-drug policies; effective to a greater or lesser extent depending on the host-nation and the circumstances in which the programs have been developed. The success story in Thailand, where alternative development programs in place and functioning for over 30 years have largely eliminated illicit drug production in the country, while on the other side of the story, other cases have developed differently depending on the circumstances. Obviously, different approaches are necessary depending on the country. Alternative development as a directed strategy on a national and international level can be effective if it is implemented with the appropriate tools and guided by social commitment to its goals, community participation and government guidance.

The UNODC’s alternative development experience in the Andean region has been incorporated as an integral part of national counter-drug policy and has had to comply with certain conditions and guidelines throughout the course of its tenure in the region. The willingness to eliminate the distribution of illicit drugs must be included in national CD policy. The government must set aside a portion of its budget to finance the initiatives and an alternative development plan must be jointly executed by the entire gamut of governmental agencies(UNDCP 2001).

The legal framework that supports counter-drug policies around the world is directed by three world-wide organizations. The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) are tasked with formulating counter-drug policy and working with signatory nations to carry out the planned initiatives.

ECOSOC serves as a general assembly tasked with administering the political facet of counter-drug policy. The INCB is an independent organization tasked with verifying international drug agreements. The UNODC is tasked with supporting the policy initiatives by ensuring international cooperation (González Plazas 2006).

The INCB is tasked annually to deliver evaluations of member states’ levels of legal commitment to the war on drugs to ECOSOC. In the 2005 annual report, a large portion of the document was devoted to Colombia’s alternative drug programs.

The counter-drug policies in Colombia began to take true effect against the scourge of narcotrafficking under the administration of former President Andres Pastrana. In 1998, former President Pastrana proposed a “Marshall Plan” for his country. This original idea turned into what is now known as Plan Colombia, which leads to a lot of criticism for being a big military intervention by the US government.

3.4 The role of Alternative Development in other countries

In order to contextualise the use of alternative development it is important to see how other countries with similar characteristics to Colombia have used alternative development as a concept. The implementation of alternative development is not the same in every country, depending on particular situations as well as the national plans, as well as the fact that every country has its own institutions that runs alternative development projects. However it is relevant to know that the use of alternative development as a concept, not only refers to a solution of drugs problems but also taking into account the elements that constitute alternative development discourse in Chapter Two, it is important to know that the practice of alternative development have been implemented in other countries with a different aim rather that to a solution of production of drugs and conflict.

In Latin America countries like Bolivia and Peru have their own Plan of Alternative Development such as PDAR (Regional Alternative Development Plan), in Perú DEVIDA (National Commission for Development and Drug-Free Lifestyle an Colombia PLANTE, (Plan of Alternative Development) which later change to Acción Social⁸ (UNODC 2005). However the experiences of Alternative development in South- East Asia have more complex outcomes for their particular circumstances that make the implementations of alternative development more difficult.

Burma is a country which also has been in civil war for decades and ruled since 1962 under a military government. It is a country struggling with drug production but also drug consumption. However not so long ago development interventions have allowed by the government and UN agencies to be present with the implementation of development programmes aimed to improve rice production and livestock projects (UNODC 2005)

The use of alternative development in Thailand is a particular case of successes in terms of eradication of illicit crops. Under the government of the king Bhumibol Adulyadej and its Royal Highland Development Programme the substitution of poppy crops was possible by assisting the farmers and agricultures technical and social. This Royal Programme took thirty years to eradicate poppy crops. Thailand had the advantage of special circumstances which facilitated the eradication of poppy cultivation and the demise of the opium trade. The land previously used for poppy cultivation was dedicated to other crops. The economic development in Thailand and the yearly double digit growth of its economy created an opportunity for the development of infrastructure and facilitated the commercial production of new products. The abuse of opium and heroin throughout the country was recognized as a pending epidemic and was dealt with accordingly. The leadership in Thailand inspired its people to move on and rid itself of the scourge and the community was inspired to follow up on this message and eventually turned the corner and

⁸ PLANTE was knows as the National Plan for Alternative Development in Colombia, which later on pass to the governmental institutions called Acción Social which is in Charge to Implement the Alternative Development Programs in Colombia called Forest Warden Programs and Productive Projects.

moved decisively against the narcotics trade and towards economic and social stability (Thoumi 2008).

In summary this chapter have illustrated how the use of alternative development within the context of drugs production it is use as a strategy as well as anti-drug policy to create profitable alternatives to the substitution of illicit crops, done by providing technical and social assistance.

Chapter 4

Case Studies

This chapter presents and analyses the process in which the following three cases have been involved in alternative development in Colombia.

The first two cases are attached to official alternative programmes that Colombian government has designed under the National Plan for Alternative development. The third case illustrates a case in which without been framed under these official alternative programmes, have all the characteristics to be alternative development case.

4.1 Policy Framework

The tools that Colombian government have used in order to implement alternative development are the establishment of alternative development programmes. This programmes were created under the National Plan of Alternative Development through the document CONPES 3218 in 2003, with the name of Productive Projects and the Forest Warden Program.

Productive Projects

The Productive Projects Initiative aims to offer stable financial alternatives to communities by ensuring a stable source of income in lieu of coca leaf production. According to the CONPES 3218 document, these projects will lead to secondary and tertiary projects in the medium and long-term defined by agro-politics and vested with the potential to affect internal and international agriculture markets. The Colombian government will finance projects of this type by bond initiatives set to mature alongside the timelines built into the projects. The financial assistance of companies in the private sector is expected along with the funding provided by the government.

The program's three main themes included the gradual transfer of 27,000 families from coca production to medium and long term agro-production of foodstuffs and forest products. The creation of 65,000 jobs in the region was the second tenet of the plan. Thirdly, and possibly the most ambitious of the themes was the dedication of 76,350 hectares to legal agro-production.

The above-mentioned themes were to be enacted in the central Macizo Colombian regions of Nariño, Cauca, Huila and Tolima. The Central Magdalena region would include Bolívar, Santander, Tolima, Caldas, Cesar, Cundinamarca, Boyacá y Antioquia, Catatumbo, Norte de Santander.

The implementation of the Productive Projects initiative was intended to provide nutritional security i.e. stable food sources, etc. to the local population while contributing to the ongoing war on drugs. This was accomplished by the cultivation of basic foodstuffs such as yucca which comprise the bulk of the local diet and yield harvests in rapid succession. In addition, cocoa, rubber, palm oil and forest product were chosen as the first wave of items to be cultivated.

The agricultural plan established by the initiative ensured a steady supply of short, medium and long crops. The obvious goal of this plan was to provide an assurance to the local population that this would not be a shoestring operation. The long history of violence and instability nationwide convinced the Colombian government of the need to make a long-term commitment in the interest of the continued development of the entire nation.

Forest Warden Program

This program intended to place responsibility for the environment and the region in the hands of the local population. The investment of human capital in this program is vital in order to reverse the negative effects coca production have had on the region to include deforestation, depopulation, and contaminated ground water due to coca production by-products.

The intent of the program was for the families to form a nucleus of intervention within their living areas and expand the initiative outwards. Under the agreement, the families could not plant coca leaf and had to plan the crop cycle so as to reforest and revitalize the affected areas. The defining aspect of this program was the inclusion of the local population. The overall objective development of social networks and the confidence gained by enacting the measures as a community would inspire others to do the same and would become a self-fulfilling prophecy in the long struggle against coca production in the region. The thought was to strengthen the social fabric and revitalize the political, economic and social processes in the area.(UNODC and Acción Social 2007c)

The specific objectives of this program included the employment of 50,000 families in the Forest Warden program, the establishment of 60,000 hectares as the foundation for the coca-free nucleus of land to be transformed under the direction of the Forest Warden program and the reforestation of at least 40,000 hectares in the areas surrounding the nucleus as a strategic buffer zone. Finally the conservation of 700,000 hectares of natural forest land is due to the vigilance and determined participation of the local population. (UNODC and Acción Social 2007b)

The methodology employed in this program was the conditional method of subsidies depending on the level of participation in the program. This program was created with a termination date in mind in order to provide a timeline and guide the locals towards the program's ultimate goals of re-establishing legitimate enterprises as the building blocks for the local economy. By taking away the production of coca, the program aimed to refocus the villagers on the possibilities inherent in a normal economy to include opportunities for advancement and freedom over their financial destinies.

The agreement between the villages and the government followed a series of defined steps and abided by a set of rules. The communities involved must be in agreement on the initiative. Local and National governments must be in agreement on the initiative. None of the families involved in the program may grow any coca in their fields. If one family was found to be growing coca, the entire village would be excluded from the program.

In the past alternative programs began without conditions and set rules. This allowed individuals to continue profiting from coca while drawing benefits from the programs at the same time. The crucial difference between these programs and those enacted in the past revolved around its set structure. The absence of wiggle room was intended to keep families in the fold when it came to the appropriate execution of the program.

The agreement was set to renew every two months with a percentage of the proceeds deposited into a community fund. The logic behind the creation of the fund derived from the need for the locals to band together at the end of the project and allocates the community fund towards a cottage industry of their choosing in order to provide an economic base upon the completion of the program (UNODC and Acción Social 2007a). This would be start towards the sustainability to these programmes.

The scope of this program was extended towards those communities at risk of falling into the trap of coca production. The idea of deterrence was revolutionary and forward thinking in the past, counter-coca production initiatives in country side were plagued by an inability to adjust to condition on the ground and the lack of vision required in order to ensuring the program's ultimate success.

4.2 Indigenous people working honey production in the Sierra Nevada range in Colombia

“The region in question is made up of 15 municipalities with regions relevant to this case study: Cesar, Magdalena and Guajira. These regions house two native indigenous reservations and two national parks declared as UNESCO world heritage sites. The Tayrona N.P. is comprised of 400,000 hectares and the Santa Marta N.P. is made up of 30,000 hectares. In the villages surrounding the Tayrona N.P. the population is mainly Wayuú and Chimila Indigenous. The estimated population of this region is approximately 211,000; 32,000 of which are indigenous people.” (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c)

The economy of the entire region is based on agriculture and cattle husbandry while 2% of Colombia's total annual coffee production is based in the area. The geographical layout including mountains and thick jungles of the region lends itself to the illicit production of coca leaf in the Santa Marta region. Coca production has staidly increased ever since it was first grown here in the 1970's. The large scale production of coca leaf in this region has been facilitated by the agriculture of the local populations. As the coca leaf holds an important place in indigenous people's culture, the general view among the population supports the large scale production of the crop in addition to providing a steady income to the impoverished region.



Figure 2 Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in Colombia

The forest warden program in Sierra Nevada Range began in 2004 with the induction of 1,500 families in 33 villages spread across the entire region. 1,000 of these families met with local and national government officials in the same year in order to sign a document confirming their intent to participate in the eradication of coca in their respective localities and protect their heritage. A portion of the families signing the agreement were never involved in coca production; rather their concern over the changing landscape and the dangers inherent in the coca business drove them to side with the government and thereby take an active part in the security, stability and the drive for progress beyond the violence and volatility in their region.

“We lived in Santa Marta, but considering that my wife is from Caquetá (a region to the south of the Sierra Nevada range) we decided to work in the coca fields there...keep in mind that we had fields of tomatoes and yucca (Santa Marta). Every four months we took this harvest to market and we returned with money we should have been able to live off for the next four months although the money ran out after two months. We would buy new clothes once every two years...you can see that I am not a bad person; you would see people working with coca driving new cars and wearing new clothes and you would ask yourself why not me? We could all go to jail anyhow. In December of 2002, I harvested my first coca crop. I did not return home a rich man, but I was able to put food on the table and my children could go to school with new uniforms.” Source (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c)

As mentioned before, these programs must be accompanied by social and technical assistance. In general, the technical assistance comes in the form of aid from NGO’s acting in concert with national government initiatives. “Several international donors and agencies have participated in these projects.” (Thoumi, 2008)

Honey

The beekeeping industry in the Sierra Nevada mountain range is well established and well known for the quality of the organic honey it produces. The environmental issues that have faced the area since the explosion of coca production have had a negative impact on the industry. The beekeeping industry not labour-intensive and as such provides a steady income for the local villagers. The honey produced in the region serves as a key supplement to the local diet due to its high nutritional value and medicinal extracts derived from the production process. (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c)

The Sierra Nevada Beekeeping Association (APISIERRA) is responsible for the caretaking of the environment in the production zones and the overall supervision of the beekeeping industry in the area. This association develops commercial strategies for the marketing and distribution of locally produced honey. The remainder of the financial backing for the association is derived from community funds. These funds are made possible by Colombian government grants resulting from the community’s involvement in the Forest Warden program.

The association is composed of four groups. These groups are in turn made up of conglomerated hamlets and villages, including San Pedro, Palmor, Minca, Guachaca and Siberia in the Sierra Nevada Region. The Forest Warden Program began with 120 beehives and has expanded to 67 families working with 339 beehives with an eventual goal exceeding 1200 working hives. (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c)

4.3 Institutional strengthening as a alternative development practice in Urabá - Colombia

The Urabá region is located in the north eastern of Colombia and territorially is part of the Antioquia and Chocó departments, with an astounding diverse culture where indigenous, afro Colombian and racial mix. At the same time the region borders Panamá and has one of the biggest ports in the area, is rich in natural resources, arable lands where the plantain has been the main centre for many international companies which make Urabá a strategic region for commercial and social purposes.

Urabá has endured one of the bloodier chapters in Colombia's long-running violence. The remote region was once a strong hold for leftist guerrillas.

Landowners created private far-right militias to carry out a dirty war against the rebels and left-wing politicians. Many consider the Urabá region to have been a training ground for what would be a national offensive by the right-wing death squads. The massive fruit corporation, Chiquita, has agreed to pay a \$25 million dollar fine after admitting it funded the death squads to the tune of 1.7 million dollars. The company says it was the victim of extortion. The region is strategically important for all the illegal groups in Colombia, from drug-traffickers to the rebels to the far-right death squads, because it serves as a corridor, allowing for the import of guns and the export of drugs.

However, social purposes have not been gratifying, the history of this region have not had a happy ending. Urabá is located in the middle of conflict where paramilitary groups, FARC and drug-traffickers are competing for the leadership of the area due to the region location, surrounding by three oceans where most cocaine, arms and chemical supplies use in drug production are exported, (Tenthoff 2008), leaving communities vulnerable to any kind of transgression against human rights.

Nonetheless people from Urabá are characterized by being deedless and besides the dreadful situation around the region people still have many expectations of change. Therefore this section will be presenting the case study of an institutional strengthening in Urabá. As it mention above Urabá has a vast extension of fertile land able to grow an extend variety of crops even coca crops, that make it difficult to the presence and trust in institutions, for that reason CORPOURABA⁹ started in the 70's with the idea to improve regional development projects, articulation of organizational dynamics in the communities that are benefit for development programmes, working together



Figure 3
The Urabá region in Colombia

⁹ Sustainable Development Corporation for Urabá. See at: <http://www.corpouraba.gov.co/>

with governmental environmental institutions and to encourage participation and empowerment in people from Urabá (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c).

Within the concept of alternative development by United Nations, CORPOURABA has managed to construct a platform to engage projects that assures social benefits for the Urabá region, by doing evaluations from past experiences and implementations of different programmes as National Rehabilitation Plan (PNR) and PLANTE¹⁰. Hereafter the Forest Warden Families and Productive Projects Programmes has embedded within the institutional frame of CORPURABA beginning in two municipalities; Turbo and Necoclí where 3216 families have been favoured from these programmes (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c). Consequently under the line of definition that CORPOURABA is using to explain what they called Institutional strengthening “understood by the increasing of the intervention capacity of the institutions, to promote coordination and agreement of actions related with the programmes, with the main idea to raise state credibility and legitimise national, municipal and national institutions in the presence of the communities”. (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c).

As a result of this definition CORPOURABA in order to accomplish their goals has set four components; i) Institutional coordination, which synchronize the institutional intervention with an appropriate structure of the plan projects strengthening the state credibility and the organizations that are involved. ii) Agreement established, support the establishment of these agreements between government and communities as, voluntary eradication of coca crops as well as the establishment of sanctions of non-fulfilment agreements. iii) Social and technical assistance for entrepreneur organizations in the region. iv) conditional subsidies verification, this is done by the UNODC that certificate if the communities involved in projects are carrying out with the agreements or not. (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c: 108).

The following part will point out the basic structure and process of the institutional strengthening process (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c)

Inter-institutional articulation: To articulate the different processes CORPOURABA has managed to develop stages that will help to improve the dynamics between institutions, organizations and communities. This will be done by proper planning and the establishment of the tasks, to be done by the technical and social assistance by the different organizations in the communities. Also the establishment of regional work tables that provide opportunities to discuss and design social, rural and agro projects within the region that involves public institutions, private sector and communities. Also it is important take into account the fact of territorialisation and finds solutions for the concentration of the landowners.

Participation: This is one of the mains objectives that CORPOURABA is striving for, when it comes to know the real socio-economic situation, the environmental and the ecological needs of the region. This diagnosis is done by the participation of communities and its leaders in two stages, the first one

¹⁰ PLANTE use to be the Colombian alternative development agency before Acción Social the actual Agency for International Cooperation

to know the social and economical need, and the second to make forestall and environmental studies, and base develop the Technical Environmental Plan (PATA¹¹).

Adaptation and executing of alternative programmes: Thanks to the participatory diagnosis made by CORPURUBA in the communities, productive projects were suggested to the communities, previous to marketing and land study, the suggestion made to the communities were rubber, cacao and forestall like teakwood and oak, vanilla, beekeeping, fish farming and species, some of these projects are already developed in the region. However one of the difficulties on the early implementation was the encounter of low education among people in the communities that made complex the technical assistance process, to resolve this CORPOURABA adopted some hectares of land to implement practices in Forest nursery as a space of learning with practice, to the communities attached to the productive projects.

Non- conventional business: Subsidies provide by the government and founding by international cooperation, most of the times are expected to be related with productive projects, however some communities have identified other activities that are sustainable in terms of income, for instance the community shops started with small contributions from 150 families in the rural settlement area 'Brisas del Rio' which is a clear example of these activities.

Gender equity: Within the context of the institutional frame in the implementation of the alternatives programmes, gender is a main issue to be address, nonetheless it is relevant to point out that the programmes do not discriminate by gender be accepted in the respective programmes, but the institutional frame do not have a clear position of gender within the programmes. According to this CORPOURABA has tried to separate the social and technical assistance to be able to reach the need of the family unit and promote the role of women as a protagonist of the process and their initiatives. As an example a group of women in the rural settlement area in the 'Brisas del Rio' got together to create a small business production of uniforms for the school nearby with subsidies of the programmes, as well as business training from public institutions SENA¹² although this is a good example but it does not represent the position of gender within the frame of the institutions.

As it mention above, this case pretend to show how these programmes are promoting the presence of Institutions that work together with processes of organization, environmental and conformation of productive alternatives to peasants in the Urabá (UNODC and Acción Social 2007c). An example of these INCUAGRO is an organization that started from the initiative of peasants, this organization has achieve strengthens of agro industrial production projects and distribution of goods and services.

¹¹ PATA by the Spanish translation refers to Technical Environmental Plan that guides projects implemented by the governmental institution in the Urabá region together with the Forest Warden Families programs and agro-organizations founded by International Cooperation that operates in the Urabá, as 'Colombian Forestall and INCUAGRO'

¹² SENA National service Learning. (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje by Spanish translation) is a governmental institution created to train in technical level people who does not have resources to assist to private institutions and public institutions.

4.4 TULASI an example of networking production in the Guaviare area in Colombia

Located in southeast Colombia, Guaviare continues to be a zone with considerable rebel influence. There have been consistent reports that rebels force the small farmers to grow coca

Tulasi is a name of a medicinal plant that grows in the south of Colombia in the municipal of Guaviare, better known as purple basil that for indigenous people represents a goodness that is able to predict dreams.

Tulasi also is a name of a small business that began as initiative of a family who wanted to let know to others the existence of a natural and healthy amazonic fruits that are not well known in the rest of Colombia or even in other countries.

This case is presented as a form to explain that not every case is part of the Alternatives development Programmes already established by the Colombian government or others institutions that are funding. This case is a perfect example of a community initiative that are not supported or funding by the main donors as the ones we have mention before such us as Acción Social, USAID and others.

Tulasi¹³ have target themselves as “Bio-business” which points out aspects as being socially sustainable, this understood sharing experiences with others by building up truss and being environmental friendly. The small business started in 2003 in Miraflores small town in the municipality of Guaviare with the aim to take advantage of those fruits crops that were wasted or were misused, where the families were technical advised by the Von Humboldt Research Institute, CAD Corporation and SENA which certificate it as a technical small business. These organizations were able to train Tulasi in fields such as administrative knowledge, accountability, legal consultancy, budgets etc. They also trained on the standardization of ecological agriculture processes.

It is important to make clear that Tulasi is also growing as a network umbrella where many families that were attached to the growing of coca find a better opportunity as doing legal activities, this because Tulasi has gained a lot of accreditation among the communities by contributing to a good social practices. This small business is generating the empowerment of those who were social excluded, in this project also disable people, elderly, groups of women and indigenous are also participating in Tulasi project.



Figure 4 Guaviare Map in Colombia

¹³ The source of this case is base on an interview made by Adam Isacson in April 2008, and an Interview made by me to Olga Patricia Gómez that runs Tulasi in the Municipality of Guaviare. Available at: <http://www.cipcol.org/?cat=43>

Within Tulasi the gender issue is very important when it comes to the division of tasks, according with the runner¹⁴ of Tulasi there are two lines of production; the first one works with medicinal plants and teas which traditionally a managed by women in the indigenous communities and the second one with amazonic fruits worked by men.

Tulasi has a small factory to produce jams made from exotic amazonic fruits, which are distributed in towns nearby, they also managed to introduce some of their products into a national supermarket chain but, their production is not enough to cover the requirements made by these big supermarkets because of the lack of industrial machines to produce bigger quantities. Besides Tulasi also is planning to be qualified as a ecological producer which makes the process to certificate it more difficult.

In terms of participation Tulasi has achieved to include four hundred people working with them, as is well known the Guaviare region in Colombia is one of the regions with more conflict for the presence of armed groups, and narcotrafficking.

Taking into account the elements that are part of alternative development discourse which have been analysed in the previous chapters it is necessary to point out the fact that this case has all the characteristics necessary to be part of the Alternative Development discourse.

According with the statements given in this chapter it can be seen that alternative development practices in Colombia have been framed within a rural development approach. Whether this is or not alternative development what it is important is to see that the elements that have been discussed in chapter two must come from a bottom up approach as initiatives of communities to supply their own needs.

¹⁴ Olga Patricia Gomez person interviewed

Chapter 5

Alternatives development programmes as a practice of alternative development approach

One of the main concerns of this paper is to see how compatible these alternative development programmes are with the discourse of alternative development. Therefore this chapter presents an overall analysis of the implementations of this programmes based on the cases in chapter four. as well as reviewing the inclusion of the elements that constitute Alternative Development discourse seen in chapters two and three. Consequently, the case studies pictured in this research shows the practices and outcomes that Colombia is doing in alternative development in recent years.

5.1 Viability of the alternatives programmes

Having considered the viability for alternative programmes in terms of financial resources, it is important to see what obstacles or limitations these programmes could have in their process of implementation

Sources of Income

Having analysed alternative development as a counter-drug policy in chapter three and its outcomes as an anti-drug policy should be considered by all nations affected by the misfortune of the illicit drug trade. This approach entails a level of social responsibility among the stakeholders as well as a firm commitment to follow through and deliver on the promises alternative development programs offer affected populations.

International cooperation is an important pillar of the alternative development programmes, according with the Colombian agency for International cooperation Acción Social¹⁵, at the moment there are 539 alternative development programmes in execution in 28 departments out 32 in Colombia, the total amount of this cooperation for this programmes is US\$123.222.018 dollars. This shows that Colombia is highly depending of international cooperation for the implementation of these programmes leaving a big concern of how far these programmes can go beyond of their own sustainability and what sort of autonomy this programmes will have if this cooperation not longer will exist. (Include Map where shows that almost all the country has alternative development programmes).

USAID is one of the principal actors in the execution and administration of the social assistance programs entailed in Plan Colombia, including social, economic and humanitarian aid, on behalf of the U.S. administration. Under the terms of the agreement signed between the countries a consortium headed

¹⁵ Source: Taken for the International cooperation map, available at: http://www.accionsocial.gov.co/acci/web_acci/nuevomapa/main.asp accessed October 20th 2008

by two primary agencies administers the alternative development portion of Plan Colombia.

MIDAS Alternative Development Fund from USAID, is in charge of securing the funding for sustainable employment for populations migrating from coca cultivation to legitimate enterprises. This facet of the AD program generates competitiveness in the private sector and encourages economic development in the target areas. Technical assistance is also provided to the farmers by MIDAS in order to develop the economic potential of the local population. MIDAS began receiving bids and proposals from the private sector and operating in earnest in 2006.(Usaid 2008b)

The MIDAS program managed a budget of 70 million USD in Colombia's conflict areas. The forecast for 2008 is a budget of 163.5 million USD, much of which is destined for new forms of employment and the conversion of coca acreage to conventional agricultural uses(Usaid 2008b).

The second organization mentioned above and tasked with the administration of Alternative de programs is the Alternative Provincial Development Team (ADAM), a branch of USAID. ADAM was designed to offer integrated solutions in provincial alternative development scenarios. Their tasking involves close cooperation with local and regional authorities in order to stimulate conventional agriculture and push local goods to market. This entails a strengthening of local institutions, initiatives to rebuild local infrastructure in order to support the new policies and technical guidance in the production and marketing cycles (Usaid 2008a)

ADAM concentrates on Afro-Colombian and indigenous areas and seeks to build a network of committed municipalities and regions in an ethical and strictly legal manner. Ten provinces in four of Colombia's strategic regions are in ADAM's scope of work. Nariño, Cauca, Putumayo, Tolima, Huila, Santander y Antioquia. MIDAS and ADAM work closely with Social Action, the Colombian government's agency in charge of distributing funds and administering international aid in the country(Usaid 2008a).

However it is important to see what kind of cooperation is Colombian waiting for? When it comes to support eradication of illicit crops it is clear that international cooperation in terms of countries or organizations have different interest in cooperating whether is for funding development programmes or endless military interventions. Therefore the concern here is whether Colombian government is willing to follow up on the best options for the country as opposed the most convenient for other governments.

Consequently, the table below shows the sort of programmes that donors are funding, as well as illustrates the policies that governments are interested in it.

Table 4 International Cooperation

<i>Project Number</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Current Donors</i>	<i>Time of the Project</i>
<i>Elimination of Drug Production</i>			
COL/B91	Support to operational capacities: PLANTE	Brazil, Colombia, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, and UK	1997-2003
COL/E45	Alternative Development in Caquetá	Denmark, Italy and Sweden	1999-2004
COL/E67	Illicit Crop Monitoring System in Colombia	France and UK	1999-2004
COL/F31	Dairy development in areas of Illicit cultivation	United States	2001-2005
<i>Prevention and Reduction of Drug abuse</i>			
COL/C81	Decentralization of the Master plan in drug Control in Colombia	Canada, The Netherlands and Sweden	1999-2004
<i>Suppression of Illicit drug Trafficking</i>			
COL/C58	Drug and precursor control programme	Italy and United States	1998-2004
<i>Crime Prevention</i>			
COL/R27	Strengthening Local government institutions in the fight against corruption	The Netherlands USAID	2002-2004

Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime July 2003

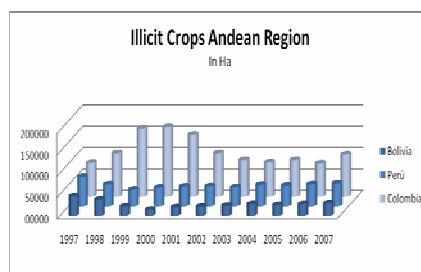
Land reforms in Colombia an absolute obstacle.

According to (Perez M 2003) the origins of illicit crops started in the 80's, Colombia was the biggest producer of coca paste but the coca leaves were imported from Bolivia and Perú. UNDCD in its last report of monitoring system of illicit crops, have shown that Colombia during the end of the 90's had 79.000 ha, increasing up to 163.000 ha in 2000 and on the other side Bolivia and Perú decrease their cultivation significantly leaving Colombia as the biggest producer of coca crops in the Andean region. (See Table 5)

Table 5 Productions of Illicit Crops in the Andean Region

Production Illicit Crops in Andean Region											
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Bolivia	45800	38000	21800	14600	19900	21600	23600	27700	25400	27500	28900
Perú	68800	51000	38700	43400	46200	46700	44200	50300	48200	51400	53700
Colombia	79000	102000	160000	163000	145000	102000	86000	80000	86000	78000	99000
Total	193000	191000	220500	221000	211100	173000	153800	158000	159600	156900	181600

Figure 5 Illicit crops in the Andean Region



Taking into account the history of agriculture in Colombia, it can be said that true agricultural reform has never existed in the country. Measures to ensure the economic vitality of the agricultural sector and the effort to assist the people vested in agriculture have been totally absent. True land reform has never truly been enacted in the country while adequate social and economic initiatives in the sector are absent for those who work the land.

The first attempt by Colombia to initiate land reform began in the 1960's with the establishment of the Colombian Institute for Agricultural Reform (INCORA) failed at the institutional level, demonstrating that Colombia was not truly dedicated to the commitment required for true reform, to include the assembly of the infrastructure required for success at the grassroots level. (Perez M 2003)

The armed conflict that took place in Colombia during this time period hamstrung any attempt at land reform. The confiscation of private land, suffered by the peasant farmers left many with no land at all and/or total displacement from the land and resettlement elsewhere in Colombia or among neighbouring countries. The villagers that were able to stay on their lands faced the danger of violence resulting from armed conflict. (Vargas Meza 2003)

Alternative Development as defined by the, UN necessitates the selection of new crops suitable as substitutes for the illicit crops formerly cultivated in the affected areas. Each crop should have the capacity to provide a steady income to the community while maintaining an environmentally friendly footprint. Finally, as the land area of current coca cultivation is considerable and spread through large tracts of the country, crops chosen as replacements should have the market capacity necessary for viable large scale production along with a capacity for significant harvests bound for local and external markets.

In order to understand the reality of illicit crops in Colombia is necessary to see what the causes of this phenomenon were, (Ortiz 2001) discuss that indeed Colombia had special factors that made it one of the biggest producers

of coca cultivations, (Ortiz 2001) refers to a vulnerability and settlement instability to generate enough income for a family unit and therefore the lack of accumulation especially in rural areas in Colombia. Other point is the economic rationality for the peasants in whom illicit crops became a form of straightforward cash in times of economic crises and a manner to purchase agricultural supplies for others licit crops. Other factor that explain the presence of illicit crops are the conditions of poverty in rural areas where the lack of physic an social infrastructure makes difficult the possibility for

peasants to engage in legal activities and to access to the market, as well as the not presence of governmental institutions that support technological assistant are main problem is the south of the country where illicit crops started to appear. Other important point that Ortiz refers to, is the Colombian agricultural crisis in 1982 where the GDP -1.03% caused terrible consequences in the rural areas in Colombia.

Indeed, the implications above present a lack of agricultural reform in Colombia. Peasants need the government's commitment to agree of fair market policies within a competitive frame on the global economy. Not so long ago during



March 24 October 2008 indigenous peasants.
Taken from www.observatoriofronteras.com

October in the year of this research paper, a massive demonstration of half million indigenous peasants gathered together with workers in different cities in Colombia to demand land reform and decent working conditions must be respect among the peasants and workers. (See picture above). This sort of demonstration only emphasises that agriculture outcomes are not enough to bring social equality. Therefore the concern now is how effective is the role of alternative development, when implementation and its practices including rural development are not achieving their main goals.

5.2 Criteria to assess Alternative Development

Gender

After seen the cases presented in this research, important questions come to mind, when it comes to gender issues such as; is gender an important issue for the alternative development programmes? How does female leadership at home environment work best for the family unit? Do women have a voice in these alternative development programmes? Therefore for it is important for this section to see until what point this element has been include or not within the alternative developments programmes in Colombia.

According to United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime established gender has been included since the 1990's in alternative development programmes. Gender is a 'perspective' rather than a 'component' when an understanding based on sex roles helps to accomplish the aims of the project. (Unodc 2005) Gender as a 'perspective' includes equity and the improvement of quality of life for women. Dietz in Friedman (1992) discusses that 'gender is about household roles, and the relationship between men as much as about

women, in one word, (it) is about the welfare of family and household. (Unodc 2005)

Following the above it is important to see that in Chapter Four the case of Tulasi not only include unity families but also, disabled and elderly people. It is obvious that this case has a clear inclusion of gender within the programme. Nonetheless what is not clear for rest of the case studies within the policy framework of the alternative development programmes is that the inclusion of gender is not specifically clear and needs to be included, especially when Colombia has suffered from armed conflict and most areas where this alternative development programmes are implemented the conflict has left widows with broken family structures in its wake and has degraded the social structures in these areas.

In any case, UNODC has incorporated gender into the agenda of alternative programmes over the past decade and efforts are being made to encourage women at the rural level, with small enterprises linking them to local markets. Notwithstanding the implementation of these programmes, the approach has not been successful and has led the UNODC to focus the approach at two levels. The improvement of access for vocational training in agriculture and the encouragement for women to participate in farmers associations at the grass-root level by induction with the same rights and benefits as men have been important steps forward. (Unodc 2005: 72)

Environment

Three levels of environmental sustainability controls include the selection of agricultural products compatible with the agro-environmental conditions, the introduction of land rehabilitation programmes and the substitution of chemical fertilizers for organic alternatives. The introduction of natural cultivation management practices was also cited in order to replace agrochemical additives. (Undcp 2001)

Having analysed how the implication of environment is important for the alternative development discourse. A number of good environmental practices can be recognized in the implementation of the alternative development programmes. For instance in the case of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in chapter two ecological practices within the natural park of Sierra Nevada is one of the main goals to be achieve. In addition to this the main policy of the Forest Warden Programme is not only about engaging people in replacing coca crops but also about conservation, reforestation and most importantly the prevention of those areas which are potentially to be harvest with illicit crops. Therefore the environmental aspect of alternative development programs is a vital one. Conflict zones are inherently unstable and present unique environmental challenges to alternative development programs (García Miranda 2001).

Therefore alternative development programs must include environmental guidelines and stratagems to overcome these challenges. Bio-diversity and sustainable development are keys to alternative development programs in these situations, taking into account crops that are also part of the Productive

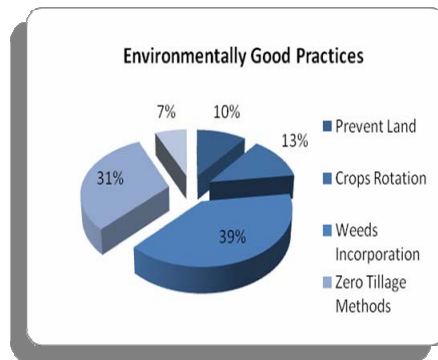


Figure 6 Environmental good Practices

Projects, but as a case it was not illustrated in this research. But I think is important to point it out because is one of the main products that this programmes is managing. Palm oil production in transition areas has created further negative effects on the area due to the erosion its crop cycle inflicts on the land while the use of reclaimed land for pasture is also unsuitable for much of the affected land area as they border national parks and nature reserves. However the discussion does not

only end here, but Palm oil Production is growing so fast due to the demands of agro fuels around the world. So far Colombia is one of the top five of the biggest producers of Palm oil in the world after Indonesia. Which bring out a huge concern of how Colombian government is trying to engage products that are only benefit the free trade agreements and not for the benefits of the communities?

As it was mentioned before Forest Warden Program PFGB is one of the programmes that promoted the good environmental practices, indeed the programme has been designed towards to reforesting, those lands which were in hands of coca cultivations (Unodc and Acción Social 2007b).

It is important to point out that within the assessment of the Forest Warden Programmes and Productive Projects, United Nations in Colombia and Acción Social, have analyzed determining factors such as:

Water Management: The water resource does not represent a considerable problem for those who are working with alternative development programmes, favourably as it mention before Colombia have considerable water resources, however it is important to point out that crops such us oil palm needs a lot of water to be maintained which represents an extensive damaged for the sustainability of the environment. However the assessment by (Unodc and Acción Social 2007a) have exposed that 92% of the beneficiaries of the alternative programmes have access to water resources at some point, but this it does not mean the access to an aqueduct.

Excrete aqueduct management: At the national level only the 18% of the alternative programmes beneficiaries have access to this excrete aqueduct, entailing to health and contamination issues.

Water and land contamination: It is true that this is a serious problem in terms that many programmes do not count with proper systems that can deal with the problems of residual water. Most of the times this residual goes to rivers and opens spaces which not only contaminate but as well create serious health problems. (Unodc and Acción Social 2007a).

Use of Alternative energy: Referring to what is an alternative, for this case UNODC and Acción social has illustrated in its report (Unodc and Acción Social 2007a) that 65% of the people attached to these alternative programmes in fact are using alternative energy, this understood as the use of wood for

cooking and the rest of the diary household tasks which means that the primary source of this 'alternative' energy is forest that is some way or another are also damaging the environment.

Use of chemical and organic pesticides and fertilizers: Alternative Projects programmes are aware about the importance to be ecological; this aim is one of the plus that alternatives projects are trying to achieve by being international recognize with a certificate as ecological products.

In sum, this section has discussed the environmental practices within the alternative development programmes in Colombia through the cases illustrated in this research. It is clear that within the frame of good environment policies these are very clear in its implementation, when it comes to follow an alternative development approach. It remains unclear at this time how Colombian government is following up on these practices beyond of the own interest.

Participation

Based on what theory has explained about participation in chapter two, and taking the cases as examples, something to analyze now is what sort of participation are these programmes talking about?: community participation?, institutional participation?, governance participation?, civil society participation?, political participation?. These entire questions might answer if the participation that we saw on these cases is really a practice of what alternative development approach have discussed.

Based on the case of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, participation have been presenting in a form of top down approach, as Chambers explanation in chapter two. To be able to answer this questions this section will extend the concept in the matrix explain below.

In terms of the practicing and base on Chambers (2005) criteria to analyze local development, participation in alternative development programmes in Colombia is characterized by the communities capacity to be organized around the Forest Warden Programmes and Productive Projects. (Unodc and Acción Social 2007 c). However there is self organizations that are not attached to this programmes as producers associations to carry out productive activities that able them to improve their quality life.

In Chapter Two, the purpose was to analyze how participation can be achieved within the alternative development programs. Referring to the question who participates here? For the case of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Beekeepers communities are the principal actor, who will be benefit for the implementations of this development process. However governmental institutions are also involved, as well as the international development agencies. In addition to this, is relevant to point out that after this given space it opened a lot of spaces for the creation of new organizations among the communities aimed to put themselves in a better position, generating empowerment among themselves. What Institutions are involved? When it comes to name institutions in conflict areas such as the Urabá region in Colombia is important to see what sort of reputation they have. Communities need trustful institutions where they can rely on. As an example CORPOURABA has

enforced participation among communities with development or rural areas and implementations of development projects such as Forest Warden Programmes and Productive Projects. Whether this participation is bottom up or top down approach, which is not very clear yet, what is important is that CORPOURABA as an institution has strengthen itself in order to generate trust in the Urabá region.

What are the objectives and functions of participation? When outcomes, such as new ideas, new projects that could benefit communities come to be possible, the idea of participation of local communities and also with the participation of governmental institutions or even NGO's strengths and empower communities to achieve goals such as the Tulasi case, which is not attached to the official programmes Forest Warden and Productive Projects but which has all the characteristics to be an example of alternative development.

According to Chamber's (2005) rhetoric analysis of local development in Chapter Two, the table bellow extends the table 3 in practices and actors in the alternative development programmes in Colombia.

Table 6 Participation and its practice

<i>Participation</i>	<i>Rhetoric</i>	<i>Practice</i>
Who participates?	The government staff and the organizations and community local people	Acción Social, international cooperation as USAID, and communities
What institutions are involved	Regional Institutions, local institution and governmental institutions	CORPOURABA, Acción social, Tulasi ¹⁶ , Ecosierra ¹⁷
The Objectives and functions of participation	Local objectives, generation of new ideas into proposal that can benefit the communities	Organization among communities, INCUAGRO.

Source: own construction based on *Participation: Review, Reflections and Future*. Chambers (2005:87)

The United Nations of Drugs and Crime and Acción Social (2007c) in its last report have established levels of organizations; first level refers to peasant's organizations and second level to the rest.

Also in the same report something to point out are the differences and its percentages between organizations (See fig 7) where only the 2% of these organizations are associative small business.

The question here is weather these organizations are construct based on a top down approach or bottom up approach? But the answer here is that, Producers Associations which shows that 81% of the organizations are coming from agriculture organizations created to constantly generate productive

¹⁶ Tulasi: Organization that produce amazonic fruits in Guaviare- Colombia (see Chapter 4)

¹⁷ Ecosierra: Organization that produce Organic Coffee and Honey in the Sierra Nevada de Santamarta-Colombia (See Chapter 4)

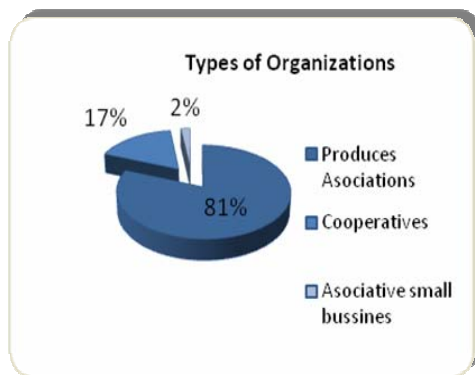


Figure 7 Agricultural Organizations

activities and institutionalized by the Forest Warden Programmes and Productive Projects Programmes.

Therefore a new question is suggested. Is that 2% the bottom up approach? However not to be unfair the same report confirms by the maturity organization, that in fact most organizations that are involved in this process are relatively new or were created around the

establishment of Forest Warden Programmes and Productive Projects

Programmes (Unodc and Acción Social 2007c). Where 52.6% have between 1 and 3 years of organized, 20, 5% have between 3 and 6 years, 23.1 have more than 6 years and only 3.8% have less than a year.

All in all what is certain is that Forest Warden Programmes and Productive projects, in some way are generating new spaces of participation. It is important that the level of trust within the communities with respect to the programmes is very high. As a matter of fact the indicators for 2007 shows that at the national level 91% of the persons involved in these alternatives programmes not only trust the program itself but also among the community (Unodc and Acción Social 2007d). Therefore the level of trust it is important especially when most of these programmes are located in areas where armed groups and conflict is present in this area.

In this context the form of participation that have been presented in these alternative development programmes are; at the institutional level the creation of agriculture organizations in which most alternative programmes are involved which are strengthening not only the communities but also the peasants and indigenous movements at the national level.

Empowerment, ownership and autonomy

The implication of the above has stated that empowerment has been evidenced in terms of how communities that are attached to this alternatives programmes somehow are empower themselves to move towards to find social capital this in terms of income. Not forgetting the fact that when this alternative development programmes are aimed to eradicate and prevent the cultivation of coca crops, institutions and organization plays very important roles when it comes to empower communities. As it discussed in last section based on the cases presented in this paper.

Forest Warden Projects and Productive Projects under the definition of what Colombian government has called alternative development are aimed to eradicate and prevent coca crops in the territory of Colombia, however not being the only purpose, empowerment of household in these communities are considerable important, as well as the participation of these communities.

Following this context of the policy framework seen in chapter four alternative development programmes are being able to generate save founds

for communities in order to buy land and to develop the projects. Most of the property land was not owned by the people who were attached to the alternative programmes when projects started, which makes it difficult to actually generate real productive incomes for the communities, especially when you have to pay a rent for the land. Nonetheless it is important to highlight the fact that according to the executive report of Forest Warden Programmes (2007), peasants families, indigenous and afro-colombian communities were able to save money from the subsidies allotted in the sum of more than 17 million dollars, this is one of the last policies that alternative programmes are using to incentivize people to buy the land where they work and promote ownership in communities. This in one way starts to construct sustainability in terms of financial resources, but also empowers communities to plan new economic activities within the region.

It is important to mention that many of this saving is made collectively but impose by the program, in which make the communities in one way or another have some saving for the developing of their own projects. They benefit the individual and the communities, towards the practice of participation, ownership and autonomy and trust among the community.

Table 7 Savings in Municipalities

<i>Municipalities with the highest savings within the Programmes</i>	
Municipality	Dollars
Unguis- Chocó	1.381.000
San Jose de Alban- Nariño	1.068.000
Belén de Bajirá – Chocó	922.500
La Cruz – Nariño	842.500
Santa Marta- Magdalena	726.000
Rio Blanco Tolima	707.000

Source: Executive Report Monitoring Forest-Warden Programmes 2007

According to the last statement, autonomy plays a very important role when it comes to the process of decision making, when actions such as ownership are present, this strengths autonomy within communities to take their own decisions, but also to build a social network between organizations that are emerged from this process.

However the level of autonomy within these programmes are based on how effective or not can be the process of ownership, which leads to a sustainable self- financial resources but also to the whole practising of what alternative development programmes are aimed to.

Conclusions

This paper analysed and explained how alternative development programmes have been established in Colombia based on an alternative development approach and stimulated by the United Nations in countries with illicit drug production problems. Therefore the central question of this paper was to what extend alternative development programmes are compatible with the discourse of alternative development?

In order to answer this question, this paper explored the theoretical framework in which alternative development emerged as a new discourse and why this was used in countries such as Colombia as an alternative development strategy to eradicate illicit crops, as well as the use of alternative development in illicit drugs production context and the practice of alternative development in other countries as well as in Colombia and finally analyse in terms of the compatibility the elements that constitute alternative discourse with the practice in Colombia. The question here is whether or not these programmes are following the aspects of an alternative development discourse from a bottom up perspective.

Following the above, alternative development as a new model or ideology emerged in the late 1960's as a counter point of mainstream development practices. As a result social movements began to appear, new concepts of participation, environment, empowerment started to come into sight, claims for rights, inclusion for all these aspects began to appear as central points of discussion in development agendas around the world. This new ideology had to be justified for its actions where the inclusion of morality of what is right must include and where structures and legal frameworks had to be reshaped and constructed around people.

Therefore different results of alternative development have emerged depending on the social, economic, political and legal structures where alternative development has been implemented. In the case of Colombia, the way alternative development programmes have been implemented has also reshaped the role of alternative development. Consequently for the purpose of this paper it has been important to clarify that factors of alternative development discourse have also been part of mainstream development in order to legitimize its practices. Whether or not these practices of alternative development programmes in Colombia discussed along this paper coming from bottom up approach or top-down approach will define alternative development as a concept in Colombia.

Moreover conflict and drugs production in Colombia have been correlated at least for the last three decades; as a result, international interventions have been constant by international agencies and governments. The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime following its own concept of alternative development which has been internationally accepted as a supply model side policy has been working in Colombia with the implementations of alternative development programmes. Consequently the experience of alternative development in Colombia has show more of an anti-drug policy within the context of the definition of Alternative Development by the United Nations.

The outcomes of the alternative development programmes within the context of drug production discussed in this paper explains that the practices in other countries of alternative development and the lessons learned from it, have shown that alternative development is a long process. Success depends on the different conditions in which the country is involved; as an example, Thailand in its aim of eradicate poppy crops by using alternative development counted with exceptional circumstances that helped to accomplish the eradication of poppy.

Consequently alternative development programmes have been a model to a solution of the drug production problem in Colombia; however it can not only be limited to an approach. These alternative development programmes require long term processes in which financial sustainability is very important in order to generate real alternatives of income and living for the communities. Therefore alternative development projects can only be comprehensive if they are part of the National Development Plan. For that reason national policies must be directed to the accomplishment of the alternative development objectives which requires a minimum of infrastructure and services as a precondition to the success of alternative development programmes in Colombia.

Additionally many lessons can be learned from the alternative development programmes in Colombia. On one hand the implementation of good environmental practices has been an effective starting point of the programmes. Where the criteria to choose alternatives to the production of coca crops has been related with not only what is good for the whole market as well as having to account for the traditional knowledge of the communities and the cultural practices of ethnic groups, however this is not happening in the entire alternative programmes but is starting to take into account the importance of it. On the other hand the role of the institutions are positively valued by the communities that are capable of engaging in projects that assure social benefit for communities, even if they represent a top down approach of alternative development.

In addition to this alternative development practices such as the case of Tulasi, seen in Chapter Four which is not attached to official development programmes but is a bottom up initiative, as it has elements that make it an alternative development approach. Consequently recognition of these initiatives must not receive only financial support but also support with the minimum requirements that alternative development needs in order to be successful such as a minimum of infrastructure security and social basic needs which derive from the state.

In order for alternative development programmes to work, they must be guaranteed financial resources and some sort of land reform must be enacted. On one hand alternative development programmes are attached to international development cooperation that always depend on other countries policies; for instance whether the incoming administration of President-elect Obama will support international cooperation initiatives. Therefore alternative development programmes must be financially independent. On the other hand the cases illustrated in this paper have shown that alternative development practices have been framed within a rural development approach whether or not this can be defined or not in a rural concept it is clear that Colombia needs a serious land reform to ensure economic vitality of the agricultural sector.

Overall to assess the compatibility on alternative development programmes with the discourse of alternative development. It is obvious that these programmes have addressed elements of participation, empowerment and good environmental practices. Despite a top down approach it is important to recognize the existence of alternative development practices form a bottom up perspective in Colombia that may bring about better outcomes in

the long term. Having said that alternative development is a long term process and the cases illustrated in this paper do not cover the entire implications of alternative development in Colombia, we have seen how elements from alternative development discourse already discussed here can be applied to these projects, but whether or not this can be a success model it is something that will need further research.

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