



Informal Settlement Upgrading

WITH AN
INTERSECTIONAL
APPROACH

Ángela María Franco Calderón
Danny María Ramírez Torres



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Universidad del
Rosario



Editorial



Universidad
del Valle



**Robert Bosch
Stiftung**

Franco Calderón, Ángela María

Informal settlement upgrading with an intersectional approach / Ángela María Franco Calderón & Danny María Ramírez Torres – Bogotá: Editorial Universidad del Rosario; Universidad del Valle, Robert Bosch Stiftung, 2023.

179 pages

1. Urbanism. 2. Community participation. 3. Housing programs. I. Franco Calderón, Ángela María. II. Ramírez Torres, Danny María. III. Universidad del Rosario. IV. Universidad del Valle. V. Robert Bosch Stiftung. VI. Título. 711.4 SCDD 20

Cataloging at source – Universidad del Rosario. CRAI

DAMV - May 30th, 2023

© **Universidad del Rosario**

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Telephone (57) 601 297 02 00. Ext. 3113
Calle 12C # 8-50, piso 8, Bogota, Colombia
<https://editorial.urosario.edu.co/>

First edition: Bogota, D.C., June, 2023

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Editorial Coordinator: Ingrith Torres Torres
Proofreading: Journals & Authors
Graphic Design: Anna Karina Echavarría

Book Cover: Anna Karina Echavarría

ISBN: 978-958-500-179-4

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/urosario/9789585001794>

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ABSTRACT

As a result of a research exploration that integrates the intersectional approach with urban studies, this book expands the debate on the notion of intersectionality—originated in feminist theories—by addressing it from the territorial scope of spontaneous settlements. Based on a case study in Cali (Colombia), this book analyzes intersectional categories that inquire not only about individuals but also about communities and their relationship with the place they inhabit as a basis to formulate and implement comprehensive habitat upgrading processes in accordance with local realities, with an emphasis on urban territorial peacebuilding. This process employs a methodological framework that combines quantitative and qualitative methods, tested through broad community participation. Memory building, intersectional mapping, community data collection using mobile devices, child and youth participation through play, and participatory design are some of the tools explored in this work focused on promoting the right to the city.

Keywords: *urban planning; urbanism; comprehensive habitat upgrading; informal settlements; intersectionality; community participation.*

Suggested citation/Citación sugerida: Franco-Calderón, Ángela María y Ramírez-Torres Danny María. 2023. Mejoramiento integral del hábitat con enfoque interseccional. Bogotá: Editorial Universidad del Rosario. <http://dx.doi.org/urosario/9789585001794>

RESUMEN

Como resultado de una exploración investigativa que integra el enfoque interseccional con los estudios urbanos, este libro amplía el debate sobre la noción de interseccionalidad, originada en las teorías feministas, al ser abordada desde el ámbito territorial de los asentamientos de origen espontáneo. A partir de un estudio de caso en Cali (Colombia), este libro analiza las categorías interseccionales que indagan no únicamente sobre los individuos, sino también sobre las comunidades y su relación con el lugar que habitan, como base para formular e implementar procesos de mejoramiento integral del hábitat, acordes con las realidades locales, con énfasis en la construcción de paz territorial urbana. Este proceso se fundamenta en un marco metodológico que combina métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos que se ponen a prueba mediante un proceso amplio de participación comunitaria. La construcción de memoria, el mapeo interseccional, la recolección de datos comunitarios mediante el uso de dispositivos móviles, la participación de niños y jóvenes a través del juego y el diseño participativo son algunos de los instrumentos y que se exploran en este trabajo enfocado en promover el derecho a la ciudad.

Palabras clave: *planeación urbana; urbanismo; mejoramiento integral del hábitat; asentamientos informales; interseccionalidad; participación comunitaria.*



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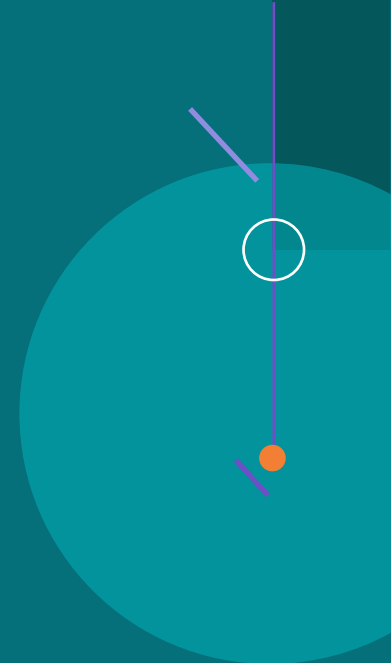
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PROLOGUE



Worldwide, scholars and practitioners agree that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to upgrading processes in informal settlements. Each settlement poses unique challenges because of its history, territory, and the diversity of its inhabitants. Frequently, residents experience major differences in access to utilities and to a dignified urban life due to uneven urban processes and to the intersection of different social identities such as race, class, place of birth, gender, education, age, disability, sexual orientation, and more. Many times, these identities interplay and produce distinct experiences of discrimination and exclusion, which are more evident in places with a long history of conflict and where certain groups experience oppression.

Therefore, habitat upgrading processes can only be successful if decision makers accept and acknowledge not only the diverse nature of the territory, but the importance of diversity in residents' lives. In other words, successful upgrading starts from listening with empathy and genuinely giving power to those who have experienced exclusion, violence, and poverty. It requires valuing the ways in which residents' knowledge contributes to urban processes as basic principle behind using the intersectional approach in planning. This way, intersectionality as a methodological instrument, allows to draw attention to structural, historic, and institutional inequalities.

Universidad del Valle integrated multiple factors into the research project *City and Peace* [Ciudad y Paz], for instance race, gender, and class; thus, it was possible to reveal both sites of intersectional oppression and sites of participation and well-being that might have been overlooked. Adequate urban planning decisions can be made by co-creating an analysis with communities, considering various forms of interconnected oppression and vulnerabilities, and using community participation processes to ensure a peaceful and dignified life for all residents.

Intersectionality has not been widely explored at the global level in urban studies, and most of the research tends to focus on theory. This book elaborates on informal settlement upgrading by expanding the implementation of the intersectional approach, which proves to be an innovative tool, into applied urban planning research. Developed together with residents of the informal settlement *Brisas de las Palmas* in Cali, this text explains how co-designing strategies for peacebuilding and habitat upgrading requires the collective agency and knowledge of the communities as an essential resource for urban governance processes.

Moreover, this book provides a unique urban perspective on territorial peace in Colombia by acknowledging that consequences of the armed conflict appear not only in rural areas. The outcomes of the intersectional work carried out in *Brisas de las Palmas* show how forced displacement, exclusion, and living in permanent insecurity are inscribed in urban territories and their socio-spatial dynamics. Within this framework, the work presented here offers fresh and highly relevant scientific and practical thoughts on how peace can be built from scratch, in concrete local spaces, through an intersectional approach, and in close cooperation with communities.

Intersectional practice is a central pillar of the Robert Bosch Stiftung strategy to work on inequalities. We believe that it is a powerful approach to reduce inequalities and achieve systemic change. In our program “Reducing Inequalities through Intersectional practice” we worked with several partners across the globe to uncover and promote good practices in intersectional work, foster connections, and provide a platform for exchange and learning among practitioners.

We are very honored that *Universidad del Valle*—with the support of the Secretariat of Social Housing and Habitat of Cali—joined our program, with pioneering work on intersectionality in urban studies. Their efforts help advance a new model of urban development that draws attention to oppression and power with the aim to promote equity and a better life for all. We are sure that this collaboration of *Universidad del Valle*, the local government and *Brisas de las Palmas* community will inspire many city-makers engaged in both research and practice to use intersectionality as a powerful tool for urban transformation.



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INTRODUCTION



The participatory action-research project *City and Peace* is a joint venture of the Observatory of Contemporary Architecture and Urbanism of *Universidad del Valle*, the Secretariat of Social Housing and Habitat of Cali (SVSH by its Spanish acronym), and the community of *Brisas de las Palmas* neighborhood. It was carried out with the support of the program “Reducing Inequalities through Intersectional practice” of the Robert Bosch Foundation based in Germany. This initiative proposes innovative methods to address informal settlement upgrading through an intersectional approach and aims to uplift discussions on social equity and urban peace-building in Colombia.

Here, we present the case study of *Brisas de las Palmas*, a popular settlement in Cali in which the good leadership of women stands out, and where *Universidad del Valle* has been working for more than five years on various initiatives. The high level of community organization, the capacity of self-management to develop infrastructure and housing, as well as the openness of its inhabitants towards the co-production of ideas on possible actions to improve the habitat and quality of life in this place, were key factors to select it and do the research there.

The main objective of this work is to discuss new methods to propose and implement actions for informal settlement upgrading. It is aimed at people involved in the formulation of public policies, as well as community-based organizations, governmental and third sector institutions that work on participatory processes about urban planning, reduction of inequalities, social inclusion, generation of opportunities, territorial peace, and citizen coexistence. In the academic field, it is aimed at researchers, professors, and students interested in new ways to explore urban studies using the intersectional approach.

The first chapter defines the two key concepts of this research—settlement upgrading and intersectionality—and proposes how the approach can be transformed to work jointly and make the projects have a greater impact. The second chapter presents the case study based on quantitative and qualitative information on the neighborhood, the characteristics of its inhabitants, their homes, and the environment, as well as the forms of community organization that have emerged throughout its consolidation. The third chapter describes the methods designed to apply the intersectional approach in this informal settlement upgrading process. The fourth chapter presents the results of the project, following the structure proposed, to show how each used instrument or tool materializes in a concrete case. The book ends with a synthesis of lessons learned and reflections on the methods, planning, and management of informal settlement upgrading and issues of this territory and community.

The data and results presented here are primary information obtained from workshops, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, tours, and community mapping exercises. These activities were carried out by the *Universidad del Valle* research team with the support of community leaders between February and December 2021. A second source of data was a socioeconomic characterization survey applied to 192 households in *Brisas de las Palmas*, which included specific questions for the intersectional analysis. It was designed by the research team, funded by SVSH, and conducted by a team of university surveyors between October and December 2021.

Thanks to the joint work carried out by the Secretariat of Social Housing and Habitat, *Universidad del Valle*, and the community, *Brisas de las Palmas* was chosen by the Mayor's Office of Cali as one of the four pilots to implement the urban legalization and upgrading program. It uses the intersectional approach as a theoretical and practical foundation in an innovative way.



01

SETTLEMENT

UPGRADING AND
INTERSECTIONALITY



Cali is the first city in Colombia that aims to develop an informal settlement upgrading (ISU) program with an intersectional approach that enables taking actions more in line with the challenges the inhabitants of poor neighborhoods face daily. As will be discussed in this chapter, the articulation of ISU and intersectionality opens a field of work and experimentation that links urban studies with an innovative methodological perspective coming from feminist theories. Although the intersectional approach has been more related to studies on gender, race, and class, this work explores the possibilities offered by this new approach to create categories that go beyond individuals by including analyses that account for community spaces and individual and collective experiences in the territory.



INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING



Informal settlement upgrading has different definitions according to the context in which it is developed. Most of the ISU programs carried out with a conventional approach are known by the predominance of actions on the built space and limited participation of neighborhood residents. Under this approach, upgrading processes aimed at transforming the environment and self-produced housing based on actions such as:

- Reduction of natural disaster risk
- Mitigation of impacts of constructions on the environment
- Resettlement of population located in areas of unmitigable risk or in areas with ecological fragility
- Optimization of public utility networks and road infrastructure
- Access to public transportation systems
- Increase of public spaces and collective facilities
- Implementation of strategies to guarantee security of land tenure through processes of urban legalization and allocation of land titles
- Improvement of habitability conditions and structural quality of housing

Although the positive impact on the quality of infrastructure and housing is visible, many of the informal settlement upgrading programs have not included an in-depth analysis of the socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of the communities. Nor have indicators and baselines been generated to measure the socioeconomic transformations of households, since the



Photograph 1. Settlements in the upper part of District 18 in Cali
Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.

indicators of success of public interventions tend to be related to construction aspects, improvement of environments, and housing.

Fundamental issues such as community participation in decision making and the opportunity offered by settlement upgrading as an instrument to build urban territorial peace are left aside when the physical-spatial approach is prioritized and it is forgotten that each community is unique, as are their needs and dreams of the territory. Likewise, aspects such as the improvement of the educational climate of households, strategies to achieve social mobility, and the joint exploration of opportunities to generate family income are left in a secondary place. The last aspect is fundamental because the residents of neighborhoods where ISU programs are implemented may incur additional economic obligations to those they had before the actions in their territory, e.g., pay for public services, property taxes, and valuation contributions, among others.



Figure 1. Guidelines of the Decalogue for Latin America and the Caribbean
Fuente: Synergies for Solidarity, 2020¹.

But beyond the effectiveness and focus of the ISU programs, in many cities in Latin America and the Caribbean, dramatic moments such as the confinement experienced due to the Covid-19 pandemic led to a debate on housing and neighborhoods as spaces for care. The economic and socio-spatial inequalities were questioned, since they caused the most vulnerable population to be the most affected, both in terms of health and employment. The responsibility we have as a society to reduce these gaps that became more acute and more visible was also discussed.

In this context, the initiative *Synergies for Solidarity* was created as a result of the collective work of social movements, academia, and international organizations. The *Decalogue for Participatory Slum Upgrading* (Figure 1) was formulated as a road map for the region.

This Decalogue is considered a turning point for ISU in the region because it invites to change the course of improvement programs and projects to transcend conventional methods. Under this approach, the Decalogue constitutes the basis for exploring innovative alternatives such as those proposed in this study for Cali.

The guidelines, which are described succinctly below, propose ISU as a process that combines the experiences and knowledge of communities—in and about their territories—, community participation in decision-making, and the exaltation of diversity in key issues such as public policies, governance, urban planning, and environment.

- Territorial governance within the framework of a multi-stakeholder political commitment.
- Public policy that has as its central objective the social and ecological function of property.
- Infrastructure provision to guarantee universal access to utilities.

1 <https://www.synergiesforsolidarity.org/decálogo-mib-2020>.

- Multi-scalar territorial planning led by neighborhood residents.
- Political recognition to protect human rights and ensure inclusion of all social groups and non-stigmatization of popular neighborhoods.
- Social diversity based on care with an intersectional approach.
- Solidarity economies with an emphasis on green reactivation, promoting food sovereignty and popular economy.
- Knowledge dialogues that integrate local knowledge and territorial data.
- Collective memory as part of a culture that fosters safety and care.
- Climate justice aiming to reduce disaster risks and increase resilience with an ecofeminist and intergenerational approach.

Based on those approaches and challenges, in this study ISU is defined as **the set of proposals and actions taken to reduce inequalities and improve the quality of life in disadvantaged neighborhoods by integrating the knowledge and cultural traits of the inhabitants, valuing natural structures, recognizing the built environment, and improving socioeconomic conditions as a foundation to achieve equity, inclusion, and urban territorial peace.** This definition is the basis that sustains the work carried out in *Brisas de las Palmas*, where the intersectional approach was used to conduct ISU proposals more attuned to community and territorial realities.



Photograph 2. Soccer is the most important recreational activity for children and youth. Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.



INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH



The intersectional approach is a theoretical, methodological, and political perspective that enables a more comprehensive approach to the diverse realities of society. It is based on the recognition of factors of oppression and privilege that mark social differences and reveal essential aspects of coexistence and human relations.

This approach was introduced by the American jurist Kimberlé Crenshaw to show how Black women in the United States were exposed to violence and discrimination for reasons of both race and gender, and how the intersection of these identities placed them in a disadvantageous position to receive timely and quality care in medical services (Crenshaw, 1989; 1995). Despite other theorists made similar statements, the notion of intersectionality had such a boom and legitimacy that it started being interpreted in a general way. Hence, it has been applied in different contexts—mainly in those related to the social sciences and feminism—to make interdependent inequalities visible on the basis of multiple identities, among which class, race, and gender stand out. They are analyzed not as isolated factors, but as intersecting issues (Figure 2) that may be a source of oppression for some people and a source of privilege for others.

Not for all people, class, race, and gender are reasons of discrimination. As Colombian thinker Mara Viveros explains:

Intersectional analyses highlight two issues: first, the multiplicity of sexism experiences lived by different women; second, the existence of social positions that suffer neither marginalization nor discrimination because they embody the norm, such as masculinity, heteronormativity, or whiteness. By unveiling these two aspects, this type of analysis offers new perspectives, which are omitted when

it is limited to a legal and formalist approach of cross-domination, and to social relations—gender, race, class—as sectors of social intervention (2016, p. 8).²

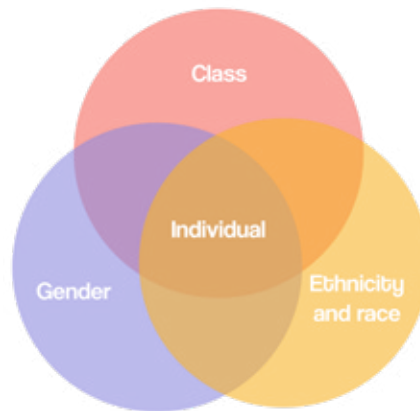


Figure 2. Conventional categories of the intersectional approach

In the case of urban studies, the concept of intersectionality has been little explored globally; however, given the broad analytical margins it offers, this notion enables understanding social gaps, so marked and so present in many cities. **In this sense, applying the intersectional approach in urban studies allows to closely analyze the reality of communities, inequalities, segregations, and discriminations that occur in specific socio-territorial contexts.** Intersectionality offers multiple elements to understand and question the mechanisms and power relations in the urban space and provides better contextualized information that will allow projects to yield better results.

Under this perspective, **applying the intersectional approach to the ISU should aim at addressing social logics in which diverse categories articulate in a concrete manner and thus account for specific experiences of subjects beyond class, race, and gender.** To this end, it is necessary to consider that each neighborhood is a unique scenario, and that the experiences of oppression and/or privileges of the communities occur in ways that must be understood and incorporated into the actions carried out in the territory.

2 Our translation from original in Spanish.



02

*BRISAS DE
LAS PALMAS*

NEIGHBORHOOD



Brisas de las Palmas, the case study of the *City and Peace* research, is located in the foothills of the western mountains, very close to the urban-rural border in the south of Cali (Figures 3a and 3b). This area is characterized by its spontaneous growth due to the arrival of people who, at the end of the 1990s and in the following years, sought refuge in the city because of the resurgence of the armed conflict in rural areas; and people from neighboring municipalities, who saw in Cali an opportunity to improve their quality of life, education, or working conditions. According to data from the socioeconomic characterization survey conducted in 2021, the approximate population of the neighborhood is 900 people distributed in 204 properties occupying an area of thirteen hectares.

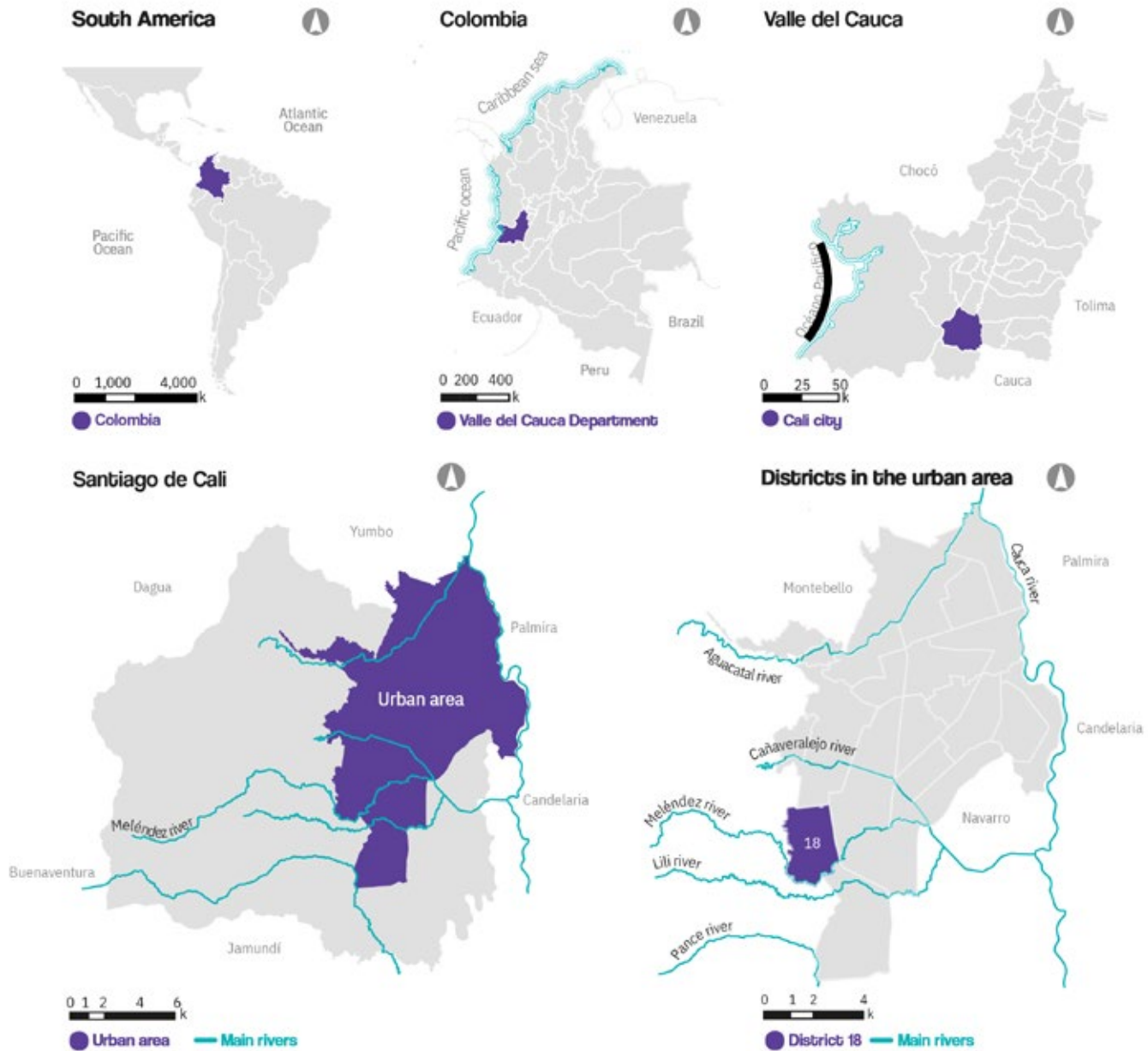


Figure 3a. Location of Cali and District 18

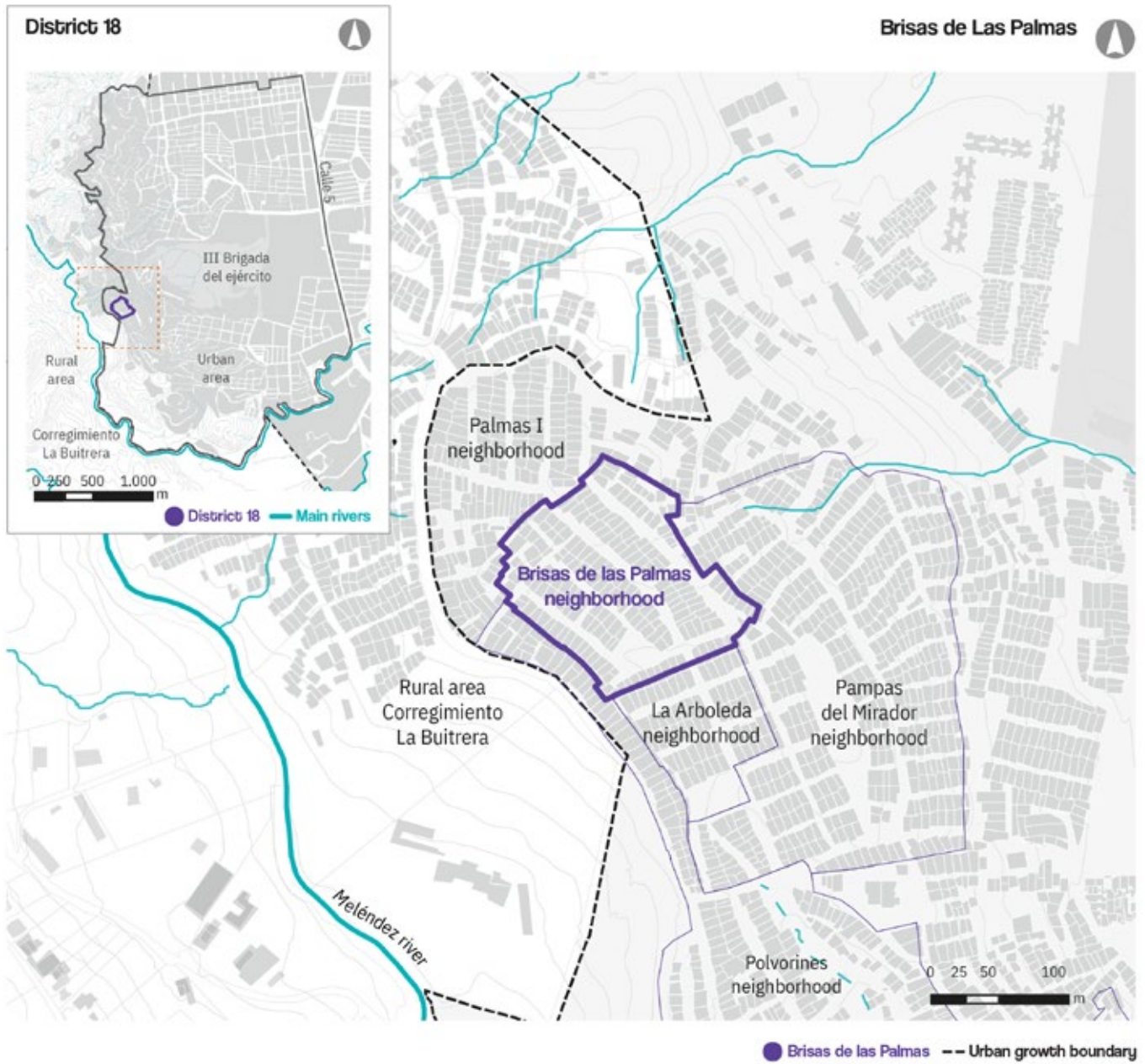


Figure 3b. Location of *Brisas de las Palmas* neighborhood



THE NEIGHBORHOOD



This neighborhood lacks nothing. I could not tell something bad about it. No. Because this is my neighborhood (Luis, man, 60 years old).

Around the year 2000, a group of families—including people displaced by the armed conflict or people who had come to Cali in search of opportunities—began to occupy land on the slopes of District 18. It was recognized by communities as municipal *ejidos* (Figure 4); these are communal lands that the Spanish Crown delimited in 1536, during the colonial era, in peripheral areas of Cali, as planned spaces for recreation or to feed livestock. Subsequently, in 1929, Law 32 defined in Article 1.^o that these lands would be intended for

the benefit of the poor and needy classes of the district, either for the natives or for nationals who have settled there, or formed an honest family, or remained with honest occupation and good conduct for at least three consecutive years (Congreso de la República de Colombia, 1929).

As a result of disputes with public agents over the territory, the community that settled the upper part of the district used Law 32 of 1929 as an argument to stay there. However, in the absence of formal title transfers, much of the occupied land is still categorized as *ejidos* in the city's cadastre. Therefore, land ownership in *Brisas de las Palmas* and neighboring areas remains unresolved.

As a result of work coordinated by the first settlers, some houses began to be built around the park, which was delimited and respected as a public space from the beginning of the territorial occupation. According to the stories told

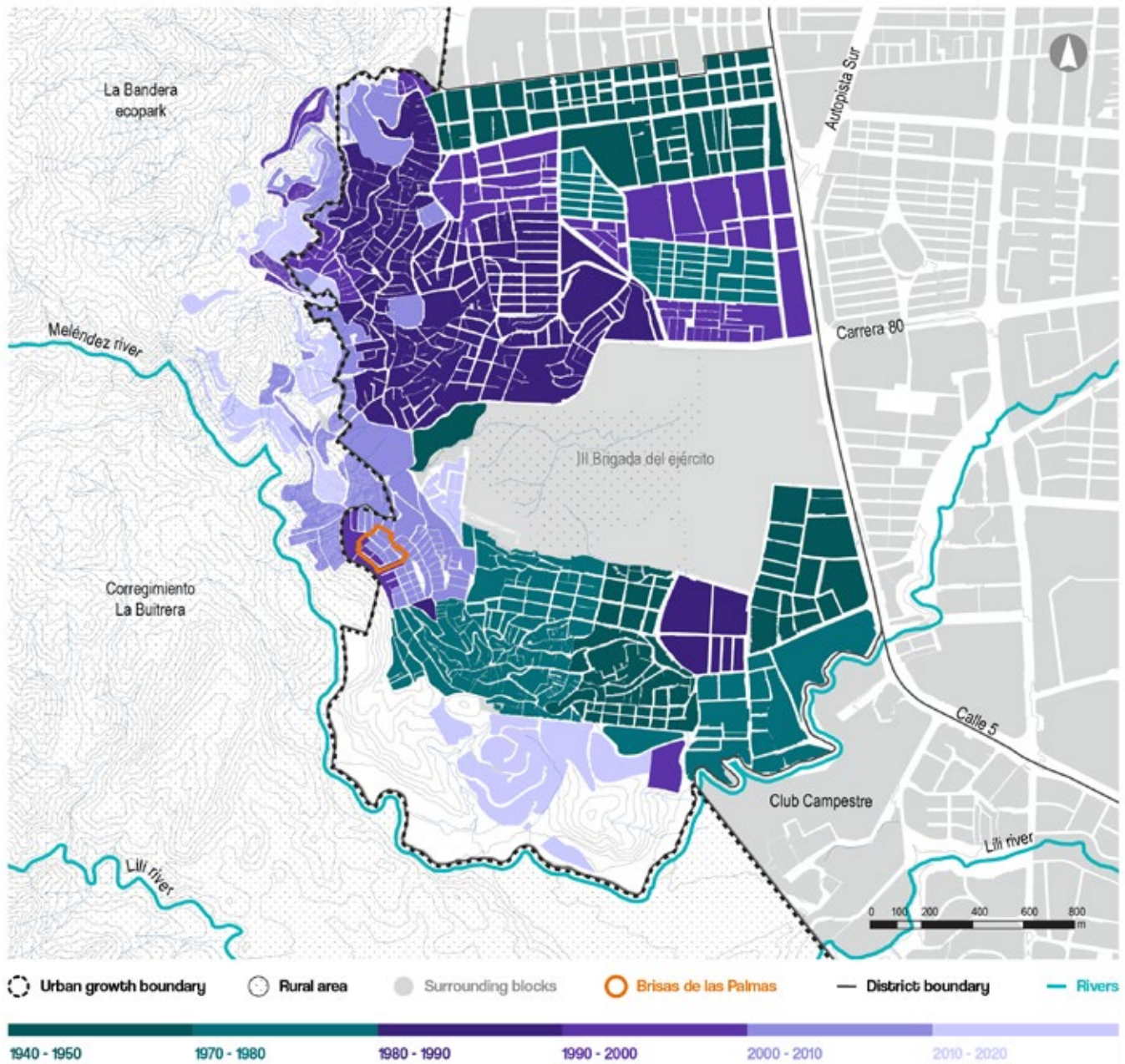


Figure 4. Population in the hillside of District 18

Graph 1
Land and housing acquisition

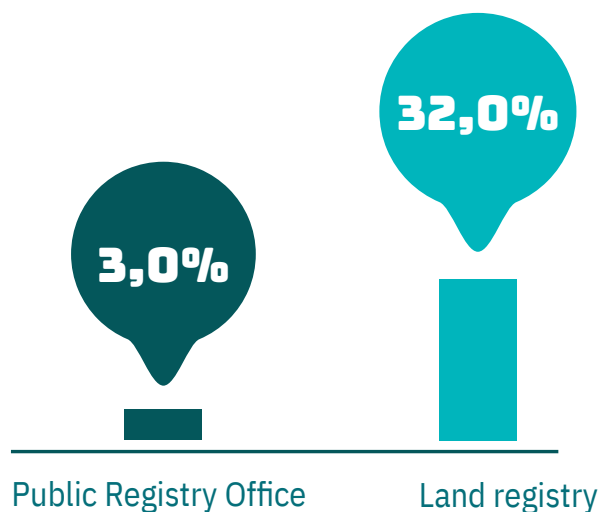


Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

by the inhabitants of *Brisas de las Palmas*, at that time, land occupation was calm and there were no evictions, although they did receive warnings from the Metropolitan Police claiming that the land did not belong to them. Two decades after the settlement process, most of the surveyed residents acknowledge having acquired the land as possession (Graph 1), i.e., informally. Many people believe that they will receive a formal title from the municipality under the *ejido* legislation or through a legal figure called *acquisitive prescription of ownership*, which allows them to become owners by occupying the land for a long time.

The Graph also shows that 19.3% of the people made a purchase and sale transaction; however, it can be only for improvements [*mejoras*]. That is, constructions that occupy someone else's land. Additionally, as can be seen in Graph 2, in neighborhoods such as *Brisas de las Palmas*, where there is no total clarity about land ownership, it is common that purchase and sale transactions of lots and houses are not formalized in the offices of public instruments or registered in the cadastre. This happens because owners and possessors fear the payment of taxes, or because the city lacks institutional capacity to keep the cadastral census up to date.

Graph 2
Registered dwellings



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021).

In an ISU process such as the one implemented in *Brisas de las Palmas*, analyzing variables such as land ownership is essential for the municipal authority to define the route to allocate titles deeds, or implement other mechanisms for the use of publicly owned land without resorting to traditional individual allocation. Alternatives such as trusts, mutual aid housing cooperatives, and long-term commodatum have been successful and aim to prevent the gentrification of legalized areas, a phenomenon already identified in other Colombian cities such as Bogotá (González, 2020).

Despite the risk that living as possessors implies for the inhabitants of *Brisas de las Palmas*, they say that the public forces never acted violently and, to a certain extent, helped them preserve order in the sector.

The dynamic for occupying the land was that we paid rent in *Los Chorros*, but we went up [to *Brisas*] to sleep every night, so that they would take us into account in the subdivision. There was always someone watching (Community mapping workshop conversations).

The *cambuches*³ were made of plastic and then of mats. We slept there (Community mapping workshop conversations).

With the idea that they would not be evicted, in 2001, the community hired a topographer to reorganize the lots. Six-meters front and twelve-meters depth plots were delimited, and the public roads were better laid out considering the space of the community house and respecting the initial location of the park at the point where there was a large tree (Photographs 3 and 4). After defining the neighborhood spatially, the inhabitants began to build their houses with low-cost materials and to improve them as the economic status allowed them to do so.

At the same time, the new residents agreed to form a housing board to raise funds for infrastructure works. The first project was the construction of a community aqueduct. At the beginning, water was shared with surrounding neighborhoods; it flowed through a hose on the street and supplied the entire block. Subsequently, the supply was improved by installing underground pipelines. To solve the sewage problem, each house had a handmade septic tank, and they washed their clothes in the Meléndez River, the nearest water source.

Between 2004 and 2005 the residents bought the pipe collars directly and agreed a payment with the adjacent neighborhood, *La Arboleda*, to connect to the new network. They also agreed to purchase the lot where the community center was located to unblock the access to *Brisas de las Palmas*. As shown in Photographs 5 and 6, there was a building in the middle of what had been defined in the topographic plan as the main access road to the neighborhood. During that time, the tree in the park deteriorated and

3 *Cambuche* is a word used in Colombia to refer to very precarious constructions made with recycled and low-cost materials such as plastic, cardboard, wood, zinc and guadua that serve as shelter.

died, and it was replaced in 2009 by a *samán*⁴ tree that still provides shade to the public space and the community center.

The money to contract the topographic survey for the first infrastructure works and to purchase the land occupied by *La Arboleda* community center was raised by the community through activities such as raffles, festivals, and bingos they organized autonomously. As a neighbor of the sector recalls:

Meetings were held in a space that was consolidated later as the [*Brisas de las Palmas*] community center. We used to put a platform there (community mapping workshop conversations).

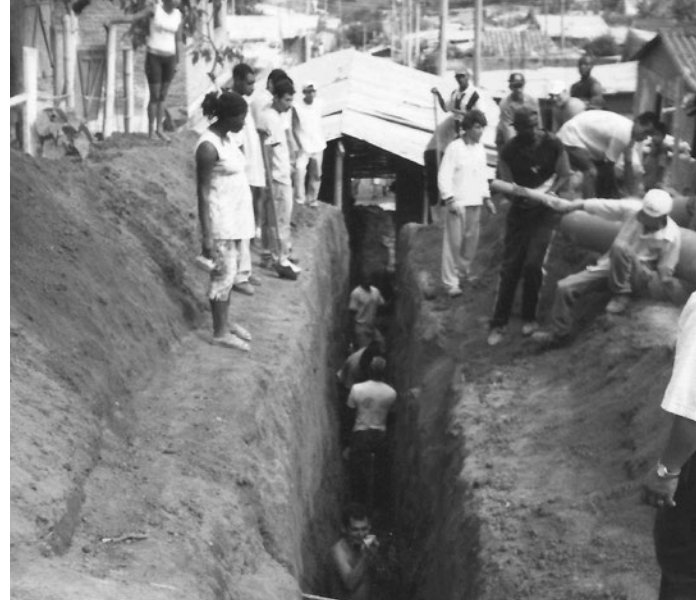
In 2007, two important projects for the neighborhood were carried out. The first one was the construction of *El Palo* park and the current community center. Prior to the construction work, residents identified these places in a symbolic way and had profound respect for them. Activities such as soccer games, parties on the soccer field; and bingo, festivals, and community pots were carried out at the community center with an imaginary delimitation of the space. After the construction, these spaces began to provide better services to the community, even for family activities, as noted by a resident of the neighborhood:

Geidy had her fifteenth birthday party at the community center, and we paid nothing. The building was made of mat [*guadua*⁵] (Community mapping workshop conversations).

The second activity that began that year was that of mototaxis. Because there were not enough transportation services available in the neighborhood, some residents began to provide this service to their neighbors. The next year, they began to build their homes with more solid materials such as bricks and concrete.

- 4 *Samán* is a large tree native to the intertropical zone, common in the Cauca river valley and particularly in Cali. It is slow growing and has an umbrella-shaped crown, which is why it is highly appreciated in hot climates for the shade it provides.
- 5 *Guadua* is a plant of the bamboo family, representative of the Andean forests. Its long stems, resistance and low cost make it one of the most popular construction materials in Colombia.

— Brisas de las palmas neighborhood —



Photographs 3 and 4. Plotting process
Source: Francy Mina's personal archive, 2000

Photographs 5 and 6. Construction of community utility networks
Source: Francy Mina's personal archive, 2000

At the request of the community, around 2010, the government began working on the neighborhood's power grid under the national Power Grid Standardization Program (PRONE by its Spanish acronym), which is aimed at informal neighborhoods such as *Brisas de las Palmas*. At that time, meters and poles for street lighting were installed. Four years later, in 2014, internet arrived in the neighborhood and, in 2015, the gas network was installed. That same year, MetroCali S.A., the company in charge of the integrated transportation system *Masivo Integrado de Occidente* (MIO), assigned a feeder bus route to the neighboring sector of Las Palmas, which improved mobility in the area. Currently, this formal transportation route shares space with buses, traditional buses and modified pickup trucks known in Cali as *gualas*, which have a capacity from 12 to 15 passengers and are frequently used in the hillside areas of the city. Some informal means of transport also operate in this zone, such as private cars known as *piratas*, which are similar to cabs but provide collective services, and mototaxis known in Cali as *motorratones* (Figure 5).

Despite the community effort and the (discontinuous) support of the municipal agencies, in 2012, the inhabitants of the upper part of the hillside, including those of *Brisas de las Palmas*, experienced a water shortage crisis due to a prolonged dry season, which forced the Mayor's Office to supply these neighborhoods with tanker trucks. That same year, the inhabitants of the neighborhood paved the perimeter road of *La Torre*, which is currently the main access to the neighboring areas and the road on which the MIO feeder bus circulates.

Subsequently, the Community Action Board was created in 2016 as an initiative to consolidate improvement proposals and have a voice in participatory planning spaces. In 2019, with the support of the board, a system of rainwater collectors and gutters was built to improve drainage, protect the roads from erosion, and reduce the vulnerability of homes due to poorly channeled rainwater.

The latest events experienced in the neighborhood were closely linked to the Covid-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2022; in addition to the national strike that had a greater presence in Cali between April 28 and the end of



**Bus Rapid Transit
(BRT-MIO)**



Guala



Pirate



Moto-taxi

Figure 5. Means of formal and informal public transportation in District 18

— *Brisas de las palmas* neighborhood —

June 2021. During the months of crisis due to these two events, the community carried out various activities to cope with the difficulties, mainly to provide food for the most vulnerable families. With the support of religious institutions, the community, and friends of the neighborhood, large community pots were made continuously. They benefited people from *Brisas de las Palmas* and neighboring sectors (Photo 7).

Despite recent contingencies, the neighborhood continues to consolidate thanks to the efforts of the community and its leaders, mainly women. For instance, besides the recent paving of the main road, for which funds were raised during the pandemic, children's playgrounds were installed in the park.

In addition, between 2021 and 2022 the Cali municipal public utilities company (Emcali) installed the aqueduct and sewerage networks (Photographs 8 and 9). This is a major step forward, achieved by community leaders after several years of efforts. It ensures the availability and quality of these services even during prolonged dry seasons.



Photograph 7. Community pot made during the national strike
Source: Enzo Mosquera, 2021.

Two decades after its foundation, *Brisas de las Palmas* is a consolidated neighborhood with one-, two- and three-story houses mostly built with solid materials. There are also common spaces that have been cared for collectively from the beginning of the settlement. As mentioned, thanks to the high level of community organization and the articulation between neighborhood leaders, academia, and the public sector, this neighborhood is part of the urban legalization process to implement a settlement upgrading program with an intersectional approach.



Photographs 8 and 9. Installation of aqueduct and sewerage networks by Emscali
Source: Gynna Millán, 2022.



THE HABITANTS



According to the results of the socioeconomic characterization survey, *Brisas de las Palmas* is a neighborhood inhabited mainly by adults (45.1%), followed by young people (17.2%), and a significant percentage of children and adolescents (30.1%), as shown in Figure 3.

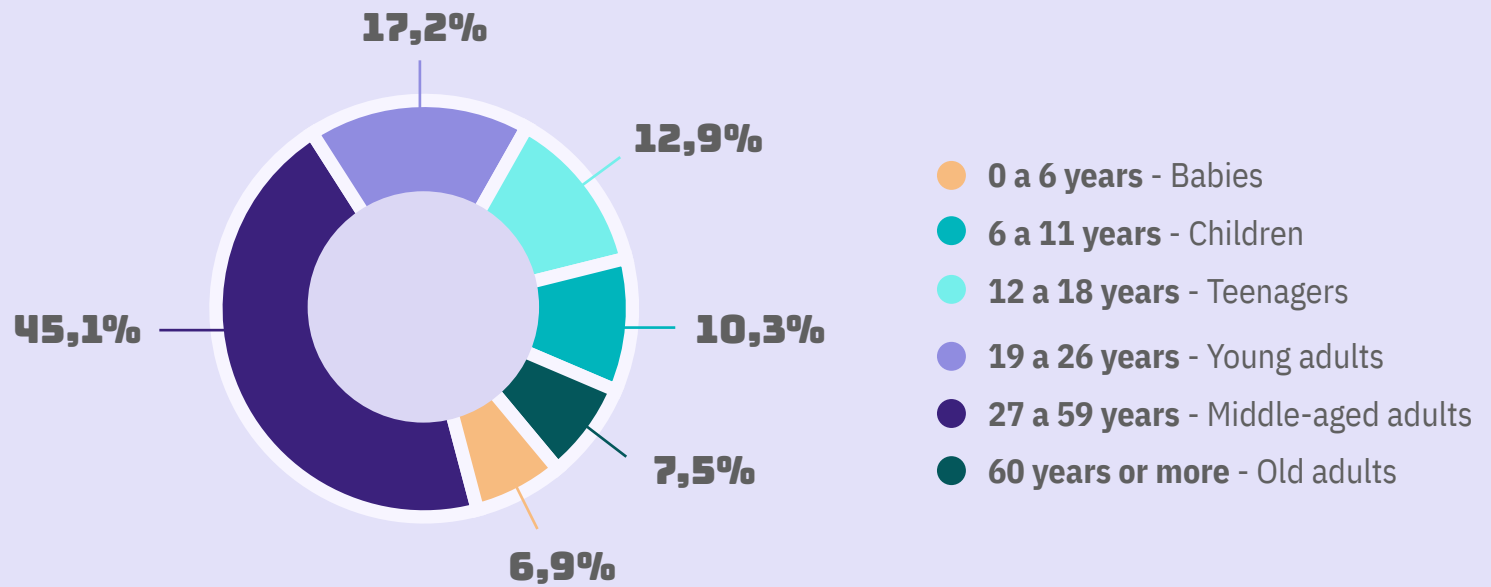
The educational attainment of the residents is low; 7.2% said they had no education, and 18.6% started primary school but did not finish it. Most of the population said they had completed secondary education (33.1%), and only 7.8% completed higher education studies at the technical, technological, and undergraduate levels (Graph 4).

The low educational attainment of the inhabitants may be related to two key aspects of the household economy. On the one hand, the main source of income is informal work, as shown in Graph 5. These data reveal the vulnerability of households, since these conditions do not guarantee neither a fixed income nor the benefits of formal work: access to the contributory health insurance, occupational risk insurance, and retirement savings.

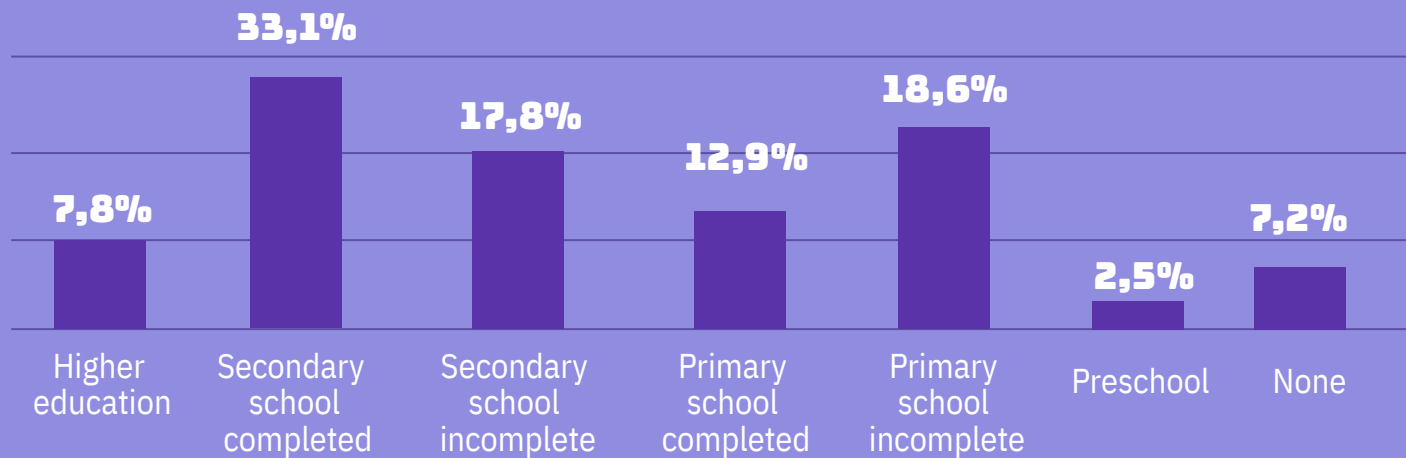
On the other hand, the discontinuity in income inherent to informal work, implies that households have little or no capacity to save money. Monthly income and monthly expenditures tend to be equal and, in many cases, due to contingencies, households spend more than they earn. This situation forces them to resort to loans—usually informal—and they must pay interest at usurious rates. In the case of *Brisas de las Palmas*, 80.8% of households reported receiving up to one minimum wage monthly⁶ (Graph 6).

6 In Colombia, the legal monthly minimum wage for 2022 was COP\$1,000,000, which is equivalent to US\$233 according to the average exchange rate for July 2022.

Graph 3
Age groups

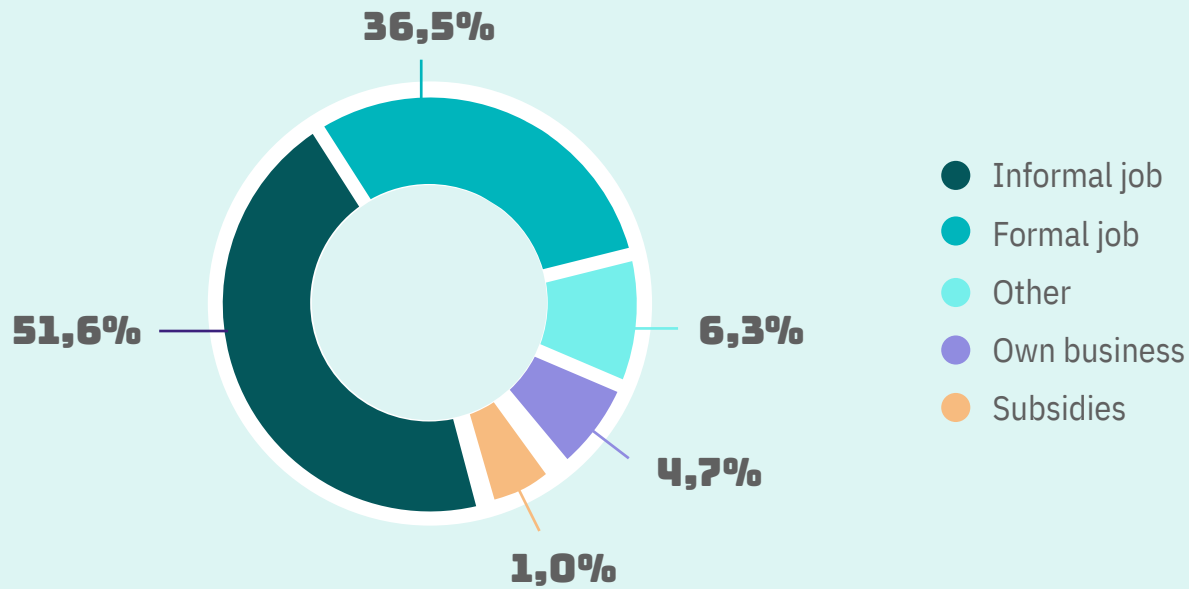


Graph 4
Highest level of education attained

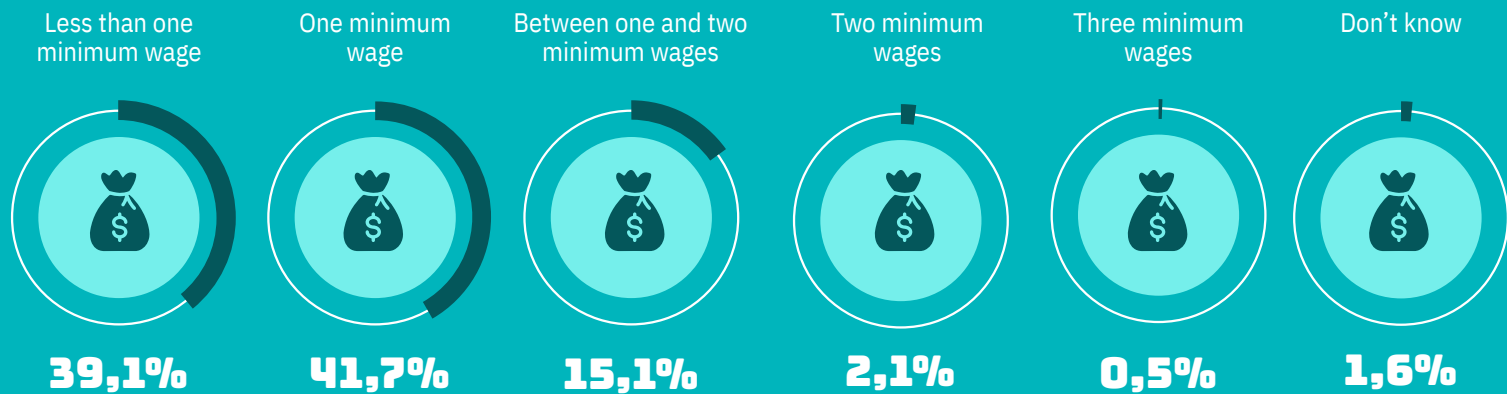


Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

Graph 5
Source of household income



Graph 6
Household income



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

With respect to the origin of the people in the neighborhood, Graph 6 shows that most of the families come from the department of Cauca (51.6%), followed by Valle del Cauca (25.8%), Nariño (7.5%), and Chocó (5.4%). These four departments make up the Pacific region, whose coastal areas are characterized by a high concentration of Afro-descendant and indigenous people, high levels of poverty, territories in conflict due to disputes between armed groups, and state abandonment.

The large number of people who arrived in *Brisas de las Palmas* coming from municipalities with deep structural problems coincides with the testimonies of the inhabitants. They repeatedly mention the search for housing options in Cali as a result of complex phenomena such as forced displacement due to the armed conflict, or rural territorial disputes in the context of drug trafficking.

The bombs began at night; they burned trucks. They burned people's documents and cell phones. I was desperate. I had two children at the time. We fled and left everything behind... we lost everything. We arrived in Cali and sold a pan and some pots to pay the rent [...] I had no one to ask for help, I did not know anyone (Luis Ary, man, 60 years old).

We had planned to live in the countryside and starting from scratch [in the city] is very hard. You must have strength and try to do things right so that they do not collapse. You see failure after failure, so you must learn and improve. I did not want to come to the city [...] Just knowing that I was going to get in a car and get motion sickness made me do not want to come (Francy, woman, 49 years old).

Considering that the greatest impact of forced displacement in Colombia was between 2000 and 2008 —more than 400,000 people displaced each year, with a maximum in 2007 close to 767,000 people⁷—, the possibility that many of the oldest residents of the neighborhood arrived as a result of forced migration increases. The period of greatest crisis due to this phenomenon in the country coincides with the founding and further consolidation of the neighborhood. Some of them, such as Luis Ary, told us how they arrived in Cali because of forced displacement:

7 Data from the Unit for the Comprehensive Attention and Reparation of Victims [*Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas*] (2022), <https://www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/es/registro-unico-de-victimas-ruv/37394>

— Brisas de las palmas neighborhood —

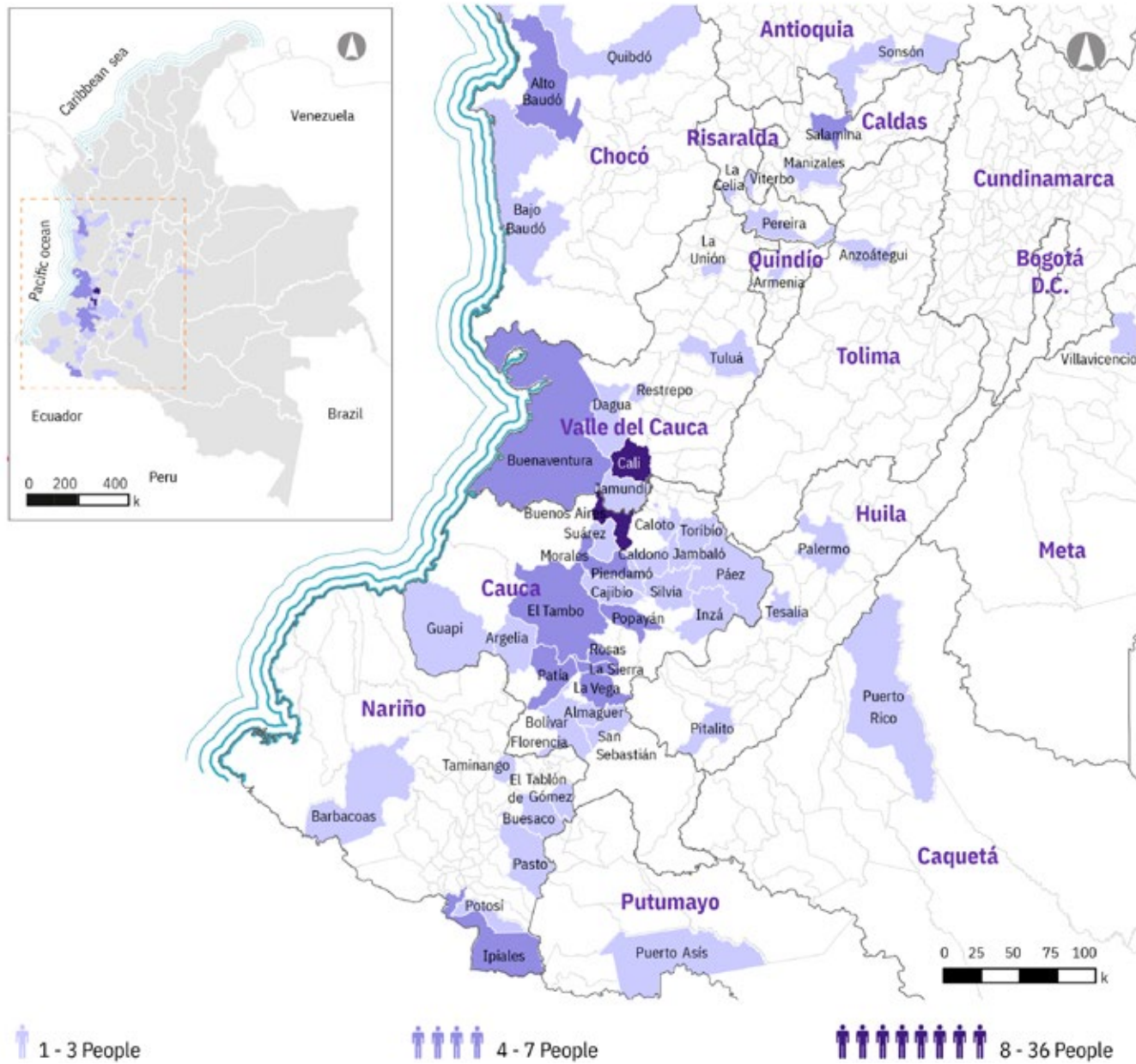


Figure 6. Home municipalities of *Brisas de las Palmas*' inhabitants
Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

Graph 7
Victims of the armed conflict



58,3%

Of the inhabitants do not recognise themselves as victims of the armed conflict.



41,7%

Of the inhabitants recognise themselves as victims of the armed conflict.



15%

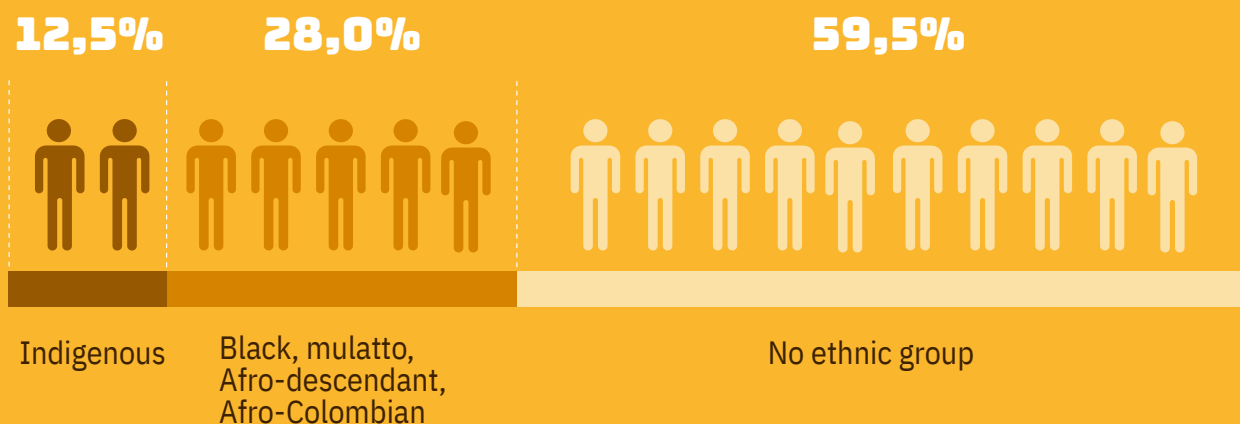
Persons registered in the RUV.

Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

I was working at kilometer 18 down towards Tocotá. The guerrillas displaced us [...]. My wife and my youngest son went to a farm to get some food, and when they were coming back at six o'clock in the afternoon, they met an armed group, and they held them [...]. I was desperate, I asked my other son to look for his mother, who did not show up. My son asked the guerrillas and they said that they had her, that they were not going to let her go until they "made a deal". They were going to take her motorcycle; an old motorcycle we had [...]. After a while they let her go, and she told us that she was locked up. (Luis Ary, man, 60 years old).

The fact that people talk about dispossession and displacement in informal spaces shows an incidence of the armed conflict in their memory. In the neighborhood, 41.7% of interviewees recognized themselves as victims of the armed conflict. However, only 36.3% acknowledge to be in the Registry of Victims (RUV by its Spanish acronym) as can be seen in Graph 7. This registry allows them to receive support from the National Government in the framework of protection, health, education, housing programs and support in productive projects. Without the official registration, victims are not included in comprehensive reparation programs.

Graph 8
Ethnic self-recognition



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

- 8 The initial figure of the results presented by Dane showed a reduction of 30.8% with respect to the results of the 2005 Census, a situation that forced a review and adjustment through statistical calculations with the support of data from the National Survey of Quality of Life carried out in 2018. The explanation of the calculations with the correction can be consulted at <https://www.dane.gov.co/files/investigaciones/boletines/grupos-etnicos/presentacion-grupos-etnicos-poblacion-NARP-2019.pdf>

Whether they are victims of the armed conflict, the fact that they come from different regions of Colombia means that the inhabitants of *Brisas de las Palmas* have diverse ethnic and social identities. In this neighborhood, more than a quarter of the people surveyed (28.0%) recognized themselves as black, mulatto, or Afro-descendant; and 12.5% said they belonged to an indigenous group (Graph 8).

These figures triple what was found at the national level by the National Statistics Department (DANE by its Spanish acronym) in 2018. This institution, based on figures from the National Population and Housing Census and subsequent statistical analysis of the National Quality of Life Survey, determined that 9.34% of the Colombian population—4,671,160 people—recognized themselves as black, mulatto, Afro-descendant, Raizal, or Palenquero, and 4.4% as Indigenous people.⁸ These figures show that the concentration of ethnic population in *Brisas de las Palmas* is important. This feature will be relevant in the intersectional analysis.

With respect to how long the residents have lived in the neighborhood, the stability and rootedness of the families is striking despite the land tenure conditions. A little more than 40% of interviewees said they had lived in the sector between 11 and 19 years, and nearly 36% for more than 20 years (Graph 9).

Who inhabits *Brisas de las Palmas*? People who came to the neighborhood looking for an opportunity to improve their quality of life by not having to pay rent; families who had to leave their territories due to violence in rural areas, possibly without thinking that they would have to live in a peripheral area and build their own habitat with little or no government support. In the framework of the *City and Peace* participatory action-research project, when inquiring about what united them and what had allowed them to weave strong bonds in their community, shared dreams, and mutual support they highlighted:

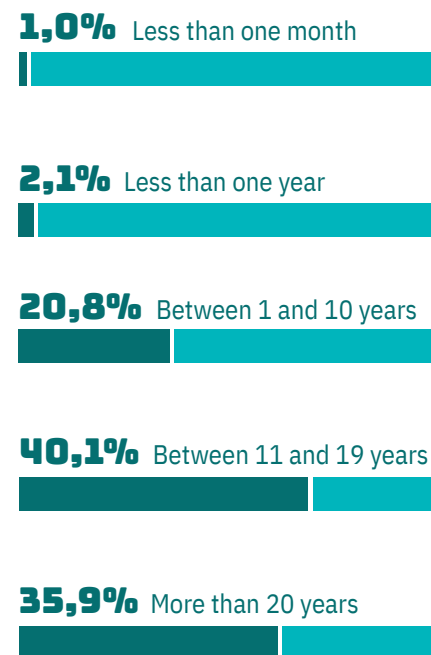
We are united because we are the same, we have the desire to have things, to have a home, and we want to get ahead (Nury Marcella, female, 38 years old).

Coexistence and humility, also that we all support each other, we all try to do things [...] to have a place to live a decent life. My parents always wanted us to be good people, here in *Brisas* they saw that possibility (Cristian, male, 30 years old).

The neighborhood unites us, our common goal is to watch it get ahead (Stefany, female, 20 years old).

Factors like the lack of decent housing; being impoverished, with low education, socially segregated, victims of violence; or social inequalities allowed them to connect and undertake together the construction of their habitat. But beyond that, in *Brisas de las Palmas*, trust and brotherhood have been built through various strategies driven by community management and action, such as those presented below.

Graph 9
Length of residence in the neighborhood



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).



HOMES AND SURROUNDING AREAS



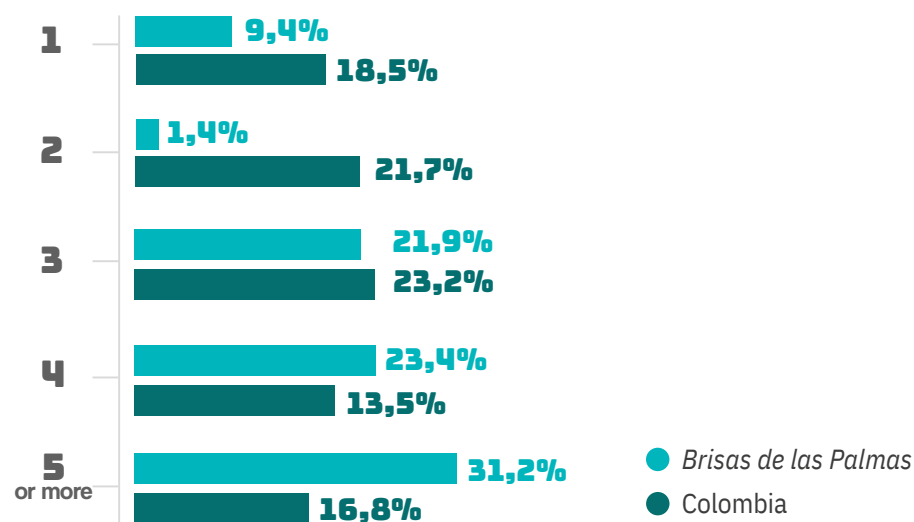
We have in common that we had no home; we had nowhere else to go and we had to fight to the end for this. If you're here is because you were in need; if you have had money, you wouldn't be here. So, it also unites us, that we're poor and we need to be together [...] We're very united and we want to get ahead, although we've received little help (Luis Ary, male, 60 years).

Most Colombian households are made up of three people. This is an important reference indicator because in neighborhoods inhabited by economically constrained populations, such as *Brisas de las Palmas*, it is common to find a higher density of housing occupancy. In this neighborhood, for instance, most households are made up of five people (31.3%), followed by those with four people (23.4%), as shown in Graph 10.

With a high number of people per household and per dwelling, in addition to the predominance of low-rise buildings, this neighborhood is still in consolidation (Isometry 1). This is because the houses are mainly built by their owners through progressive development practices, and the construction work is carried out as they have the economic resources to do so.

Regarding the type of housing that predominates in the neighborhood, 80% of the houses are still under construction, followed by 19% that are finished. The remaining 1% corresponds to apartments and one-room houses. Despite the economic restrictions of the inhabitants, there has been a great transformation in terms of construction. In a span of two decades, many of the houses originally built with *guadua* mats, zinc roofs, and earthen floors are now more solid houses built with materials such as baked clay bricks and reinforced concrete (Photographs 11 to 18).

Graph 10
Number of people per household



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

I have lived in the sector for twenty years, I moved into my house in the 2000. When we started, there was a great lack of opportunities in the neighborhood. We lived for a long time in shacks made of *guadua*, with unpaved streets [and] without utilities. We have been through difficult situations; we had a school, but it was very small, also built in *guadua*. There was absolutely nothing. Since then, it has been growing and the change can be seen. Many foundations and institutions have come and helped in many aspects. We have made progress (Nury Marcella, female, 38 years old).

Today, about 83% of the houses are built with bricks and concrete, and only 6% are made of rough wood, boards, and *guadua*. The remaining 11% corresponds to houses built with prefabricated materials.

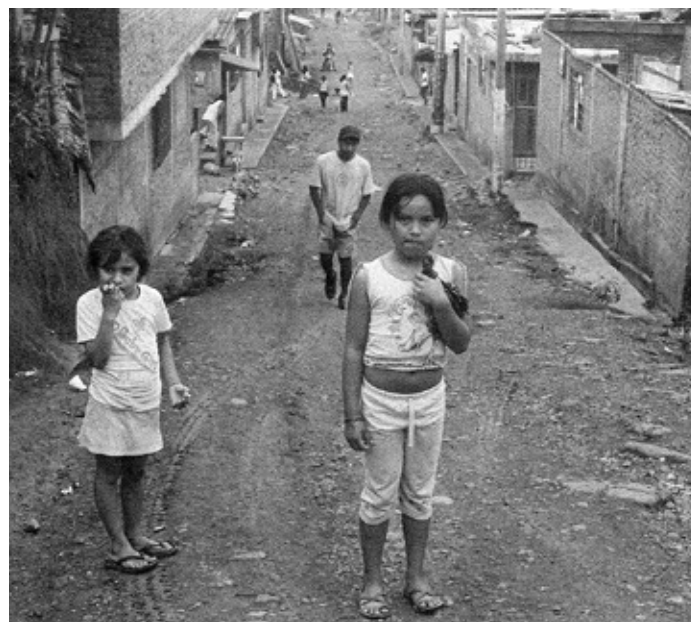


Photograph 10. A Little girl from the neighborhood at *El Palo* park
Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.

— Brisas de las palmas neighborhood —



Isometry 1. Height of the buildings
Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021).



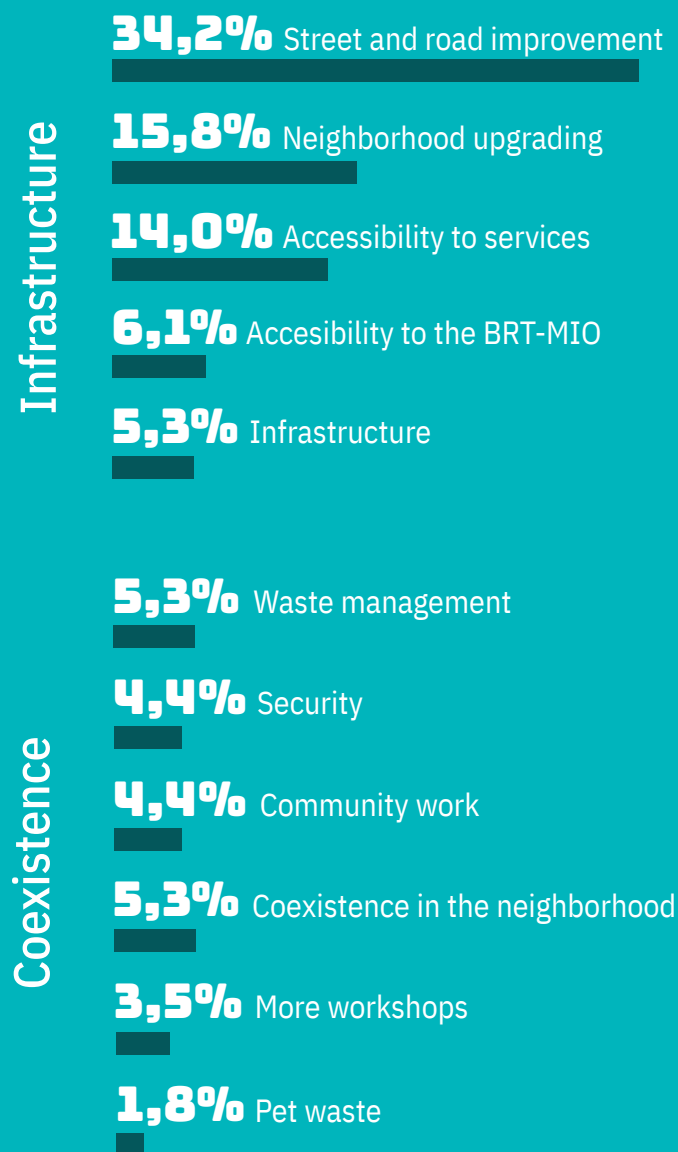
Photographs 11, 12, 13 and 14. Transformation of the houses and the main access road
Source of historical photographs: María Ángeles Sánchez, 2009. Current photographs: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.

— Brisas de las palmas neighborhood —



Photographs 15, 16, 17 and 18. Evolution of the dwellings and surrounding areas
Source historical photographs: María Ángeles Sánchez, 2009. Current photographs: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.

Graph 11
Issues to improve



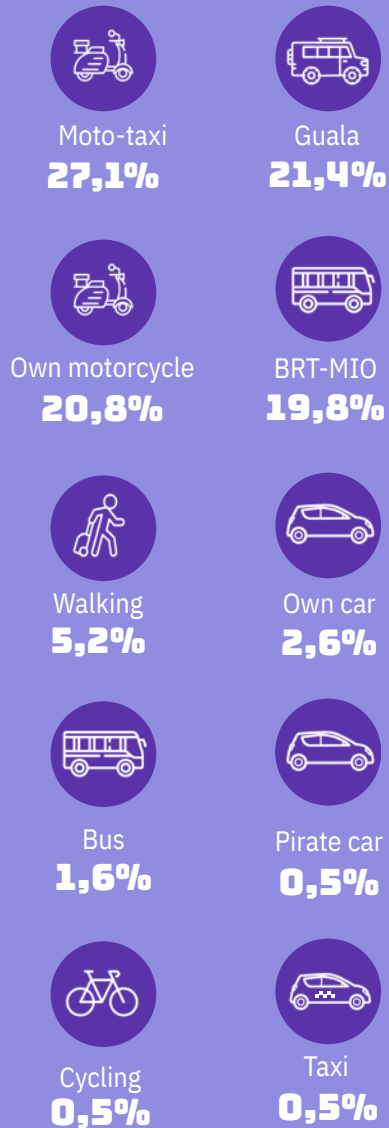
Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

The use of more solid materials, however, does not mean that the quality of the constructions is good either structurally or spatially. As shown below, one of the main problems in the neighborhood is the lack of technical assistance for both housing and the development of community infrastructure. This lack of technical and economic support has made the processes slow and costly because of the inability to take advantage of economies of scale, but also because there are still pending works for which the neighborhood families do not have the resources; for example, the roads are not yet fully built, and the community would like to concentrate efforts on it.

Despite the great importance of infrastructure for the communities of self-managed neighborhoods, it is interesting that challenges related to coexistence appear when inquiring about issues to be improved (Graph 11). This shows that community work goes beyond meeting the basic needs of collective infrastructure and housing; the people from *Brisas de las Palmas* also expressed an interest in improving community life.

The weakness in public infrastructure, which affects this community and characterizes many poor peripheral neighborhoods, also reflects on the means of transportation that residents must use daily. Although, as mentioned above, the integrated mass transportation system (MIO) has feeder routes on the hillside that pass near *Brisas de las Palmas*, only 19.8% of the population reported using

Graph 12
Most used mode
of transport

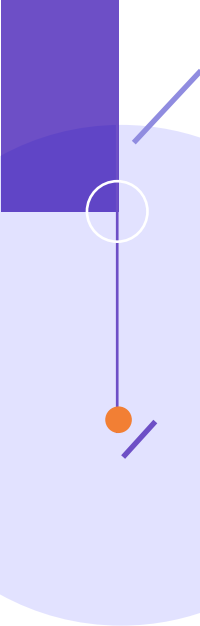


Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

this system. As can be seen in Graph 12, most residents use *motorratones* because they are available at many points in the sector. If they are acquaintances, they can be contacted by cell phone, they take passengers to specific points, and they are faster. In fact, time often prevails over cost because a *motorratón* is not necessarily cheaper than public transport if the trip is long.

Regarding other means of transport, similar percentages of residents use *gualas* and their own motorcycles (21.4% and 20.8%, respectively). The *gualas* have established routes, but they stop at any point where they find passengers and operate as a cooperative in the area. Alternative means of transport such as walking or cycling are underrepresented in *Brisas de las Palmas* because it is far from educational institutions, workplaces, and shopping centers, but also because of the steep topography and the poor quality of the roads.

In conclusion, the settlement is still in the process of consolidation through self-management mechanisms and own resources. Utilities are largely resolved, although significant investment is needed in road infrastructure and in spatial and structural improvement of housing with specialized technical support. It is also necessary to have efficient public transportation to reduce the security risks associated with the use of informal means of transport (especially for adult women and the elderly), which in some cases are also linked to cost overruns for households. As we will see below, the people from the settlement remain united to execute the most important projects, but also to strengthen their bonds through the promotion of community processes of mutual support.



MANAGEMENT, COMMUNITY ACTION, AND FORMS OF ORGANIZATION



The *City and Peace* project started from the fact that *Brisas de las Palmas* is a community who share interests and ideas, and they are marked by impoverishment, social exclusion and, mainly, by the lack of a home of their own. As presented in the previous sections, the management capacity of this community to build the neighborhood is evident, and activities to strengthen the bonds of solidarity among neighbors continue to be important.

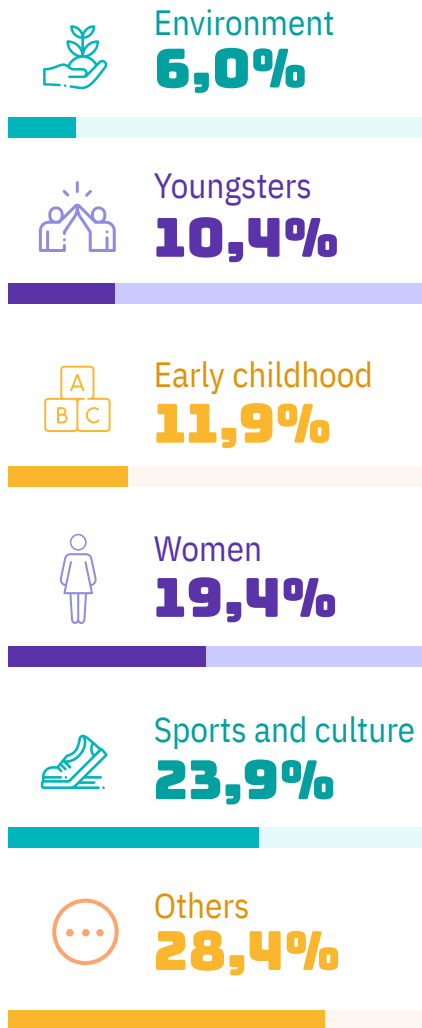
In this research, **community management was understood as a process through which the inhabitants of the neighborhood have developed, autonomously, a set of strategies and actions involving various social actors to achieve a common goal related to well-being.**

As can be seen in Graph 13, the community recognizes the organizational processes underway, led mainly by women. They have had an active participation in actions and decision-making about projects to improve the sector, as well as in the capacity to encourage solidarity work to achieve better living conditions.

Through community management processes, many projects have been carried out: hiring a topographer for the land allocation process, defining the location of the neighborhood park, building the community center, establishing the community dining room, installation of aqueduct and sewerage networks, installation of power poles, and paving some of the streets, among others.

When the power grid was to be installed, we had to go down to pick up the poles. There was a large group of women there. We dragged those poles, it was quite hard, but we had the energy (Mónica, woman, 33 years old).

Graph 13 Organizational and community processes



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).



Photograph 19. Panoramic view of the neighborhood in process of consolidation
Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.

Building a neighborhood from scratch implies dialogue, mediation, building consensus, management, coordination, and resistance. It is about moving forward with a community project that is often outside the interests or plans of the institutions. That is, community management is a constant negotiation between different internal and external stakeholders throughout the consolidation of a common project. In this case, the gradual construction of a neighborhood by its inhabitants.

The participation of different actors in various areas associated with self-management and settlement upgrading strengthens leadership and individual and collective skills to work towards common goals. It promotes coexistence and can even have an impact on improving the economic and social conditions of residents.

I had to tell people to mark their lots, and that we had to unite because if we did not, we would be expelled from there. We had to fight for the neighborhood through legal channels, not quarrel [with the authorities]. We had to be united! (Luis Ary, man, 60 years old).

Everyone did sewers, paving, and all that in their block. People got together because the neighborhood was growing. This neighborhood is not dangerous, there are a lot of kids in the park. It is a very nice place to live with a family atmosphere (Luis, man, 60 years old).

The sense of belonging and participation of the members of a community make community management a scenario of co-creation to materialize the yearnings of social and economic improvement. Collective efforts contribute not only to improve the quality of life, but also to the construction of a more equitable society. In the case of *Brisas de las Palmas*, community management involved a series of actions summarized below:

- Agree to work together for a common purpose
- Coordinate joint actions
- Arrange inter-institutional meetings
- Find a balance in complex situations
- Mediate and make agreements when internal conflicts occurred (peaceful resolution)
- Achieve the economic and political sustainability of projects
- Identify an efficient way to organize (committees, groups, *mingas*,⁹ etc.)
- Consolidate support networks and strategic contacts
- Raise funds, obtain construction materials, and procure free labor among community members and neighbors.
- Political education and development of management and leadership skills.

9 The word *minga*, from Quechua, refers to the gathering of diverse actors, knowledge, and tools in search of a common goal. It is a term widely used by ethnic communities in Colombia and South American countries and has already been incorporated into the Dictionary of Real Academia de la Lengua Española.

Based on these actions, we found evidence of the management capacity of the residents:

- Autonomous development and management of the community to consolidate the neighborhood
- Dedication and willingness to work collaboratively
- Valuation of joint learning to make the necessary adjustments to materialize their housing project
- Conviction to build a safe, peaceful, and livable space for their children
- Articulated work between the community, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and academia that creates opportunities for all the stakeholders involved
- Establishment of adequate channels of communication internally and with institutions that can support them in some respects
- Planning political and policy negotiation strategies
- Definition of community and negotiation objectives
- Acceptance of differences as long as they do not affect the common goal.
- Legitimacy of the people who exercise community leadership

The main tools for organization in the consolidation process of *Brisas de las Palmas* are intuition and common sense to get things done. Since the institutions do not have recognized the neighborhood legally, the communities have organized themselves into interest groups to achieve their objectives: housing, water, roads, and energy committees. As noted in the previous section, as basic needs are met, community work structures move towards objectives more closely linked to the well-being of residents e.g., food, education, sports, culture, the environment, and income generation.

We organized ourselves by groups and by street. There was [for example] the money group; we thought of activities to collect funds, we did them and with the collected money we did whatever was needed (Francy, woman, 49 years old).

Organizational processes have allowed the community to inhabit the neighborhood through the appropriation of spaces, and to territorialize socioeconomic and cultural processes, which emerge in response to multiple needs. Hence, the construction of a solid community fabric is a frequent response in self-built neighborhoods given the need to solve common problems. The new housing scenario demands quick and creative responses to issues such as the urgency to build solid housing, to have utilities, and to fight poverty and daily crises. New forms of action, relationship, and representation appear; they accelerate social, spatial, and cultural changes. **In the case of *Brisas de las Palmas*, this first ‘weaving community’ action allows them to mobilize using various strategies to consolidate their own habitat, and to guarantee housing for their children.**

As shown in Figure 7, the current forms of organization correspond to a second phase of community management, one that focuses on guaranteeing the well-being of the inhabitants. These organizational processes, which generate multiple relationships, have been consolidated in the territory through specific groups as follows: **groups with identity affinity** (members of the LGTBIQ+ community and the group of senior citizens), **support groups for vulnerable populations** (children and adolescents, e.g., the community dining room, the soccer team, and the art school), and **mutual support groups** (the women’s network). One way or another they are connected to each other.

Despite many self-managed neighborhoods like *Brisas de las Palmas* have a high degree of organization, there are common difficulties associated with community management processes. For example, if neighborhood leaders fail to grow interest in other community members to share the workload, or fail to find a new generation of people willing to work for common goals, there may be a weakening of solidarity ties, loss of external support, and breakup of community-based groups and organizations.

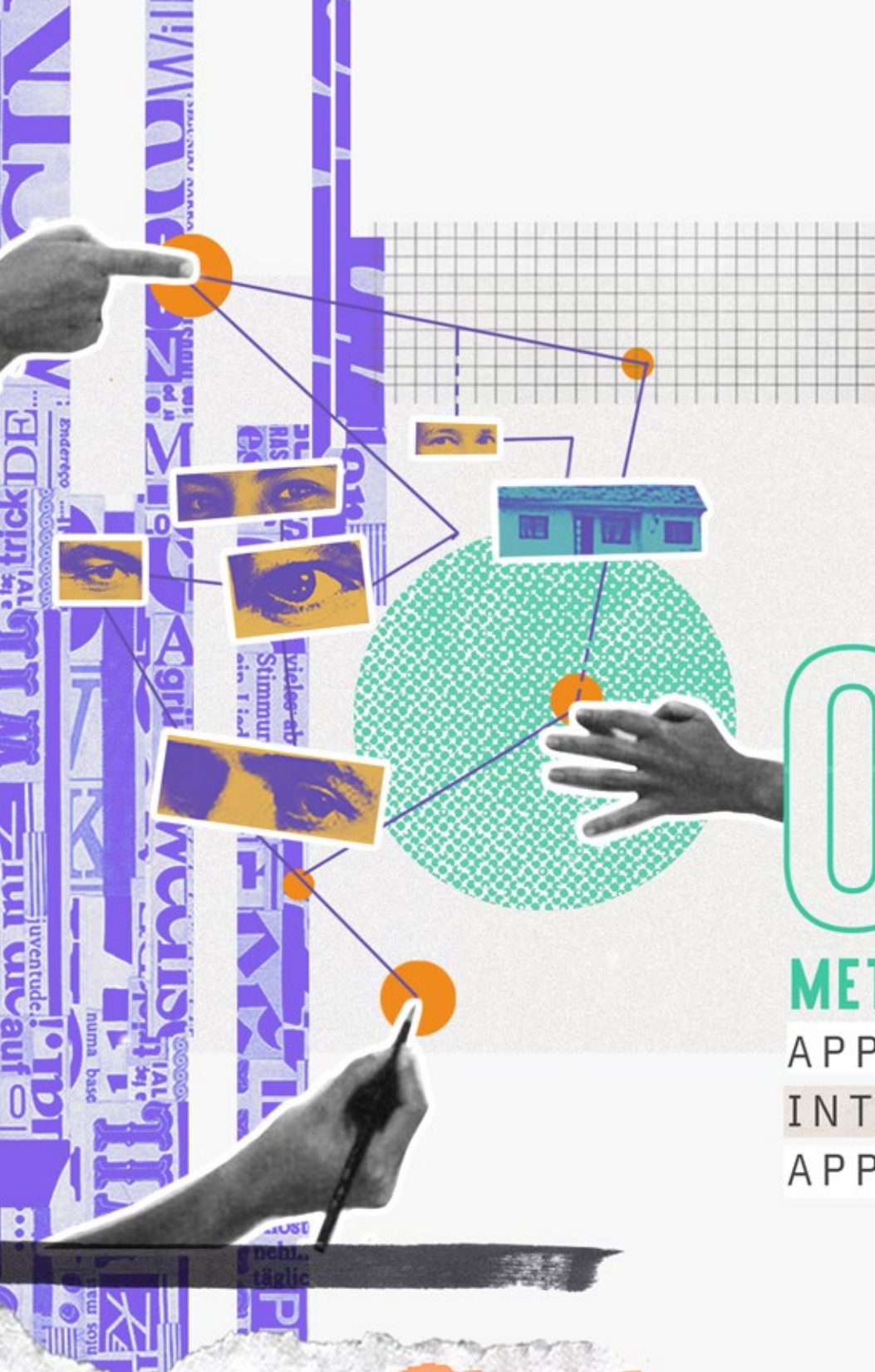


Figure 7. Forms of community organization

Another difficulty that may arise is the absence of technical support in construction processes such as street paving or the extension of drinking water, energy, or sewage networks. It is also essential to define the location of housing or infrastructure to prevent them from being in high-risk areas or environmentally protected land. In most cases, communities do not have specific knowledge about construction, environmental fragility, or risk management. They have to invest more money than necessary, have later problems with the infrastructure due to the poor quality of the works carried out, or even total loss due to a wrong location.

Patronage practices are also common in self-managed neighborhoods because, for a community with so many needs, it is difficult to refuse unofficial support from politicians. However, because of these practices, the opportunity to carry out settlement upgrading processes with the support of official institutions can also be lost, especially if corrupt political powers see the *status quo* as an opportunity to take advantage.

In a framework of solidarity work and community ties as strong as those of *Brisas de las Palmas*, and to avoid common problems, it is essential to strengthen community management and organization through alliances with the public and private sectors, academia, and the third sector. These institutions, in addition to provide technical support, can help improve processes considering local knowledge and leadership as starting points.



03

METHODS TO
APPLY THE
INTERSECTIONAL
APPROACH



Intersectionality was applied to the *City and Peace* project through the participatory action research method. This posed a complex challenge: to develop a set of instruments and tools to use the intersectional approach for designing a comprehensive habitat improvement strategy and articulating knowledge and experiences of residents with creative planning and territorial management instruments. Applied to a particular case, the intersectional approach allows us to overlap identities. The result are analysis criteria that go beyond the individual character traditionally given to this approach and incorporate territorial and community categories. These categories include forms of organization and interaction with the territory they inhabit, and exclusion factors such as violence due to the armed conflict and socio-spatial segregation.

To apply the intersectional approach to the case study, the guiding principles and challenges were:

- **Addressing the intersectional approach in context.** What may be an object of oppression for some people, may be a privilege for others. The initial approach to the neighborhood was aimed at understanding its social configuration, its spatial-territorial codes, its forms of expression and communication, to broaden the view and perception of what it means to inhabit an informal settlement. The challenge was to understand the settlement away from the existing prejudices and stigmas about the sector.
- **Defining our own categories.** Given the complexity involved in materializing the intersectional approach in urban studies and empirically developing the theory, we defined our own categories, which will be presented in detail below.
- **Designing methodologies and raising questions according to the object of study.** To promote the use of the intersectional approach in the MIH process, it was necessary to design specific methodologies to address the psycho-spatial dimension in the urban analysis and to go beyond conventional methods focused on the physical-spatial dimension.
- **Measuring well-being in the absence of privilege.** In an informal settlement such as *Brisas de las Palmas*, with great strengths in community terms, but visible deficits in aspects such as infrastructure, institutional support, and public investment, well-being was measured based on the life experiences and feelings of its inhabitants. This is because, at first glance, the neighborhood can be read as a place marked by exclusion and inequality. In order not to position intersectionality as a synonym of oppressions or sum of disadvantage factors, it was necessary to permanently try to understand the emotions and experiences of well-being amid the difficult realities the inhabitants of the neighborhood face.

To raise these principles and challenges, it was fundamental the allusion made by Mara Viveros (2016) on the work of Jacques Derrida about the risk that can be incurred if intersectional theory falls into an academic-capitalist narrative in which intersectionality is mentioned, but ‘stripped of its concreteness, context, and history, and therefore of its political impetus’ (p. 15). In this sense, the *City and Peace* project was based on the idea that the application of this approach should have a deep and well-grounded meaning to people and specific population groups involved in urban processes such as ISU.

As a practical contribution of the project, we present a series of quantitative and qualitative methods developed specifically to apply the intersectional approach in the MIH process in *Brisas de las Palmas*. To put these methods into practice, **we established as a central principle that participants have an active and constructive voice in the development of both individual and collective activities.** Thus, participation was aimed at getting to know the positions, opinions, and reflections; to promote respect and appreciation of differences; to encourage dialogues that would give an account of the expertise and experiences of the participants; and to actively and critically observe to learn other languages, beyond words, and incorporate them in the systematization process of the project.

In some activities, the observer was limited to paying attention, sharpening the senses, and perceiving the encounter in an attentive manner without modifying or controlling the space. In others, there was a more direct and open interaction between the *Universidad del Valle* team and the people of the neighborhood. This combination of methods made it possible to capture dynamics, experiences, practices, codes, and forms of relationships of those who live in *Brisas de las Palmas*, taking intersectionality as a cross-cutting notion. Likewise, the methods implemented enabled the construction of the specific products presented in Chapter 4 by processing the information obtained in the workshops, interviews, and tours; the socioeconomic characterization survey; and other activities described below.



TIMELINE



Since the memories of the neighborhood are intangible and fragmented because they are part of the imaginary of each inhabitant, we proposed a time-line-building workshop to chronologically organize the experiences, milestones, and achievements of the leaders and the community participation processes. In a little more than two decades, this area of the city went from being a wasteland to a fully consolidated neighborhood, as can be seen in the satellite photographs of 2001 and 2021.

To build the timeline, a large-format paper was installed on one of the walls of the community center. It only contained a horizontal line with the years in boxes; there, the participants placed photographs and maps they brought to the workshop. Based on what people put on the paper, the facilitators promoted conversations to obtain more details about the history of the neighborhood, important events that took place there, and actions that required collective work. The information obtained during this activity was later processed in the TimelineJS software¹⁰, which enables associating images and data easily and visualizing the information in an organized manner (Figure 8).

The second objective of this activity, which included maps of the neighborhood built by the *City and Peace* project team, was to explore how the inhabitants perceive their territory. This transcended the physical-spatial dimension and allowed us to learn about emotions, sensations, and meanings of collective spaces; those that people identify as relevant places in the neighborhood.

¹⁰ This free *software developed* by the Knight Lab at Northwestern University, United States, was designed to facilitate the construction of interactive timelines through a user-friendly interface with online data storage and visualization.



Photographs 20 and 21. *Brisas de las Palmas* in 2001 and 2021.
Source: satellite photos from Google Earth, 2021.



Figure 8. Timeline in TimelineJS

SOCIOECONOMIC SURVEY WITH AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH



The socioeconomic characterization survey was conducted by the Secretariat of Social Housing and Habitat, and *Universidad del Valle* during the last quarter of 2021. It consisted of a questionnaire of eleven sections and 100 questions. It was applied using the KoBoToolbox software¹¹ (Figure 9). This open-source software can be used on small devices such as cell phones and tablets, which facilitates the work of surveyors and reduces data collection costs by not requiring special equipment. Among other functionalities, this tool allows to geolocate the surveys, take pictures, store the information in real time, or save it if the device does not have internet access. These functionalities make data management fast and practical, since databases are automatically generated and ready to be processed from the moment the information is uploaded.

- The socioeconomic characterization survey had five purposes:
- Understand the population of the neighborhood and the perception of its inhabitants in various aspects, mainly on quality of life.
- Obtain information on the socioeconomic situation of the households.
- Determine the quality of the houses by observation; the surveyors had parameters for the general evaluation. The software made it possible to attach photographs of each dwelling.
- Ascertain the housing and land tenure situation by incorporating a module in the survey to attach documentation in this regard.
- Learn about the perception of community participation, security, and coexistence.

11 Free access platform whose development was supported by USAID, IRC, and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) to promote a humanitarian data collection tool with unlimited storage.

The starting point to create the questionnaire was the survey used by the Secretariat of Social Housing and Habitat, which had been applied by officials to characterize informal settlements in rural and urban areas. In agreement with the Secretariat, **additional questions were incorporated to include the intersectional approach, based on the use of variables that would allow to cross-reference conventional socioeconomic information** (gender, head of household, age, educational attainment, household income, housing tenure, among others) **with other aspects such as ethnic-racial affiliation, origin, functional diversity, direct or indirect effects of the armed conflict, home care responsibilities, accessibility and mobility, quality of common spaces, existence of organizations, perception of the neighborhood and its functioning, as well as levels and spaces of community participation.**

As will be presented in Chapter 4, the analysis of data and cross-references resulting from the intersectional approach unveiled oppression and well-being factors that have direct and indirect repercussions on the lives of *Brisas de las Palmas*' residents. Thanks to the underlying information obtained by including the intersectional approach in the survey, the data collected in the case study became relevant to formulate the ISU Program pilot in the neighborhoods prioritized by the Mayor's Office in District 18, and to improve communication with the community, so they feel understood and included in the territorial planning processes.



Figure 9. Example of displaying survey questions on a mobile phone



QUALITATIVE METHODS



Semi-structured interviews with leaders

The semi-structured interviews were designed to enable fluent one-on-one conversations with fifteen leaders identified in the sector (Photo 22). Open and closed questions were used as reference to record the dynamics of community management in the consolidation of the neighborhood. The purpose of using this instrument was to inquire about unique elements related to how the community fabric and integration were achieved since they led to the development of the neighborhood through self-management processes. The aim was to explore what made these people like-minded and how trust, recognition, and leadership were built.

The questions that guided the interviews were structured in two parts. The first focused on general data such as time of residence, reasons for arriving in the neighborhood, place of origin, how the interviewee became involved in unpaid community work, and how he/she thought *Brisas de las Palmas* was perceived by citizens who have not had close contact with hillside settlements. The second part inquired about the activities and projects led by the interviewees, the impact of these projects on peace building, and dreams about the future of the neighborhood.

Focus groups

In the *City and Peace* project, the focus group method was aimed at documenting the of community management dynamics in the construction of the neighborhood to determine the singularities of the groups and their specific contributions to community integration processes. Six focus groups were made with the following organizations:



Photograph 22. Interviews with leaders from *Brisas de las Palmas*
Source: Danny Ramírez, 2021.

- Fundación Creando futuros con amor
- Equipo de Fútbol Brisas FC
- Organización LGTBIQ+ Equality
- Organización para la Atención al Adulto Mayor Nuevo Amanecer
- Red de mujeres
- Escuela de Arte Star dance

The focus groups allowed us to characterize the existing forms of organization in the neighborhood, and to learn about the experiences and initiatives they have been carrying out under the logic of territorial peace building. Thus, we could explore their perception of the community processes based on their own experience. This method also served to document the micro- and macro-oppressions perceived by the members of the organizations at both individual and collective level.

Workshops with children and youth

Working with children and youth posed multiple challenges. The first was to carry out actions without harm, and the second was to use the right mechanisms to learn about their perceptions on neighborhood peace building, oppression, and wellbeing based on their personal experiences. Workshops were conducted using playful and non-verbal expression techniques like games, drawing, conversations, and representations of everyday situations. Such languages are means by which, in a natural or guided way, children and young people understand, interpret, and represent their social environment. In this way, both verbal and graphic narratives were included to create stories about the participants' relationships of well-being and oppression.

To achieve the objectives of the workshops, it was necessary to put into dialogue the interdisciplinary nature of the work team and refine the methodology to find creative ways of approaching a wide age range: the group was made up of people between 4 and 17 years old. In this exploration, drawing, painting, color, and play were fundamental, as they allowed us to find common areas of interest. We could say that participants talked about their environment in a comfortable atmosphere of fun and friendship.

For the *City and Peace* team, it was essential to approach different scenarios and conversations with the children and young people of the neighborhood, since they are less cautious about “political correctness” and tend to be more open in their dialogues, perceptions, and readings of their context. The conversations during the workshops provided the participants with new ways of seeing and understanding their surroundings and life in the neighborhood.



A useful method for working with children and youth is to divide them into subgroups by similar ages. This allows them to work with their peers and feel more comfortable, while facilitators can fine-tune the objectives and contents to be addressed with each group. <<

Photography 23. Workshop with boys and girls
Source: Danny Ramírez, 2021.

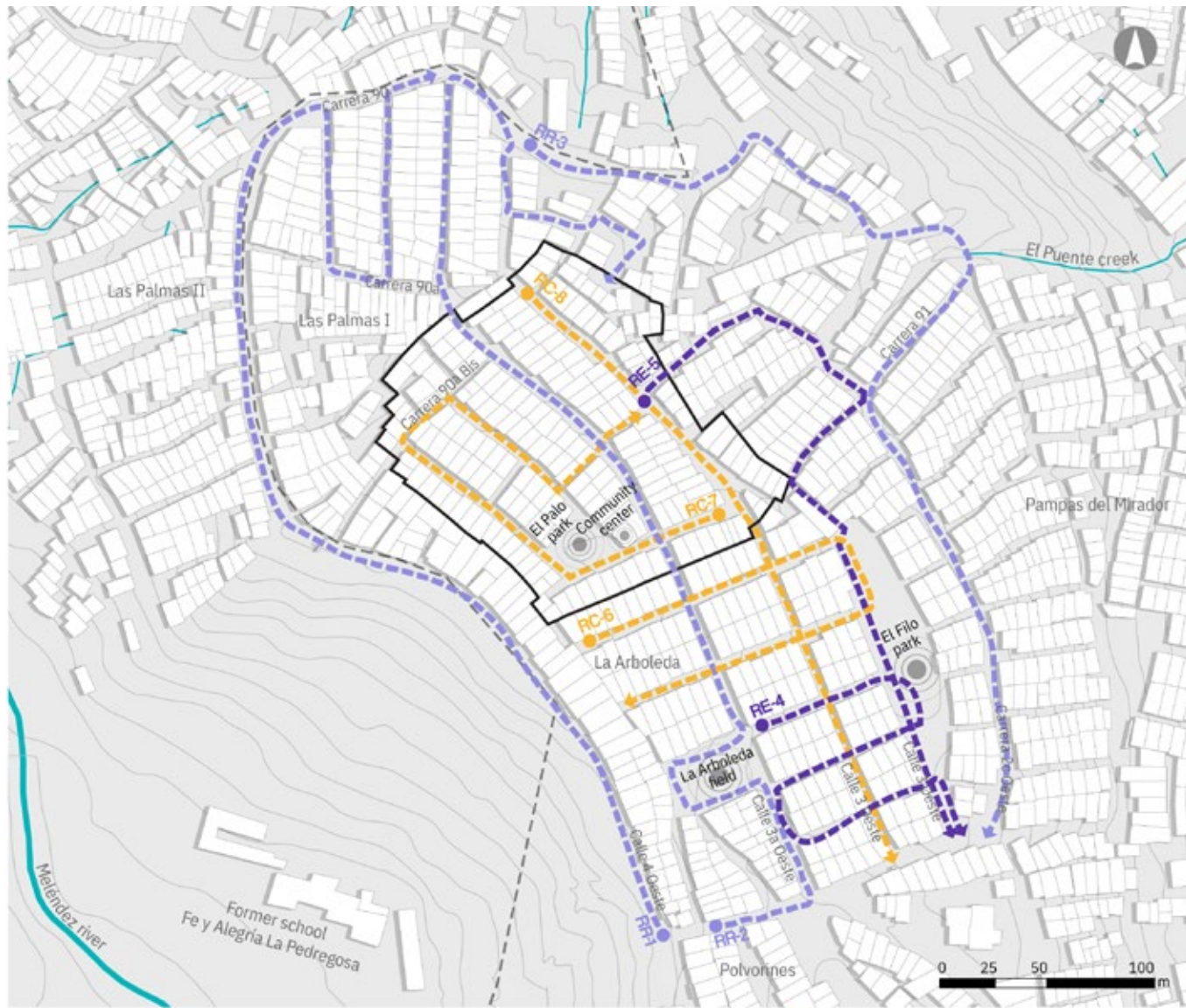
Neighborhood tours

At the methodological level, the neighborhood tours were proposed as spaces for exchange and informal approach to the community, to learn individual and collective particularities firsthand, and to obtain data for the intersectional spatial analysis.

With this method, we were able to obtain a complete vision of the territory and expand the stories through informal conversations because it is a common daily practice and typical of local customs. This was done under the following methodological guidelines: 1) to be accompanied by a leader of the sector to take advantage of their detailed knowledge of the territory and their ability to interact and include the community in the process; 2) to maintain active attention and listening; 3) to carry out participant observation, take notes in the field log and prepare cartography. A total of eight neighborhood tours were conducted, with different objectives depending on the stage of the project.

The first tours had the purpose of recognizing the place and familiarizing the work team with the urban structure of the neighborhood, getting to know its residents in context and having conversations about the space with leaders. Subsequently, tours connected to the semi-structured interviews were conducted in places recognized as strategic by the people, such as the day care center, the community dining room, and *El Palo* park. At a later stage, we conducted tours to take pictures and collect photos and other graphic inputs about the neighborhood, e.g., maps, books, and drawings that people had in their homes. The conversations that emerged during this activity focused on neighborhood peace building, perception of the environment, the city, and the habitat (Map 1).

At the end of this activity, we were able to confirm that the neighborhood tours were a successful strategy to get closer to the community. Walking together enabled a more horizontal relationship between those who live in the neighborhood and the project researchers.



◆◆ Reconnaissance route
(RR-1, RR-2, RR-3)

◆◆ Semi-structured interview route
(RE-4, RE-5)

◆◆ Conversation and photography route
(RC-6, RC-7, RC-8)

○ Brisas de las Palmas

○ Urban growth boundary

Map 1. Tours made in the neighborhood



Photograph 24. Encounter at *El Palo park* captured from the air
Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.

Exchange of experiences

The exchange of experiences took place in different spaces shared with the community. The project team supported some activities organized by the neighborhood leaders. This exchange allowed the inhabitants of *Brisas de las Palmas* to recall their stories and tell, from their experiences, the development process of the neighborhood.

Although there were specific methodologies for how, when, and where to obtain information throughout the project, spontaneous moments of interaction with the community were also crucial. Informal spaces such as the minutes between workshops, talks during meals and when cleaning the community center before and after the workshops, as well as outdoor conversations in significant spaces for the community like *El Palo park*, provided invaluable information about the people and their environment. This information facilitated a more comprehensive and sensitive reading and interpretation of daily life in *Brisas de las Palmas*.



THE INTERSECTIONAL MATRIX



In dynamic territories such as informal settlements, the categories of socio-spatial analysis vary according to each context. Hence, an adequate selection for each territory is essential to carry out a work adjusted to the social, economic, and cultural realities. In this regard, resorting to the intersectional approach to identify how the categories and their variables interact in the generation of oppressions or well-being, implies a deep understanding of social structures, but, mainly, a joint work with the communities.

In *Brisas de las Palmas*, we found unique characteristics thanks to the accompaniment of its inhabitants. Thus, the intersectional matrix, which was based on theoretical models, must be complete enough to allow multivariate socio-spatial analyses and the application of novel research methods that would provide new knowledge for ISU processes. Using those methodological tools, we laid the foundations to define the categories of analysis that make up the intersectional matrix designed for the case study. They become a reference to conduct ISU projects that look for more holistic results.

Categories of analysis

The construction of the intersectional matrix was based on race, gender, and class because they were found in the first theoretical explorations and implied a constant dialogue and adjustments until finding new categories to interpret *Brisas de las Palmas'* social and territorial reality. First, it was necessary to search for theories on intersectionality in the Colombian context. Authors such as Mara Viveros (2009), Fernando Urrea and Daniel Echeverry (2015), and Orlando Fals Borda (2013) refer to race and class as an **ethnic-racial** category; Monica Iza (2018) defines **territoriality** as essential in **peacebuilding**; and Vera Rodrigues (2013) highlights the importance of referring to the **armed conflict** from an intersectional analysis.

The last four categories served as the basis to complement the initial matrix considering the specific conditions of the case study. It has the following characteristics: informal settlement built by self-management, peripheral, population with economic restrictions, high presence of ethnic communities, high number of residents who arrived because of forced displacement due to the armed conflict, community leadership, household responsibilities concentrated in women, and high levels of organization for community projects management. Based on the combination of categories proposed both in the theories and in the findings, seven categories represented in the form of a *mandala*¹² were proposed as a framework of intersectional analysis for the *City and Peace* project (Figure 10).

As mentioned above, **the project contributes to intersectionality theories by going beyond the individual categories of gender and ethno-racial belonging, which are also incorporated, and including territorial and community categories into the analysis, e.g., community management, socio-spatial segregation, violence and armed conflict, territorial peace, and city and transition areas.** The resulting intersectional matrix enables a comprehensive understanding of a territory and its inhabitants, so that ISU processes transcend the physical-spatial dimension. It also leads to include key aspects to improve the quality of life in poor neighborhoods, such as the socioeconomic and psycho-spatial dimensions, aiming to reduce the impact of phenomena such as inequity, violence, exclusion, segregation, and discrimination.

12 *Mandala* is a word of Sanskrit origin and means 'circle'. Used in Buddhism and Hinduism, the mandala represents unity, infinity of the universe and harmony.

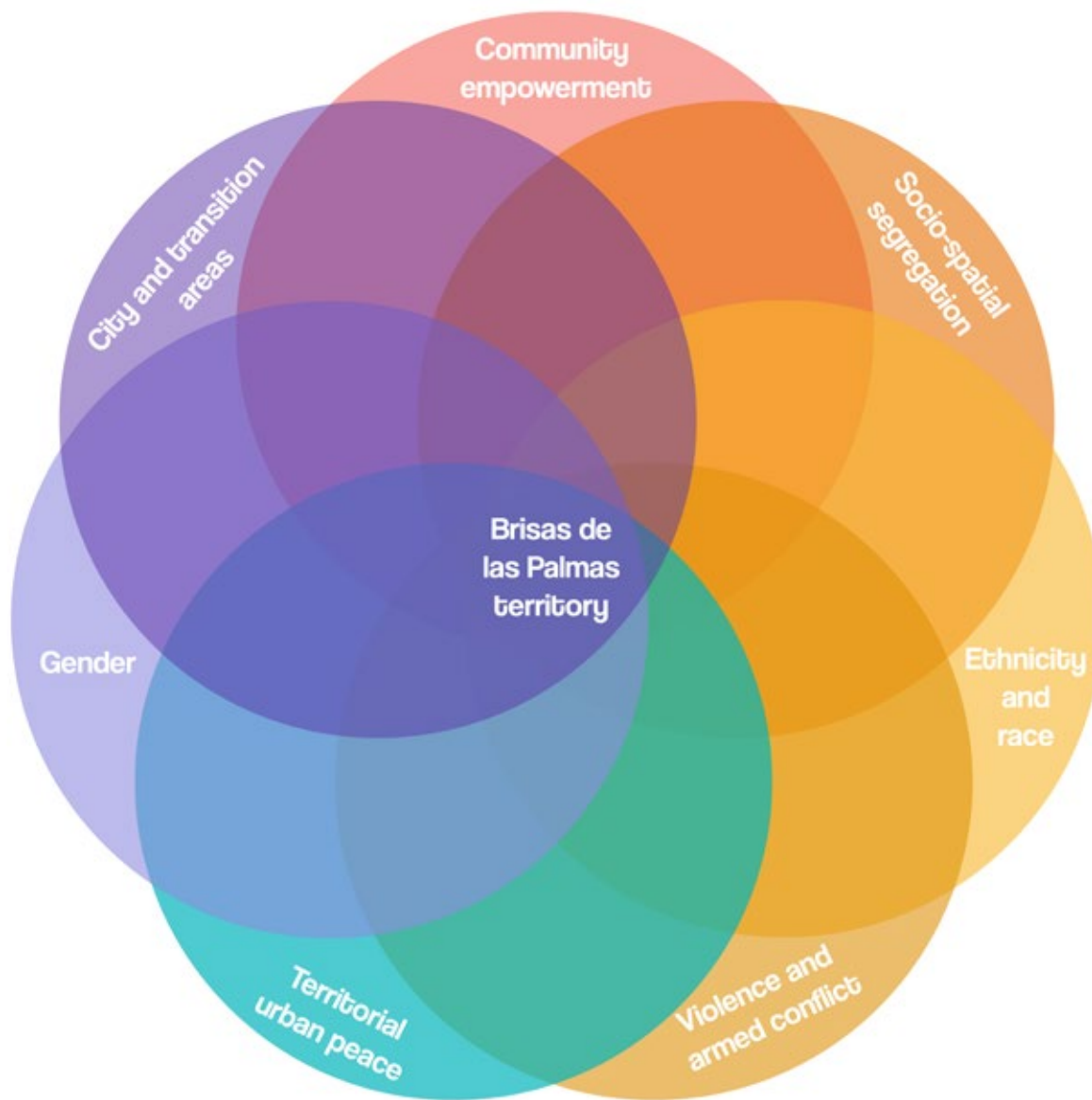


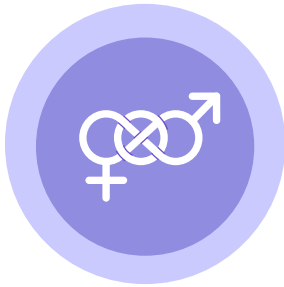
Figure 10. Categories of analysis proposed in the *City and Peace* project.

Categories focused on the individual



Ethno-racial belonging:

Mara Viveros (2009) explains the importance of this category for intersectional studies in Colombia because of the historical oppressions and discriminations of class and race that Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities have suffered. In Cali, according to the results of the Population and Housing Census conducted by the National Department of Statistics (DANE) in 2018, the location of ethnic minorities such as Afro-descendants and indigenous people coincides with the poorest areas of the city on the eastern and western borders. As observed in the results of the socioeconomic survey, in *Brisas de las Palmas*, 40.5% of the residents recognized themselves as black, mulatto, Afro-descendant or indigenous; a significant number when compared to Cali or the national total.



Gender:

The *City and Peace* project findings showed the importance of women's leadership and empowerment in the construction of the neighborhood. In *Brisas de las Palmas*, a high number of women are heads of households and a significant number exercise a leadership role in community affairs, as well as in income generation both for their households and for neighborhood projects. A small but organized community of LGTBIQ+ people was also identified, they should be considered and made visible in the analysis.

Categories focused on community and territory



Community management:

Community action is linked to mutual aid principles that seek solutions to common problems in self-managed informal settlements. There, the State has implicitly delegated the development of housing and basic infrastructure projects to their residents. This is important in the intersectional matrix because it allows us to understand the local collaborative work dynamics associated with categories such as race, gender, violence and armed conflict, segregation, and peace building.



City and transition areas:

Although conventional urban planning systems are based on building and land use regulations designed for the formal city, there are other forms of occupation at the edges. They are transition areas between the formal and informal city, where the implementation of ISU programs with an intersectional approach is required so that the solutions proposed can improve several territorial dimensions simultaneously. In these areas, self-management is the most powerful mechanism to meet needs not covered by the State.



Socio-spatial segregation:

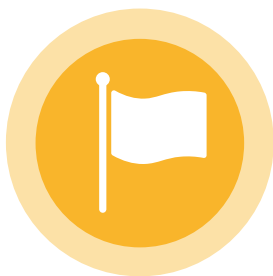
It is a common phenomenon in Latin American cities. Its historical antecedents in the region date back to the colonial era, when social differences were reflected on the spatial divisions of cities marked by class and racial conditions. In the case of Cali, as historian Edgar Vásquez explains, after an exponential population growth during the first half of the twentieth century and under a segregationist urban development pattern, two cities were defined: ‘the space of the “excluded”, as a ring surrounding Cali along the hills and the banks of the Cauca River; and the city of the “included” in the interior’ (2001, p. 4). *Brisas de las Palmas* is in the city of ‘the excluded,’ on the western slope mentioned by Vásquez.

Categories focused on community and territory



Territorial urban peace:

The transition to peace in Colombia has been linked in recent years to the Peace Agreements signed between the Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrillas in 2016. However, they focused on rural areas and left aside specific strategies to consolidate urban territorial peace. Considering that more than 230,000 victims of the armed conflict have sought refuge in Cali,¹³ and that many of them belong to ethnic minorities and have arrived in a condition of vulnerability, informal settlements are important recipients of this population. As demonstrated by the data and testimonies of its inhabitants, *Brisas de las Palmas* is no exception.



Violence and armed conflict:

The armed conflict has been going on in Colombia for more than fifty years. It has had most direct repercussions in rural areas where territorial disputes between illegal groups, the lack of State presence, and the lack of socioeconomic opportunities and equity have exacerbated the migration of peasants to the cities. To this extent, urban areas have also been affected by the conflict because they have been the recipients of displaced poor people, who have found refuge on the outskirts of cities, in high-risk areas (dangerous natural phenomena), or in ecologically fragile areas. Many of the people who have arrived in Cali in conditions of forced displacement or as migrants in search of opportunities belong to ethnic communities from the Pacific and Andean regions, particularly from the west and southwest of the country, as shown in Figure 6.

Matrix validation

The discussion on the intersectional matrix was based on the analysis of each element raised in the work scenarios with the community and the changes arising from the permanent interaction. The refined version of the matrix, under the principle of action without harm, required a last stage of validation. It was made in a final workshop in which the participants learned, through experiences, stories, anecdotes or opinions, the relationship between each category of analysis and daily life in the neighborhood (Photograph 25).

There were two key moments in the project regarding trust-building and community outreach to create the matrix. The first was the presentation and discussion of the results on several occasions. The second was the validation workshop, in which the work done by the community without external recognition was highlighted. In this workshop, it was possible to assign a leading role to people who have contributed most directly to the consolidation of the neighborhood and the construction of community ties.

The results of the validation workshop were significant for the parties. They allowed the inhabitants of the neighborhood to recognize their contributions, and to see the consolidation of their entire journey as a community managing a territory. They could also measure what they have done and achieved in two decades since the settlement process started. It allowed the *Universidad del Valle* team to obtain a solid base to continue the systematization and documentation stages of the process.

COMMUNITY MAPPING OF INTERSECTIONALITY



One of the greatest challenges the *City and Peace* project faced in methodological terms was the **conceptualization and design of strategies to create maps of the built environment that could reflect the intersectional approach. These maps should be valid instruments for decision making on territorial planning in the framework of ISU processes.**

As a first step for the intersectional mapping, a series of tours and participatory cartography workshops were designed to learn perceptions, emotions, sensations, meaning of collective spaces and places identified as relevant by specific population groups.



Photograph 26. Community mapping workshop
Source: Luisa Fernanda Afanador, 2021.

These activities were carried out with groups of women, the LGTBIQ+ community, leaders, senior citizens, children and youth, community mothers, and athletes.

The second step was the construction of a base map in a geographic information system (GIS) using the QGIS¹⁴ open software. The places that people recognized as relevant spaces for both the community and individuals were pointed in it, based on their experiences (Map 2).

This base map was a fundamental tool for the workshops because people were quickly able to familiarize with the cartography and locate themselves spatially on it. However, given the complexity for reading and visualizing results on a technical map by the communities in general, an isometry was developed to allow a better spatial understanding and to show the characteristics of the neighborhood more clearly, for instance, the undulating topography and the natural and built environment (Isometry 2). In this isometry the points recognized by the community were also located to obtain the base map in 3D.

The thematic tours by interest groups continued once the cartographic base in two and three dimensions was ready. The tours enabled the creation of eight maps with different attributes of the final intersectional matrix. They were the basis to subsequently cluster oppressions, wellbeing, community management, and prospective spaces into four synthesis maps. The details of the mapping are presented later in the results chapter.

14 Open access geographic information system to visualize, analyze, and publish geospatial information.



- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ● Facilities | ● Mobility | ● Public space and environment | ● Conflict areas |
| Community center | Moto-taxi stop | Recycling area | Water catchment |
| Minuto de Dios School | BRT-MIO stop | Playground/park | Unused water tank |
| Alto Polvorines Health Center | Gualas stop | Road erosión | Urban growth boundary |
| | | Homicide area | Theft area |
| | | Waste conamination area | Area of drug use |
| | | Brisas de las Palmas | |

Map 2. 2D Location of spaces relevant to the community

— Methods to apply the intersectional approach —



- | ● Facilities | ● Mobility | ● Public space and environment | ● Conflict areas |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Community center | Moto-taxi stop | Recycling area | Homicide area |
| Minuto de Dios School | BRT-MIO stop | Playground/park | Waste contamination area |
| Alto Polvorines Health Center | Gualas stop | Road erosion | Theft area |
| | | Water catchment | Area of drug use |
| | | Unused water tank | Brisas de las Palmas |
| | | Urban growth boundary | |

Isometry 2. 3D location of spaces relevant to the community



INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING PROGRAM

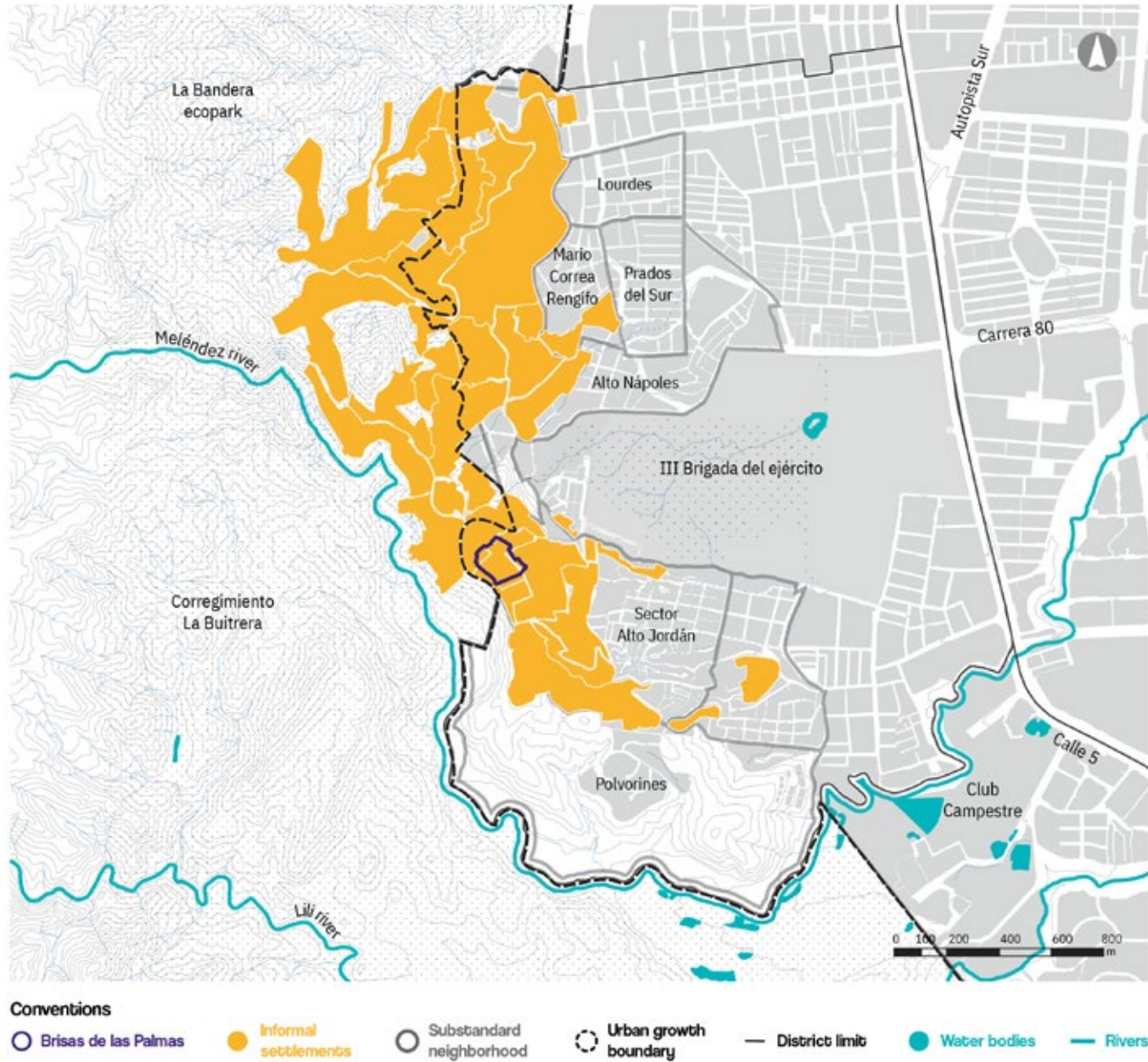


The Secretariat of Social Housing and Habitat and *Universidad del Valle* formulated the ISU Program based on the contributions of the *City and Peace* and GREAT¹⁵ research projects, and the detailed diagnosis of the hillside area carried out in 2020. This program covers District 18 and its surroundings, an area of 390 hectares between urban and rural land, including *Brisas de las Palmas* (Map 3). The program focuses on improving the so-called Incompletely Developed Human Settlements (AHDI by its Spanish acronym), whose name was officially adopted in Cali in the Comprehensive Habitat Upgrading Policy (Municipal Council of Santiago de Cali, Agreement 0411 of 2017) to refer to neighborhoods of informal origin that require diverse actions to improve the quality of life of their inhabitants, reduce risks due to natural hazards, and protect environmental structures.

In methodological terms, the program integrated the intersectional view of the territory, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the guidelines of the Decalogue for Participatory Slum Upgrading with the current territorial plans and occupation of the territory derived from the practices of social construction of the habitat predominating in the upper part of the district (Figure 11). This enabled the design of a project-based structure addressing the zonal scale (structuring projects, SP), the sectoral scale (transversal projects, TP) and the neighborhood scale (nodes, N).

As will be presented in the results chapter, the projects designed at the three scales covered socioeconomic, environmental, and cadastral risk; and land tenure and functional aspects related to collective spaces (parks, squares, and facilities), mobility and accessibility, utility infrastructure—including internet connectivity—and housing. The program also included, in a very detailed manner, a strategy for citizen participation that established means, instruments, articulating elements (activities, devices, and tools), and a guide with methods to apply the intersectional approach in participatory planning processes.

15 The research *Gridding equitable urban futures in areas of transition in Cali and Havana (GREAT)*, conducted by Lancaster University, University College London, *Universidad del Valle* and *Universidad Tecnológica de La Habana José Antonio Echeverría*, and financed by the United Kingdom Research and Innovation Fund (UKRI), focuses on the analysis of transitions between the formal and informal city, peace building and gap reduction, through strategies of participation and community empowerment with an intersectional approach. *Brisas de las Palmas* is one of the four case studies of the GREAT project.



Map 3. Location of *Brisas de las Palmas* in the area covered by the ISU Program.
Source: data from the Urban Diagnosis of District 18 and surrounding areas (SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2020).

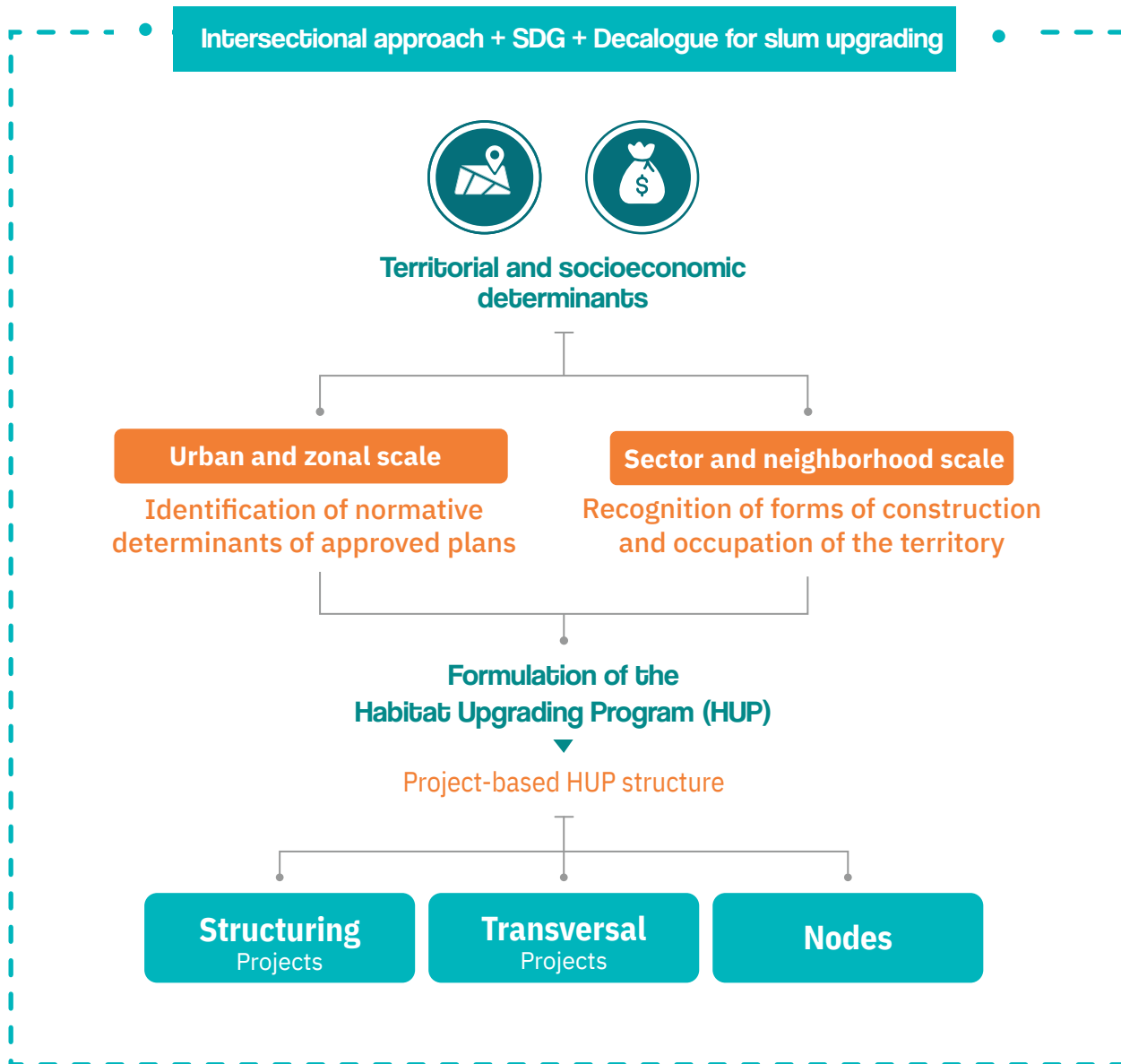


Figure 11. Conceptual model of the ISU Program in District 18 and surrounding areas.
Source: based on SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021.



PARTICIPATORY DESIGN OF COMMUNAL SPACES



In the ISU processes, there is a growing interest in participatory design and the possibilities this method generates in terms of appropriation and care of communal spaces. In the case of *Brisas de las Palmas*, the most significant spaces are *El Palo* park, whose name alludes to the large tree that shades this space (Photograph 27) and the community center (Photograph 28). The latter has a triple role: meeting space, community dining room, and storage for recycling material. The material collected is sold by the women who coordinate the dining room to raise funds to buy supplies and to develop community projects.

Once the information necessary to apply the intersectional approach to the participatory design exercises was collected within the framework of the ISU Program, we implemented the community participation program in the urban and architectural design of the park. The fact that the tours and workshops were held prior to the participatory design exercise ensured a committed participation in a scenario of trust and mutual exchange. With this co-design activity, we sought to know in depth the concerns, problems, and dreams of the community about both the park and the community center.



Photograph 27. *El Palo* park. Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.



Photograph 28. Community center. Source: *City and Peace Archive*, Universidad del Valle, 2021.

The work method was organized in four stages. The first consisted of **analyzing the results obtained in the field work and the workshops on intersectionality**. There, the park was pointed out, simultaneously, as a space of oppression/tension and a space of well-being. The second stage corresponded to the **visit guided by the community for the characterization of the park** with the objective of knowing its precise dimensions, physical limits, topography, and environment. The third stage was a **community workshop, we made a tour and listened to the community's perceptions** of the problems and positive aspects of the park. During this tour, we observed that, despite the precarious condition in terms of materials, finishing, and state of the infrastructure, this space is intensively used from morning to night, every day of the week. We found that *El Palo* park is the heart of the neighborhood and, therefore, it was essential to involve the community in the design of the upgrading project.

Finally, the fourth stage consisted of a second **workshop to discuss urban and architectural design ideas based on a pre-drawing of the park using the information gathered in the previous three stages**. In this workshop, photographs, 3D digital images, plans, and a model were used to open the discussion and receive feedback from the community.

El Palo park is a space of 862 square meters in a slightly sloping topography. Its four edges, although they do not form a regular polygon, are defined by the surrounding buildings (Photograph 29). In addition to being recognized as the most important collective space, respected, and cared for since the neighborhood was founded, it has a large-sized *samán* tree that provides the thermal comfort necessary to make outdoor activities more pleasant.



Photograph 29. Plan view of *El Palo park* and the community center (right side of the tree). Source: Miguel Galeano, *Monoceja*, 2021.



ART, PLAY, AND PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH



I have been working in the district for many years, I am a young leader here. I have a dance school for young people and children [...]. Our strategy is [to use] art to activate the senses. Here in the community, there is a lot of art, and we want to reach many hearts and people through it, so we can be recognized (Willington, man, 33 years old).

Incorporating art and play in the *City and Peace* research was our bet since the inception of the project. We believed it was possible to create spaces for reflection through artistic expressions such as performing arts when working with children and young people. We sought to link this novel strategy as an ISU tool with an intersectional approach to learn perceptions and feelings about the social and physical environment of the neighborhood, as perceived by a specific population with multiple perspectives and experiences.

The methodological proposal was centered on the **action-participation of children and young people with a playful-pedagogical orientation materialized in the creation of theatrical scenes about specific topics**. The workshops began with icebreaker games and exercises to improve group attention. We also worked on observation, teamwork, tempo-rhythm management, rounds, imitation, fantasy, and tongue twisters. Once the group was organized, we defined four topics related to the realities found in the neighborhood, which became the basis for the staging: 1) coexistence and peace culture; 2) discrimination with emphasis on ethnicity and race; 3) consumption of psychoactive substances; and 4) conflict resolution.

The scenes and situations created with the children and young people were the result of improvisations and drama exercises largely based on the daily life and context of the participants. In different sessions, the work focused on the assembly of *tableaux vivants* or 'living paintings', the development

of **narrative games in body photographs**, and the **representation of stories** as modes of expression. Participants were asked to externalize their own feelings and experiences through frozen scenes, photographs, and theatrical representations of stories, respectively, but also collective experiences with which the group could identify.

Using these techniques, we work on daily scenes such as family life, experiences with sports and community activities, and problems derived from racial discrimination and the armed conflict. The children from *Brisas de las Palmas* have not been oblivious to these situations.

The purpose of including the performing arts in the project was to learn more about children and young people and their experiences in the territory, to promote their integration into the dynamics of the neighborhood, and to raise their awareness of their role as peacebuilders. Likewise—through play, teamwork, and creativity—the project aimed to improve the participants’ ability to identify daily conflict situations, so that they can deal with them in a better way and be part of the change.



04

RESULTS:
 MEMORY, DATA,
 NARRATIVES, MAPS
 AND ISU

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	2,30		55	55	4,50
8	}	2,70	50	50	4,80
		2,70	55	55	5
		2,70	60	60	6
		2,70	60	60	6,50
		Grand Centre			5
9	}	3	50	50	5
		3	55	55	6
		3	60	60	6,50
		3	60	60	7
		3,30	50	50	6
		3,30	55	55	7
10	}	3,30	60	60	8
		3,60	50	50	7,50
		3,60	55	55	8,50
11					





Diversifying the methods commonly used in urban studies to include the intersectional approach in ISU programs enables more refined qualitative and quantitative analyses of individuals, communities, and their interactions in and with the territory they inhabit. In the case of *Brisas de las Palmas*, the results presented in this chapter reveal self-management processes, the role that community leaders and organizations have played in the consolidation of the neighborhood, the intersections of disadvantage factors that deepen oppressions, and how they translate into narratives transferred to the territory. This detailed knowledge of socio- and psycho-spatial interactions is a basis to enrich participatory urban design processes and to develop strategies to incorporate urban territorial peace building as the axis of actions in ISU programs.



RECONSTRUCTION OF MEMORY



As mentioned in Chapter 3, the tool used to reconstruct the memory of *Brisas de las Palmas* was a timeline (Figure 12) complemented with interviews and conversations with the inhabitants at different occasions. Although the settlement process took place more than twenty years ago, the history and milestones that marked its development were clear in the memories of the leaders and some residents, who were part of the process. **Intangible memory is very vulnerable, susceptible to being altered, modified, or even erased, and very little had been documented about the origin of the neighborhood.** Faced with this void of information, we saw the opportunity to contribute to the community through the joint construction of a document that would allow them to organize their stories, photographs, and maps in one place.

During the timeline workshop, which was highly valued by the community, the inhabitants recalled significant and emotional events of the neighborhood. Regarding the workshop, the attendees considered that the timeline exercise enabled them to:

- Remember the history of the neighborhood and the place they now have in Cali.
- Make visible the collective power of joining efforts.
- Value community achievements and show the solidarity effort.
- Strengthen the social fabric.
- Inform the new inhabitants about the history of the neighborhood and invigorate the sense of belonging of the new inhabitants.

This process allowed the inhabitants of the neighborhood to have a more comprehensive perspective of their achievements and the changes generated over the years through collective efforts. Methodologically, the construction of the timeline allowed us to understand that, based on individual accounts carried out in a group workshop, it was possible to configure the collective memory of a neighborhood that already has two decades of continuous development.



1999

Land occupation

The dynamic for settling was that we paid rent in *Los Chorros* neighborhood, but we went up to sleep every night [in Brisas] so that they would take us into account in the land allocation. There was always someone watching.

2000

The occupation continues without evictions and land subdivision begins

Luis came to the neighborhood from the department of Cauca. He helped install the water and power networks. ‘We were like four people; we took care of each other [...]. There was a lot of suffering, anguish, and lack of protection.’ The shacks were made of plastic and then of *gua-dua* matting.



2001

A topographer demarcated the lots and the meetings were held in what later became the community center.

A topographer helped to delimit the lots: “he measured, laid out the streets, and then we began to build the ranches. The Army sent us food; they gave us rice, sardines, bread and coffee, and the community made community pots and took care of the lots. That year the Housing Board was also formed to raise funds for infrastructure projects. For the meetings, a stage was set up where the park is currently located.



2002

Installation of community aqueduct and fire nearby

‘Water came from a hose, it was one for the whole block, which was extended out into the street. We washed our clothes in the river.’ That same year ‘the [construction of the] road began, machinery was used.’ For the community, the Meléndez River was a washing and bathing area; ‘for the children it was like an place to go out on weekends and take care of the lots because they could play there.’ In December, the first fire occurred near the *Minuto de Dios* school in the adjoining neighborhood.

2003

Playful activities started with the children of the neighborhood

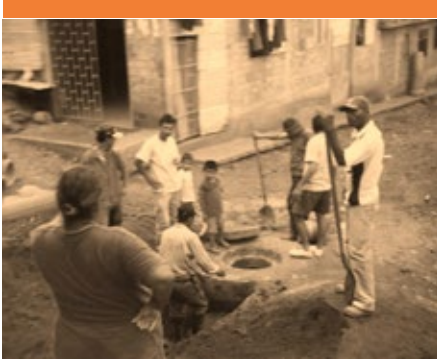
Edier ‘*el profe*’ Reyes gave soccer lessons and taught values to the children of the neighborhood. Most of the houses already had septic tanks.



2004

The carob tree in the park had to be cut down. Construction of the main road and the community sewage system began

The carob tree or ‘*pecueca*’ was cut down because it was infected by a fungus. The city’s environmental authority made the diagnosis. There are many stories about the tree; the community says that ‘a witch used to appear there.’ The construction of the main road and the sewage system began.



2005

The sewage system did not work and the same year the residents of Brisas purchased the temporary community hall to guarantee access to the neighborhood

Four million pesos were paid for the sewerage system, but it did not work. 'La Arboleda charged two million pesos to connect us to their sewerage system.' We purchased the lot where the community hall of *La Arboleda* was located for six million pesos to make way for the main street. 'We raised the money through raffles, bingos, and festivals.' A second fire occurred in the same area of the school.

2007

The park, community center, and power projects began. There was an avalanche. Mototaxis appeared

The projects began: 'We bought concrete poles, and some others were donated by a man.' In the work of installing the power grid, a pole fell in a neighbor's ankle and broke it, it was a tragedy at the time. Community parties were held for the first time in December. 'At the beginning it was just to raise funds for the neighborhood, but now it's a tradition.' 'At this time it rained a lot and everything was a muddy mess.' One Sunday, there was an avalanche and several people died. 'Before, everything was messed up, now it's a paradise.' *Mototaxis* also appeared.



2008

The housing consolidation process began

Once the initial stage of settlement and utility coverage were completed, we began the construction of houses with solid materials such as baked clay bricks and reinforced concrete.

2009

The community planted the *samán* tree in the park

That year a new tree was planted to replace the carob tree.

2010

The PRONE program arrived to officially install electric power

Brisas de las Palmas was included in the Electricity Grid Normalization Program (PRONE). 'Emcali did not comply, and bills of two hundred thousand pesos arrived in the houses.'

2011

Street lighting continued to be installed and the park court was paved

Emcali 'installed the meters and poles for the public lighting.' The court at *El Palo* park was built in concrete. A dance group was also formed that year.



2012

Paving of La Torre road, known as 'the alley', which is one of the access roads to *Brisas de las Palmas*

The houses continued to consolidate; each one with its own land. That year, there was a water crisis due to a very long summer and people had to fetch water from tanker trucks sent by the Mayor's Office, but it was not clean: 'That water was bad for the children. It gave them skin problems.' That year an area near the Carvajal Foundation in the adjoining neighborhood collapsed.



2013

•
Fire

A fire occurred in *El Tanque*, in a sector towards the north of the neighborhood.

2014

•
The Internet arrived in the neighborhood

The first home Internet connections were installed in *Brisas de las Palmas*.



2015

•
The gas network was installed, a MIO route arrived, and the court was improved

Gases de Occidente installed the gas networks and MetroCali included a MIO feeder route along the main road near *Brisas* into the routes to the hillside. The community worked together to improve the park's court. The Black Boys youth dance group was created.

2016

•
The Community Action Board was created

The residents of the neighborhood decided to formalize their community governing body through the creation of the Community Action Board.





2018

The first art and culture program was implemented

A dance teacher hired by the Mayor's Office started a program of dance and aerobics classes in the court. A musical group was formed, they rehearsed at the community center and sometimes in the park.

2019

Construction of rainwater channels and formation of soccer teams

To control erosion caused by rainfall, the community-built canals and rainwater collectors. Neighborhood soccer teams were formed that year.



2020

The covid-19 pandemic arrived and SVSH selected *Brisas* as an ISU pilot. The urban diagnosis stage began

'During this year, because of the pandemic, there was a lot of help in the community.' The project to pave the main road began: 'Work was done every Sunday.' Based on information from the GREAT research project, SVSH and the *Universidad del Valle* conducted an urban diagnosis of the settlements in and around District 18, which included *Brisas de las Palmas*.



2021

Formulation of the ISU Program and the *City and Peace* research project. Installation of playgrounds for children.

SVSH and the *Universidad del Valle* formulated the ISU Program. With the alliance of these two entities, the *City and Peace* project was developed with the support of the Robert Bosch Foundation. Children's playgrounds were installed in the park that year. Community kitchens were promoted because the city suffered an unprecedented social outbreak. Two months of blockages left neighborhoods without supplies and food prices rose.

2022

Official installation of water and sewage networks, urban legalization pilot, and creation of the PopuLab at the *Universidad del Valle*.

Emcali installed water and sewage networks in the neighborhood and *Brisas de las Palmas* was selected by SVSH for a pilot of urban legalization with the technical support of the *Universidad del Valle*. This year the *Universidad del Valle* created the Popular Neighborhoods Laboratory (PopuLab) to support projects in other neighborhoods of the city, such as the one carried out in *Brisas de las Palmas*.





INTERSECTIONAL INTERPRETATION OF STATISTICAL DATA

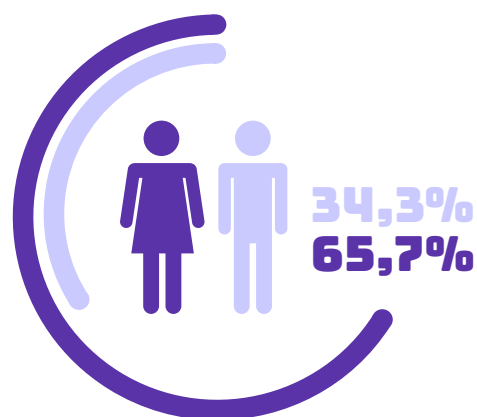


Conducting statistical analyses with an intersectional approach not only requires including key questions in the surveys that allude to factors of oppression or well-being of individuals (ethnic-racial condition, gender, functional diversity, place of origin) and their perception of the territory (fear, tranquility, uncertainty, solidarity), it also requires to define which data should be cross-referenced and their purpose to interpret and use the information on matters such as the ISU.

In the case of the *City and Peace* project, data cross-references focused on women, ethnic minorities, people with functional diversity, the roles of these population groups in the territory, and the perception of inhabitants about physical and of community participation spaces. To that extent, the information obtained and summarized in this section shows great vulnerabilities that the ISU must address by including programs to reduce inequities and oppressions detected both in households and in the neighborhood spaces. Key aspects such as the improvement of household income, greater recognition of women's paid and unpaid work, oppressions of which members of the LGTBIQ+ community are victims, as well as spatial equity in terms of accessibility must be addressed in comprehensive improvement processes.

In the case of *Brisas de las Palmas*, we found that the role of women has been fundamental, not only to the households and activities related to care, but also to community management and organization. The survey data show that 65.7% of the households are headed by women (Graph 14). This figure almost doubles the percentage of male-headed households (34.4%). It is very high compared to the data of Colombia, where 40.7% of households are headed by women (DANE, 2018a), and Cali, where this percentage reaches 44.5% (DANE, 2018a).

Graph 14
Head of household by gender



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

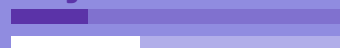
This imbalance can also be noticed because **women are the main responsible for caregiving activities in the home** (64.1% compared to 6.8% of men, and 29.2% of shared responsibility). This burden is heavier because they also have to work to generate income. As can be seen in Graph 15, 42.3% of female heads of household, who said they were caregivers, reported that they also had a job, compared to 38.5% of men. Likewise, there is a radical imbalance regarding household chores, since women are largely dedicated to this work.

But this is not a matter of popular neighborhoods, **inequity in the use of time between women and men, both in paid and unpaid work, is widespread in Colombia**. Figures from DANE (2020) show that the burden of unpaid work is greater for women, who spend from 7 to 14 hours a day doing it. It is almost four hours more than the time spent by men, which is 3:25 hours. We must add that women spend 7:35 hours a day doing paid work, for a total of 14:49 working hours per day (Graph 16).

Graph 15
Household heads in charge of care:
gender and occupation

Looking for a job

16,3%



30,8%

No activity

4,1%



15,4%

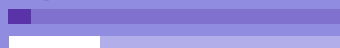
Studying

3,3%



Retired

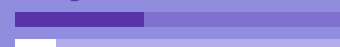
0,8%



7,7%

Home occupations

30,9%



7,7%

Working

42,3%



38,5%

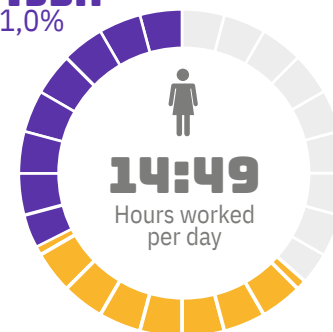
Permanently unable
to work

2,4%



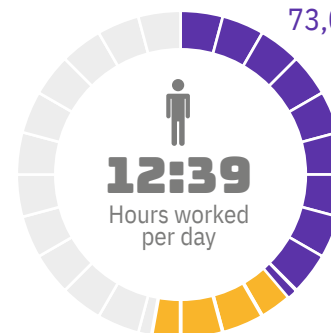
Graph 16
Hours worked by gender

7:95H
51,0%



7:14H
49,0%

9:14H
73,0%



3:25H
27,0%

- Paid work
- Unpaid work

Source: socioeconomic survey data
(SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

In terms of **education and gender**, there is a low educational attainment in the neighborhood: 5% of female heads of household said they had no education, while no men reported this. However, in levels such as completed secondary education and higher education, women have a small advantage over men (Graph 17).

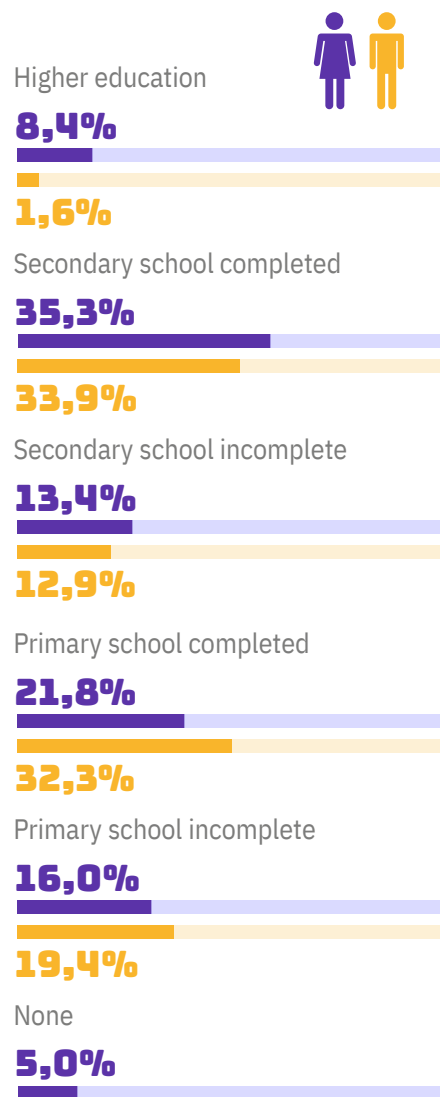
Unfortunately, **the higher education level of women does not translate into direct advantages such as higher income**. As can be seen in Graph 18, most female heads of household have incomes below the minimum wage, which means great vulnerability and economic instability to support their families.

This may happen, to a large extent, because their main source of income is informal employment (52%). Men have a very similar situation, but less. As shown in Graph 19, there is also a gap in access to formal jobs or own businesses.

Adding the **ethnicity variable** to the analysis, we can observe that women heads of household who self-recognize as indigenous have higher levels of education. The opposite happens to Afro-descendants, who have higher percentages in variables such as no education and incomplete secondary education. In turn, in the case of male heads of household, indigenous people have the lowest educational levels, and Afro-descendants show the highest percentage of incomplete secondary education (Graph 20).

For both women and men, people who do not belong to an ethnic group obtained the highest percentage of higher education. This fact could evidence disadvantages in access to higher education for ethnic minorities.

Graph 17
Educational level of heads of household



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

■ Women
■ Men

Graph 18
Household income by gender



Less than one minimum wage

■ 45,7%
■ 31,3%



One minimum wage

■ 35,9%
■ 56,3%



Between one and two minimum wages

■ 14,1%
■ 12,5%



Two minimum wages

■ 3,3%



Don't know

■ 1,1%

Graph 19
Source of income of the head of household

■ Women
■ Men



Formal job

■ 31,5%
■ 40,6%



Informal job

■ 52,2%
■ 50,0%



Own business

■ 4,3%
■ 6,3%



Subsidies

■ 2,2%

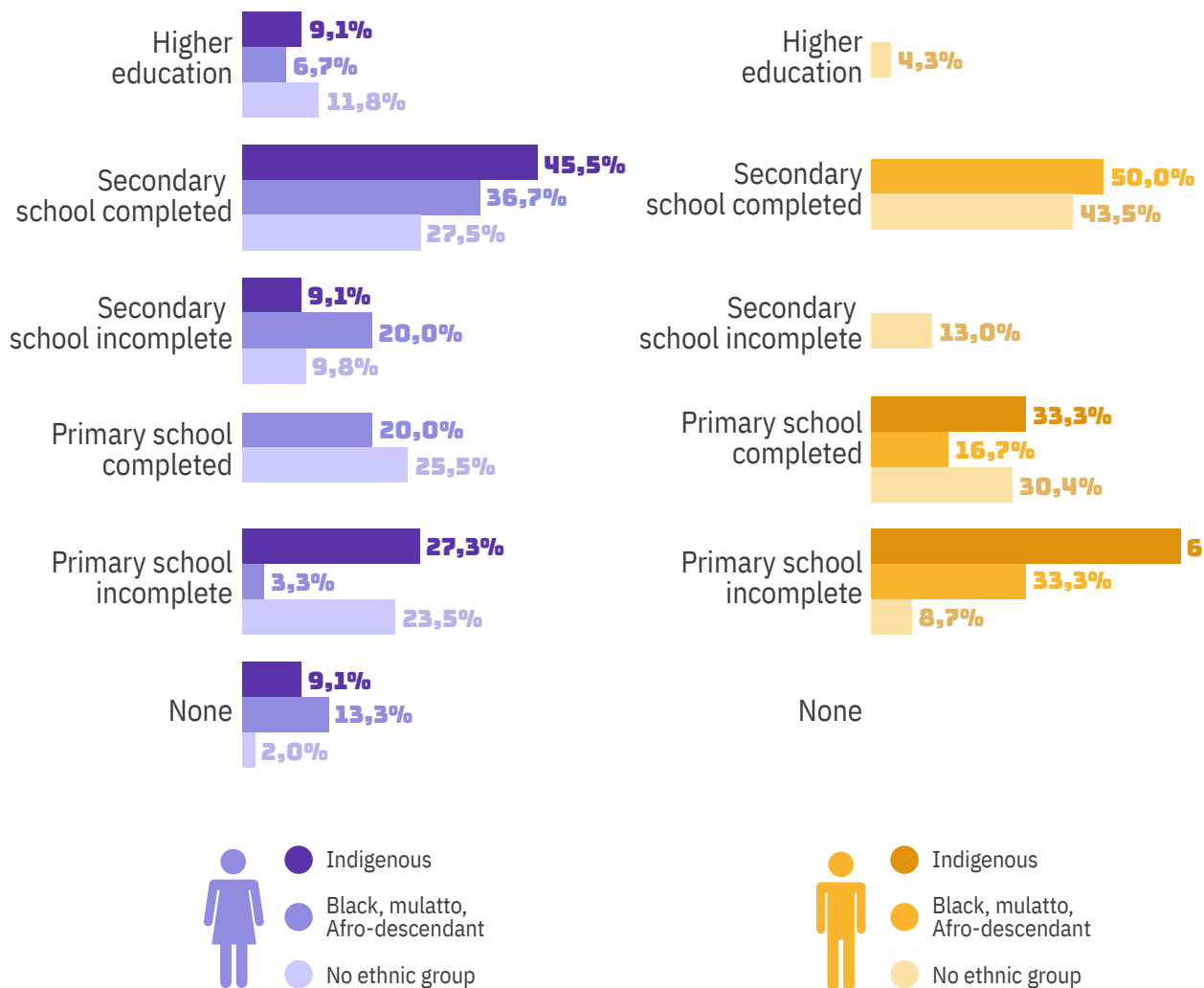


Other

■ 9,8%
■ 3,1%

Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

Graph 20
Heads of household: educational level and ethnicity



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

But income disadvantages, even with an acceptable level of education, are not the only factor affecting women in the case study. When asked about the **perception of safety** in the neighborhood, they feel more insecure than men. To the question “Do you feel unsafe in the neighborhood?”, 33.3% of women answered yes, compared to 22.7% of men. Although *Brisas de las Palmas*’ residents affirm that the neighborhood is not a dangerous place, this greater perception of insecurity among women in public spaces is consistent with the findings of research conducted in other Latin American cities. Results show that, despite the achievements of women in public, political, and economic life, public spaces continue to be masculine. For girls and adolescents, the situation is much worse, as they feel more defenseless and end up taking refuge in their homes and withdrawing from social life in communal spaces.

I do not like to go to the street anymore; I pass by and the older people or men say things that I do not like (Girl, 13 years old).

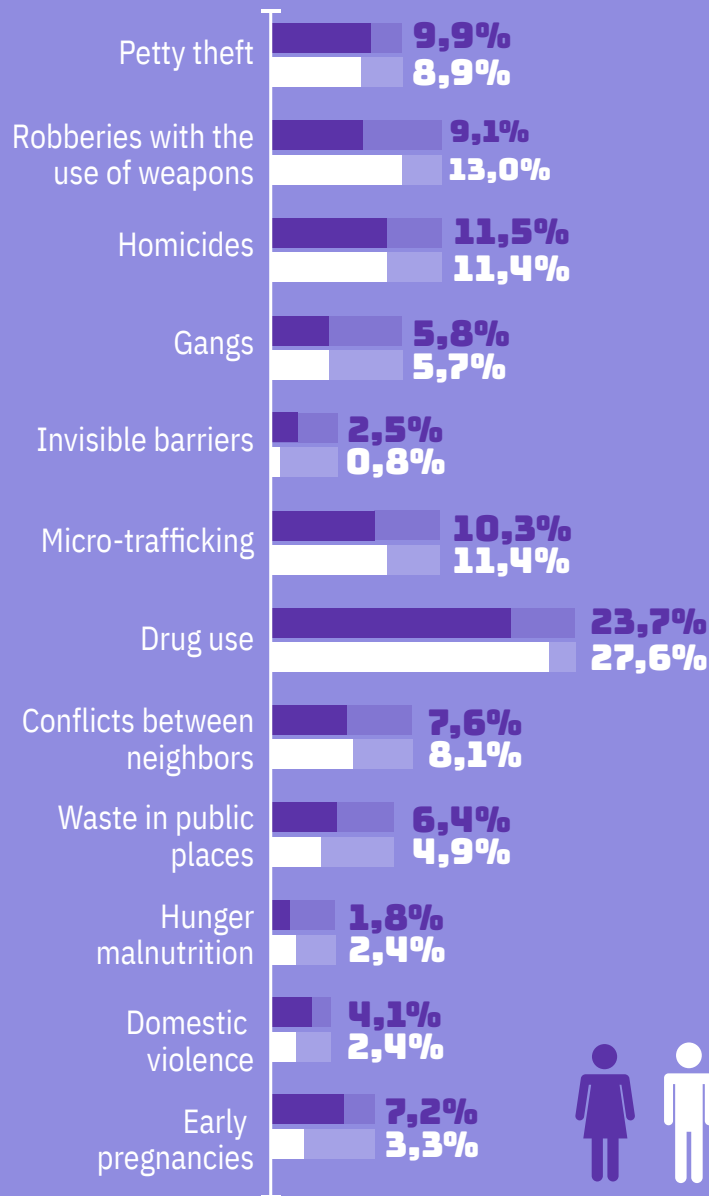
But the violence experienced by women (harassment, bullying, and even rape) is deepened by the fact that women are, in many cases, blamed for the aggressions they suffer in public spaces. As researcher Ana Falú explains:

The cultural internalization of public or urban space as masculine, and therefore forbidden to women, contributes to them feeling responsible when they are victims of any crime on public roads, for circulating at certain hours or wearing clothes considered socially inappropriate (2014, p. 21).¹⁶

Faced with such complex issues, women who exercise leadership in *Brisas de las Palmas* have gathered around projects and strategies to gain space. This has enabled them to have a presence, a voice, and a vote in the social and political life of the neighborhood. Despite the gender oppressions of which they may be victims, their role as promoters of collective well-being is ratified by their answers in the survey on the most important problems they face in the neighborhood. While men pointed to drug use, armed robberies,

16 Our translation from original in Spanish.

Graph 21
Neighborhood problems by gender



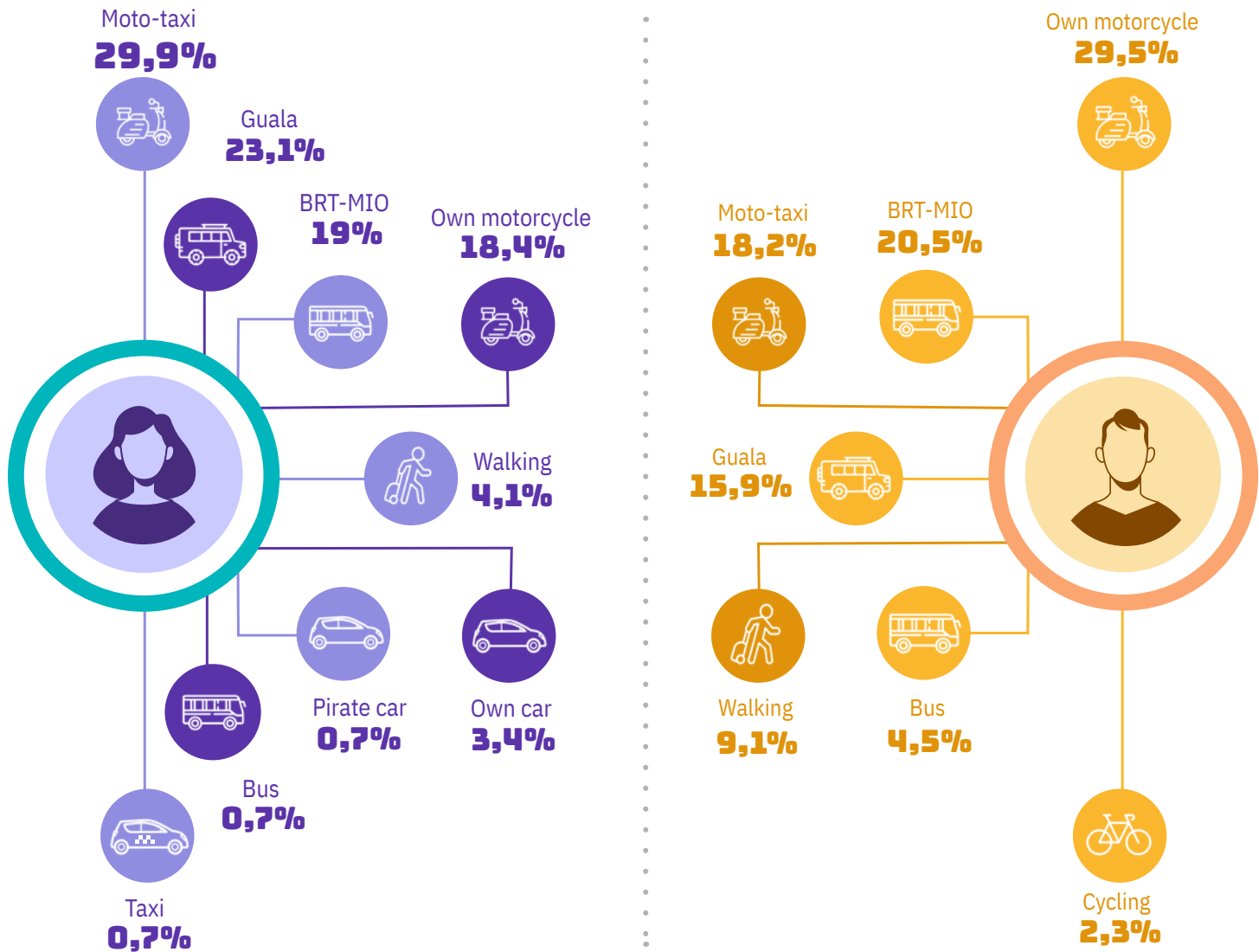
Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

and homicides, women referred more to community problems such as invisible borders, gangs, litter in public places, and early pregnancies. They also reported issues that affect women more than men, such as domestic violence and being easy victims of petty crime in the streets (Graph 21).

On other issues of daily life, such as **mobility and accessibility** that allow for intersectional analyses of spatial justice, the survey results also showed differences by gender and by age groups. As shown in Graph 22, women tend to use *mototaxis* and *gualas*, and only 20% use the MIO public transport. To a lesser extent, they have access to their own motorcycle, which is most used by men.

These figures show that women must resort to informal means of transport to a greater extent (Graph 23) because of the immediate availability in the area, which implies less walking time in public spaces, and because of economic restrictions that force them to resort to cheaper options or prevent them from owning their own vehicle.

Graph 22
Mode of transport by gender



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

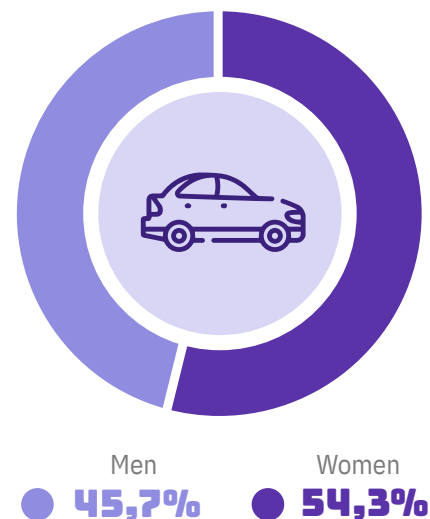
By age group, data show that adolescents use the MIO public transport, mototaxis, and their own motorcycles in equal proportions. Young people reported using mostly their own motorcycles and, to a lesser extent, the MIO system. Adults reported a higher use of motorcycles, and older adults use *gualas* and *mototaxis* in equal proportions (Graph 24). These differences show the high dependence of adults and older adults on informal means of transport to take them to their destination in less time.

These figures highlight the inequity in terms of mobility and accessibility, the fact that *mototaxi* is the most used mode of transport by almost all age groups (young people did not report using it with a high frequency, but they are the ones who generally provide the service) shows that the supply of a safe transportation system, with good coverage, convenient travel times, and adequate routes is limited for this community.

These results are far from the data collected in the citizen perception survey of the Quality-of-Life Monitoring and Evaluation Program *Cali cómo vamos*, which shows that the most used means of transport is MIO, followed by private ones such as motorcycles and cars. As can be seen in Graph 25, only 6% of the people said they used informal transport, a figure that contrasts with the 28% obtained in the *Brisas de las Palmas* socioeconomic survey.

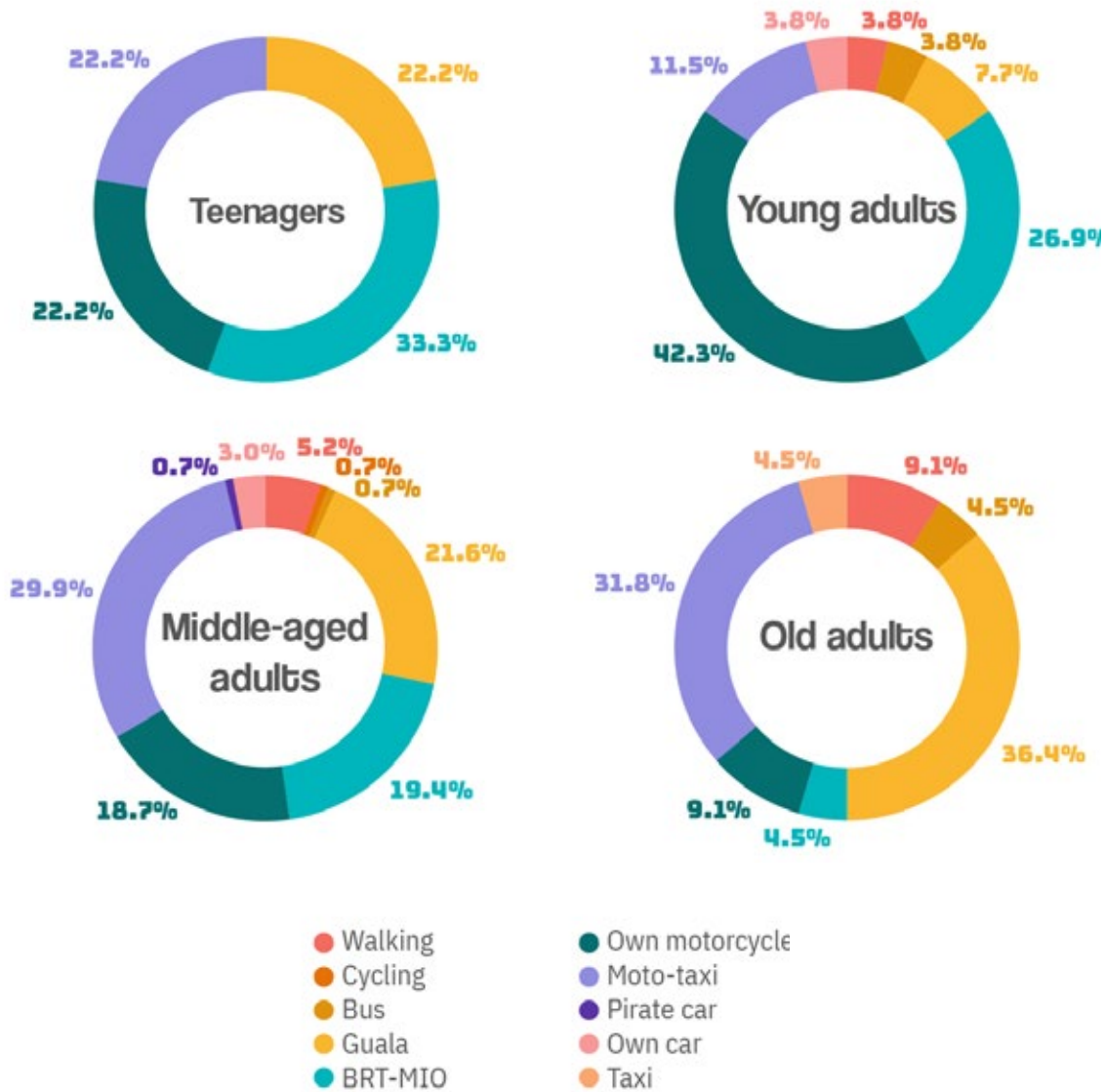
These findings show that the experience of **mobility and accessibility in poor neighborhoods is very different from that of people in more privileged urban areas, who can use formal means and private transportation. This demonstrates the urgency of working on mobility in ISU processes underpinned by spatial equity and with an intersectional approach.** The disaggregated data obtained by including the intersectional approach in the analysis results of this case study showed various inequities both by gender and age group, which, added to those presented by other variables, contribute to deepening the gaps, not only between subjects of the same community, but also between the inhabitants of poor neighborhoods and sectors inhabited by people with middle and high incomes.

Graph 23
Use of informal transportation by gender



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

Graph 24
Mode of transportation by age group



Source: socioeconomic survey data (SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

As stated by researcher Paola Jirón:

The differentiated experience of mobility can shed light, first of all, on the need for better transportation systems, better infrastructure, and better housing programs, but also the need to improve access to working conditions, education and health services, cultural activities, use of leisure time, and recognizing how the informal economy operates, among others (2007, p. 193).¹⁷

Although the inequalities are wide and varied, the cross-referenced data presented in this section clearly show the **disadvantage conditions of women, both in terms of paid and unpaid workload and income, despite their responsibility for financially sustaining the household.**¹⁸ Moreover, they feel less safe than men in the neighborhood, and they depend, to a greater extent, on informal transportation to carry out their daily activities. This aspect is even more marked in the case of older women.

Although this is a homogeneously poor community, adding the ethnic-racial variable to the analysis reveals disadvantages of people who recognize themselves as part of an ethnic minority. It reflects a general situation in a city as racially segregated as Cali. In the urban area, Afro-descendants and indigenous people are concentrated on the edges, which in turn are the poorest areas, with the highest levels of direct violence and the population with the highest unemployment rates. These same areas are the most prone to suffer natural disasters such as landslides on the western side and floods on the eastern side (Franco-Calderón, 2020).

Graph 25
Most used mode of
transportation in Cali



BRT-MIO
34%



Motorcycling
24%



Own car
13%



Cycling
7%



Pirate car
6%



Bus
6%



Taxi
6%



Walking
4%



Job transport
0,2%

Source: socioeconomic survey data
(SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021).

Nevertheless, **these disadvantages have not been an obstacle for women from *Brisas de las Palmas* to become the managers of neighborhood projects.** As mentioned in the section Community management and action, initiatives such as the dining room; support groups for children, young people, and the elderly; and the Community Action Board are led by women. They are known by their willingness to serve, capacity for work, and high degree of organization.

In summary, the data presented in this section can be analyzed in multiple ways depending on the emphasis of each ISU project. They are essential to propose initiatives to reduce gaps, which are generally hidden in conventional methods of urban analysis. Factors of disadvantage such as gender, ethnicity, age, and the stigma often experienced by residents of poor neighborhoods—translated into discrimination and socio-spatial segregation—are not usually visible in the statistics of poverty, vulnerability, employment, or unmet basic needs that commonly show the socioeconomic panorama of an area. In this sense, the intersectional approach becomes relevant in urban studies as a method to promote the construction of fairer societies and territorial peace coherently in complex urban environments that require direct actions through ISU programs.

17 Our translation from original in Spanish.

18 Other variables that are not presented in detail in this section but are key to this type of analysis are functional diversity, geographic location in the city, origin, and religious preference in contexts with greater diversity of faiths. Likewise, it is important to visibly include the LGBTQ+ community, which was not representative in the survey but was included through other methods such as workshops, interviews, focus groups and intersectional mapping.



INTERSECTIONAL NARRATIVES



Intersectional narratives emerge from the idea of assigning content and a face to situated experiences. The exploration of these narratives seeks to find the diverse oppressions that can affect the individual in his/her life cycle and how, despite experiencing it, they can move forward and create well-being experiences for themselves and the community. As noted here, one of the challenges the intersectional approach faces is to materialize it and make it visible, which is why the *City and Peace* project prioritized working with people who, in addition to the role they play in the community, experience intersecting oppressions directly or indirectly. These people are a small sample of hundreds of inhabitants of *Brisas de las Palmas*, who also experience oppression in multiple ways.

In the four cases presented below, we explored the intersection of social variables related to each subject, articulated with the community scenario where they make contributions from and for the community (Figures 13, 14, 15 and 16). This approach enabled us to build specific narratives that make visible the community work of people like Francy in both the community dining room and the community center, Cristian in the soccer team, Milagros in the Women's Network, and Willington's commitments to inclusion processes of the LGTBQ+ community. These narratives facilitated to consolidate specific examples of how a corporeal reading of the intersectional matrix can be made in a settlement like *Brisas de las Palmas*.

Willington

Is an Afro-descendant gay man who has led the LGTBQ+ community processes in the area. From his firsthand experiences, he accompanies other heterosexual dissidents to fit into a society that excludes them because of their gender orientation. He helps discriminated youths through the **LGTBQ+ Group**. For people in this community, one of the strategies to survive and stay in the territory is the network of communication and mutual help, which provides both emotional and physical security. This group also works for sexual diversity and respect for difference, not only in *Brisas de las Palmas* but also in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Doña Milagros

Is a peasant woman and an older adult who participates in community processes in the neighborhood. Despite her advanced age and health limitations, she is the caregiver of another older adult and a victim of multiple forms of violence, including gender violence. She participates in the community activities of the **Women's Network**, an organizational process to develop community activities aimed at youth and the elderly. This network leads the community dining room and recreational activities for the elderly population in the neighborhood. In addition, she promotes non-violence and women's sexual and reproductive rights.

A common feature of those who live in poor neighborhoods is the use of informal mechanisms to solve housing problems, overcrowding, poverty, marginality, violence, social segregation, precarious utilities, stigmatization, invisibility, and political instrumentalization. The latter becomes the connecting thread between patronage practices and the search for solutions to everyday problems. Although almost all these problems are experienced in *Brisas de las Palmas*, during the development of the *City and Peace* project, we found that the community has remained united by the commitment to build an environment of peace and tranquility. Among the shortages caused by their informal origin, they have consolidated basic physical and social cohesion elements that have allowed them to create a safe neighborhood.



Figure 15. Willington's Intersections



Figure 16. Doña Milagros' Intersections

We have already mentioned that **informal settlements on the periphery become a solution for people who do not have access to decent housing**, either because public policies fail to serve the poorest population, or to keep pace with the rapid growth of the impoverished peripheries of cities. These populations are also affected by the marked income inequality that prevents them from entering the formal real estate market. Moreover, **some social segments are systematically excluded from living the city due to their vulnerability or oppression by the system**, e.g., women, the LGTBIQ+ community, people with functional diversity, the elderly, at-risk youth, and ethnic minorities.

Projects such as *City and Peace* show the gap and lack of opportunities for people like Francy, Cristian, Willington, and Milagros, who saw an informal self-built settlement in the periphery as an option to have their own house. Likewise, research allowed us to learn about the intersections of disadvantage factors in a given community (Figure 17). Despite experiencing this intersection, the people who fight daily for their community have dreamed, created and recreated friendly scenarios such as the community center, the community dining room, the soccer team, the LGTBIQ+ group, and the Women's Network. Those spaces make other views and other realities possible amongst the precariousness generated by their informal origin.

The difficult situations experienced by this community occur in a country where the Constitution (Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, 1991) promotes the right to decent housing but is not able to guarantee a decent habitat for the poorest families, who still resort to other alternatives. The prevailing approach in public housing policies in Colombia is to promote new constructions built by the private sector with on-demand subsidies. Under the scheme of down payment subsidies and long-term loans, housing is clearly unaffordable for those that do not have enough income to save and pay mortgages, as in the case of *Brisas de las Palmas*.

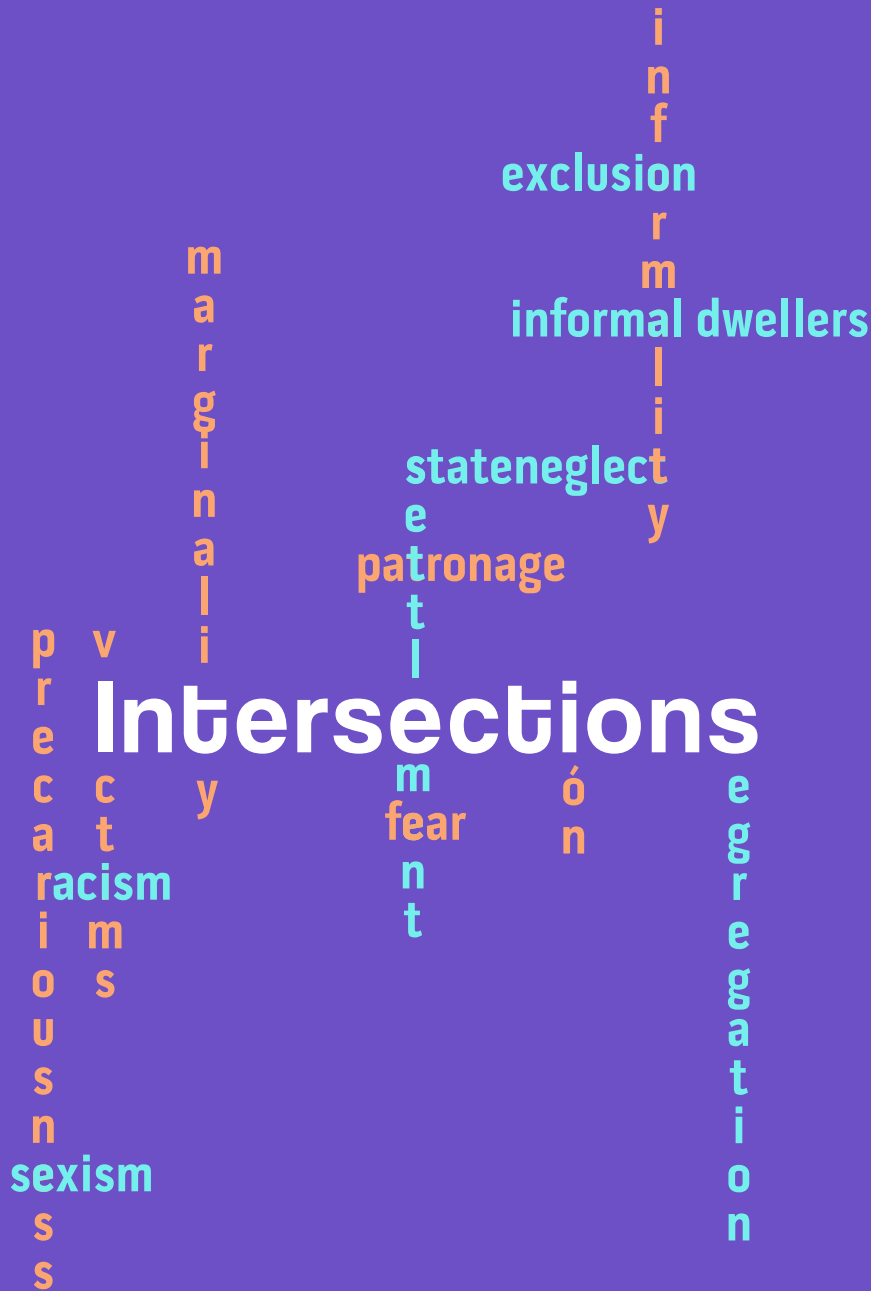


Figure 17. Intersections found in *Brisas de las Palmas*

In this context, new housing projects should not be the government's preferred strategy. There are other options such as subsidies to purchase second-hand housing, support for rentals, public housing, and non-conventional land tenure, like those mentioned in Chapter 2. To this extent, **ISU is an important alternative for vulnerable families in self-managed neighborhoods because it is a mechanism to improve their quality of life without resorting to resettlement processes.** These processes, in addition to high costs and complexity, lead to the uprooting of people like Francy, Cristian, Willington, and Doña Milagros. For many years, they have built solidarity ties with their neighbors and have contributed to the consolidation of the urban fabric through projects and life experiences.



APPLICATION OF THE INTERSECTIONAL MATRIX



As mentioned in Chapter 3, the intersectional matrix, initially based on theoretical approaches, was enriched with categories and variables identified jointly with the community. The resulting matrix (Figure 10) allowed us to identify and position people and community spaces at the intersections. Their location shows how people or community spaces are more relevant at certain points of the matrix (Figure 18).

The crossing of categories and variables shows the experiences of intersectionality, both individual and collective, which reveal more complex intersections when worked in greater detail. In Figure 19, we present an example of the intersections found in *Brisas de las Palmas* for each actor in the matrix.

This individual representation allowed us not only to identify and draw the main intersections of each actor, but to reach a level of detail of the characteristics of each one and their interaction in the *mandala* that represents the matrix. These interactions were key to understand the role of the leaders, as well as to define relevant spaces for the community, which were fundamental to make the cartography.

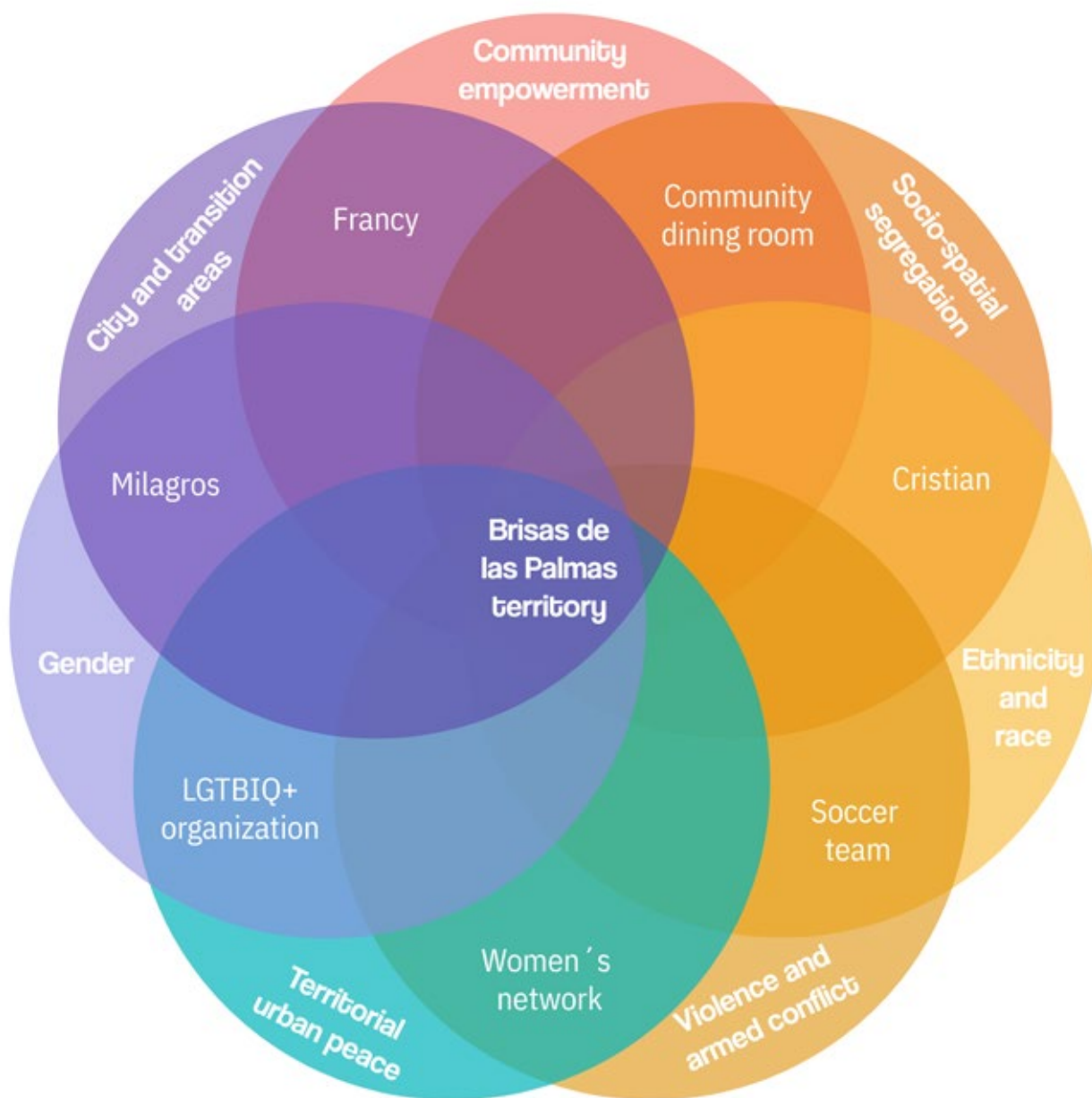


Figure 18. Intersectional matrix applied to *Brisas de las Palmas*

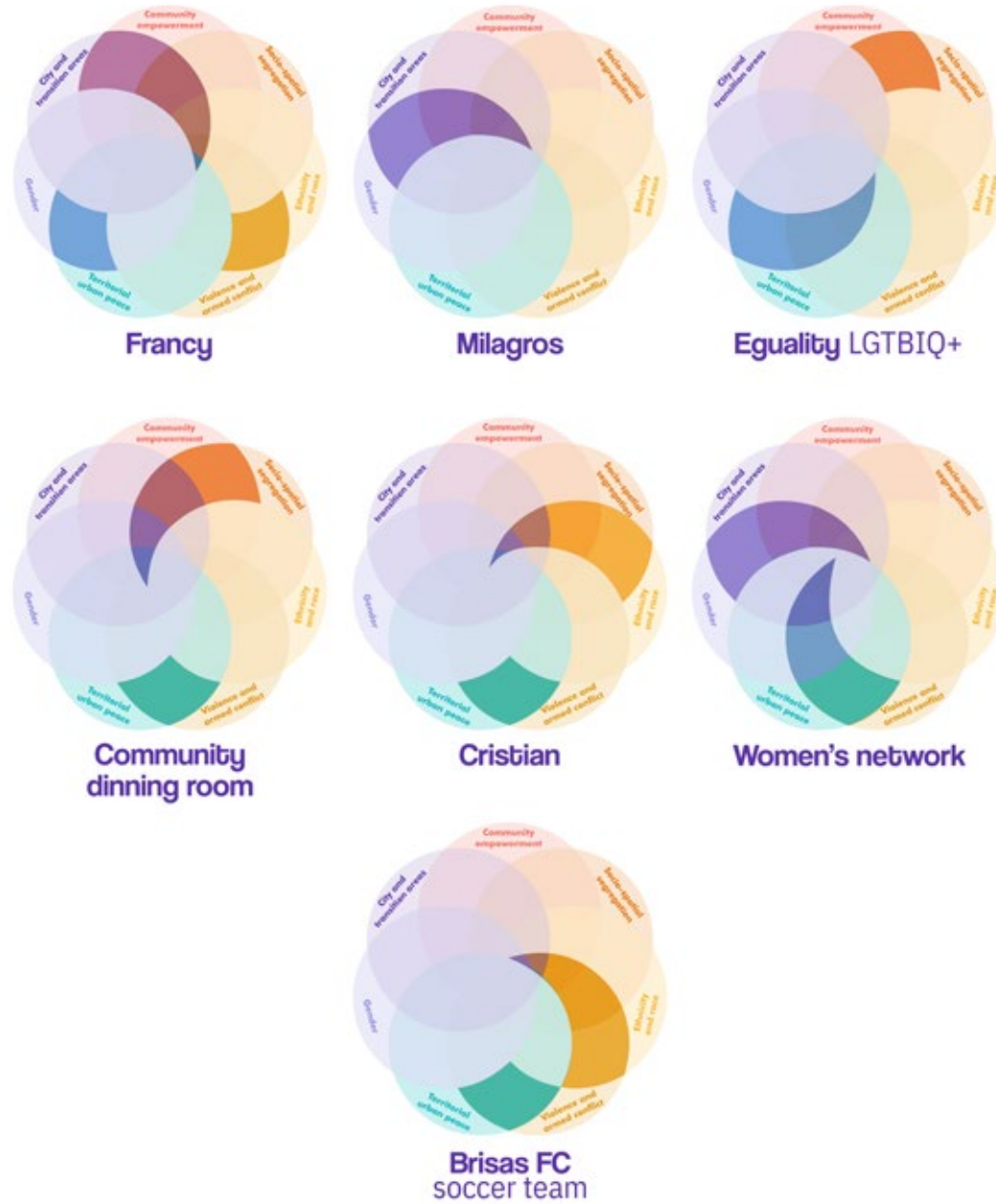


Figure 19. Intersections of individuals and community spaces in various categories.
 *The solid colors are the intersections activated for each person or organization.



INTERSECTIONAL MAPS



Using the basic information about the community and the territory collected in the tours, workshops, and collective discussions about the intersectional matrix, we designed a method to build a series of maps on people's perceptions, experiences, and feelings about the territory by interest groups. Not only did we collect information about the places and what they represent for the inhabitants of the neighborhood, we also identified which types of people or groups had perceptions, feelings, or concerns in specific spaces. For example, it was possible to determine which places were perceived by members of the LGTBQ+ community as spaces of oppression or well-being; places where children felt more at ease or felt tension or fear; spaces of oppression for women or those where ethnicity or race played a role. The methodological scheme to develop the stepwise intersectional mapping is presented in Figure 20.

Based on the information of the base map presented in Chapter 3, we produced eight intersectional maps with the participation of the community. The contents were as follows:

- **Oppressions:** spaces where the inhabitants of *Brisas de las Palmas* currently feel tension, fear, or oppression.
- **Memory of spaces of oppression:** places where suicides or homicides occurred and are engraved in people's memories.
- **Well-being:** spaces that are currently related by the inhabitants of the neighborhood to feelings of well-being.
- **Memory of wellbeing spaces:** positive memories about individual experiences in places of the neighborhood and its surroundings.

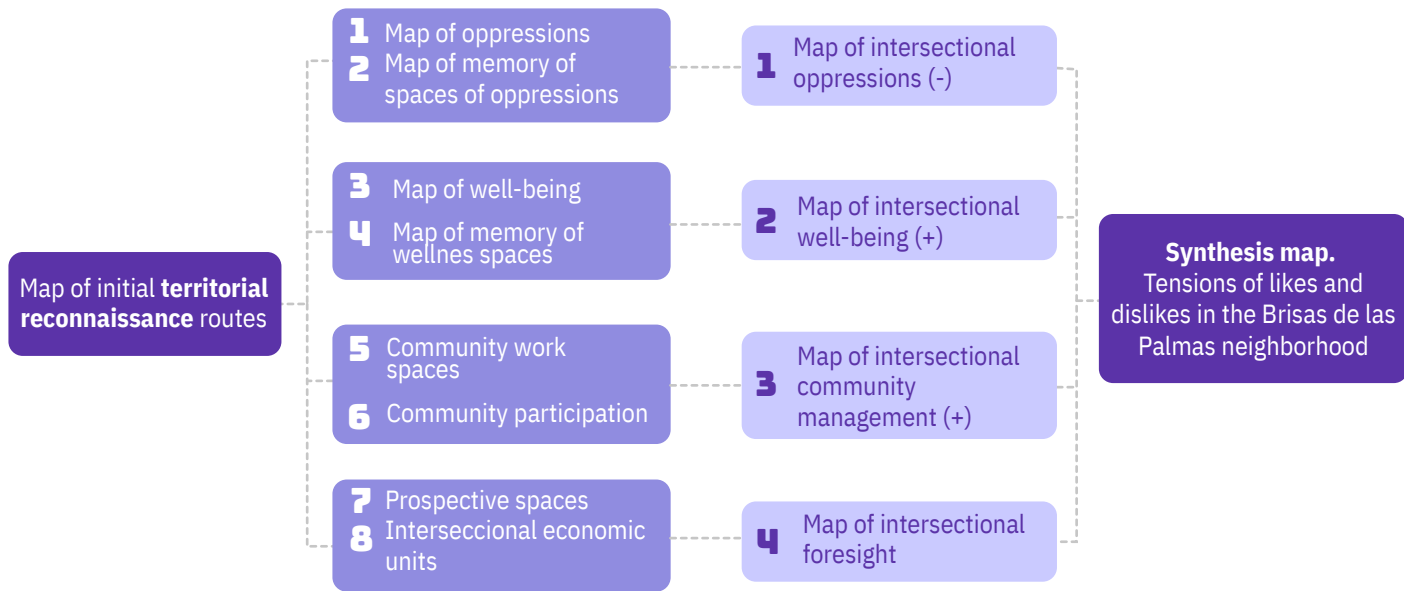


Figure 20. Construction of intersectional maps by stages

- **Community workspaces:** spaces in the neighborhood where community work takes place.
- **Community participation:** location of the dwellings of people who participate in collective activities.
- **Prospective spaces:** places where the community perceives potential for common benefit projects.
- **Intersectional economic units:** mapping of local economic units related to groups of interest such as the LGTBIQ+ community, women, and neighborhood leaders.

To create the eight maps, spaces were given a numerical weight according to the number of times (frequency) that people pointed them out to map the intensity (high, medium, and low) of each attribute. The information was consolidated into four intersectional maps as follows:

Oppressions: this map gathers the results of the two maps made to indicate oppressions. It points out, with a dark color (high level of oppression), spaces of drug consumption, places where violent deaths occurred, and a property in front of *Brisas de las Palmas* park where there is a bar that generates discomfort among the community due to noise and consumption of liquor in the street when children and young people are playing. It is noteworthy that both *El Palo* park and the neighboring public spaces are marked as spaces of oppression. This is due to repeated disputes between children and young people over the use of the *Brisas* and *La Arboleda* playgrounds, and to the fear aroused by a group of young people who use drugs at a specific point of *El Filo* park.

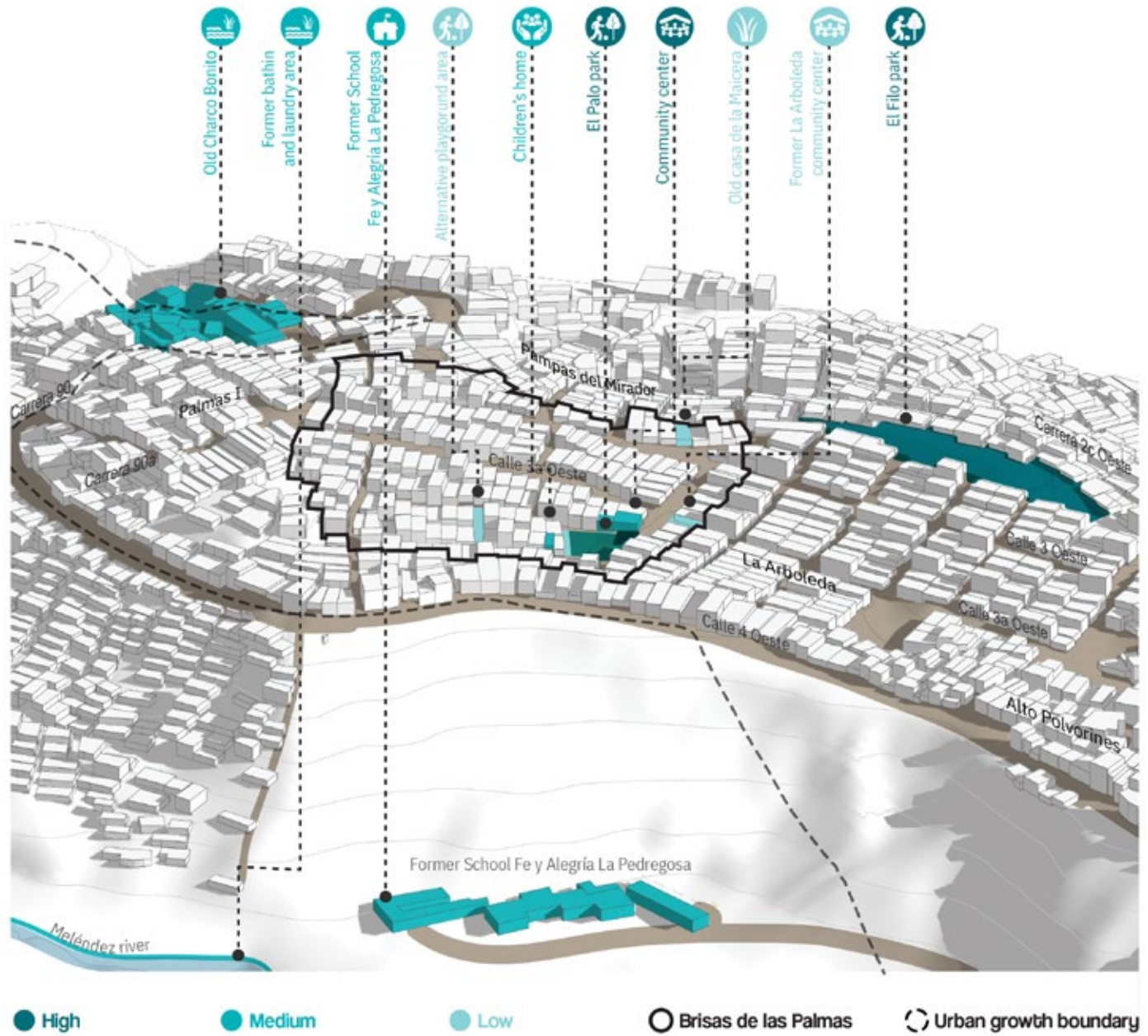
Well-being: the places identified by the community as well-being spaces are strongly linked to their public nature and the benefits they provide. They include parks, sports fields, *the Brisas de las Palmas* community center, the old *Fe y Alegría* School, and the Meléndez River. It is important to note that *El Filo* park appears again with a high level, but this time as a significant space for community recreation. This may be because, topographically, it is the highest place in the area and has a beautiful view. The corner of *El Palo* park where the children's playgrounds are located is also marked with a high level because this is the space that children feel as their own.

Community management: this isometry is the result of joining information of the community work and participation maps. Meeting spaces such as *Minuto de Dios* school in *Pampas del Mirador*, *El Palo* park, and *Brisas de las Palmas'* community center appear here with high recognition. The medium tone represents both the spaces where community work takes place (particularly the streets) and the properties where the people who commonly participate in the development of neighborhood projects live. The properties with low incidence in community management appear in a lighter color since the residents of these areas are not frequently involved in neighborhood activities.

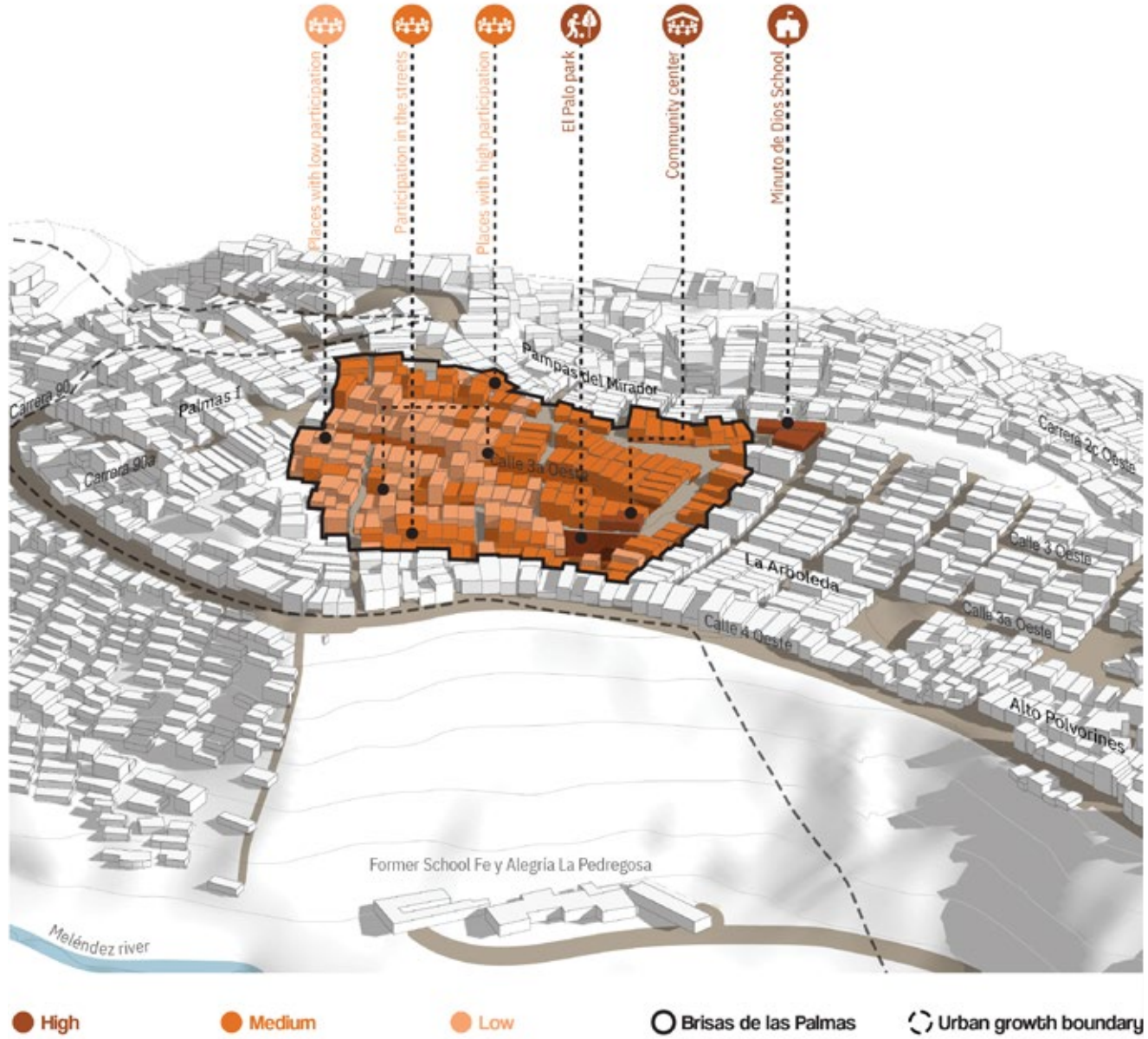
Prospective spaces: this isometry highlights the spaces the community pointed out as communal places with potential for ISU, and places where productive activities with potential for growth and participation in circular economy processes, and that join the LGTBIQ+ community, women, and neighborhood leaders are carried out. *El Filo* park and the community center stand out again, as well as the large green area surrounding the old *Fe y Alegría* School. This area has large trees and the community walks or ride bicycles to cross the river and go to work or study in sectors such as *La Buitrera* or the southern neighborhoods of the city.

The previous work is summarized in isometry 7, which clusters oppressions and well-being by disaggregated levels of intensity.

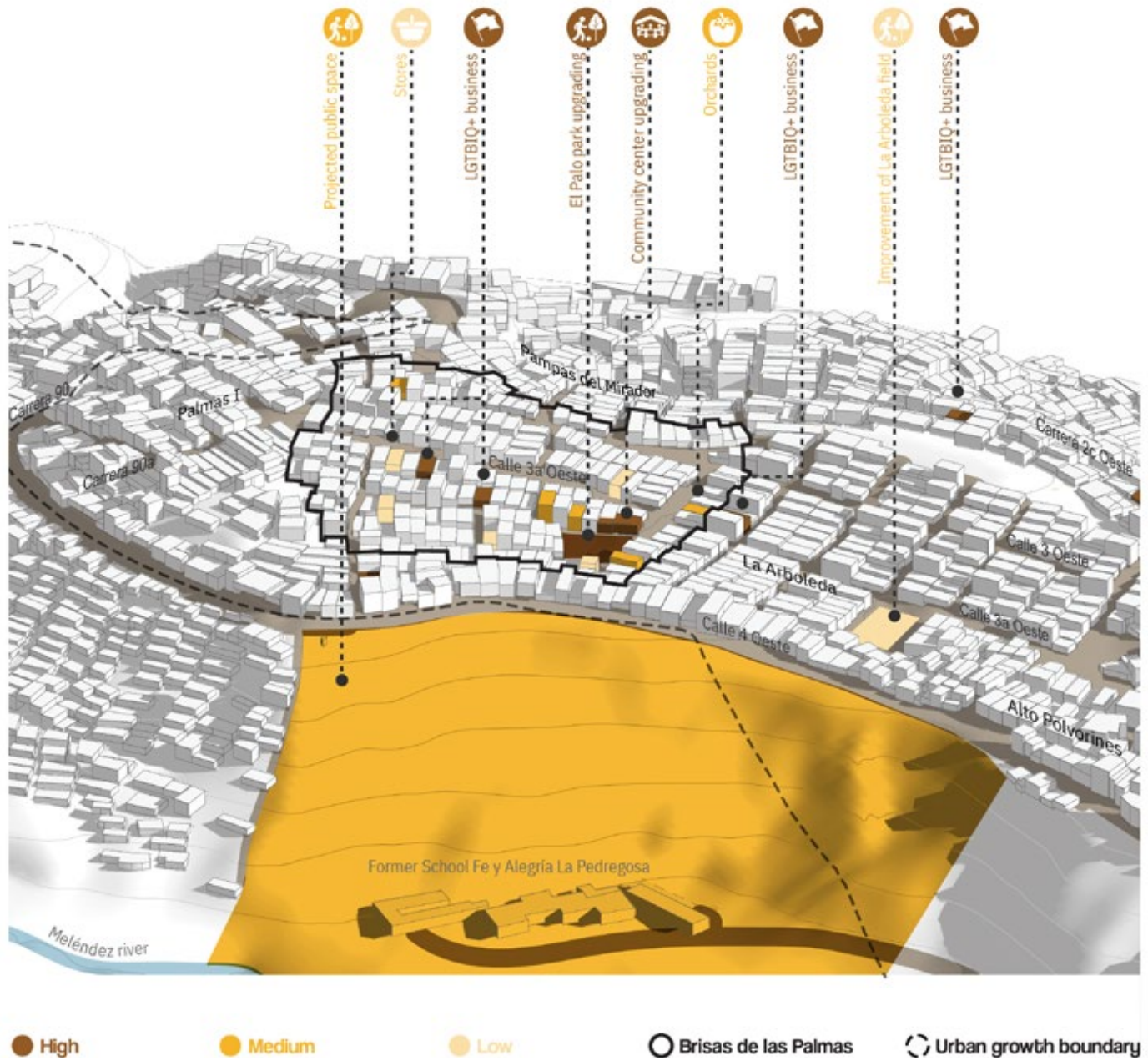
The main findings from the intersectional mapping reveal that **people have different perceptions and feelings about the same places according to their identity and role within the community, and their relationship with other neighborhoods.** For example, children feel unsafe in spaces such as *El Filo* park in *Pampas del Mirador* because some young people have occupied this space to do drugs. However, *El Filo* is in the collective memory as a space of well-being because it has a court, and this is the largest viewpoint in the whole area. Something similar happens with *El Palo* park, which is the heart of *Brisas de las Palmas*. There are strong overlapping feelings of oppression and well-being. The children's area is the one that generates most tension because, although it is well delimited and the children said they enjoy it, sometimes they are displaced by young people.



Isometry 4. Intersectional well-being matrix



Isometry 5. Intersectional matrix of community management



Isometry 6. Intersectional matrix of prospective spaces

The court in *El Palo* park is the only one available to everyone in the neighborhood, and it is used for games, sports, culture, and meetings of senior citizens. This place is also perceived both as a space of oppression and well-being, depending on the individual experiences and memories of the users and neighbors of the sector. This is where the soccer team trains, older adults exercise in the mornings, and young men meet for recreational activities. However, young women hardly interact here. As they become adolescents, girls go to their homes or meet with schoolmates looking for refuge because, as mentioned, the street becomes a violent setting for them. Men sexually harass them. In the workshops, the boys and young men stated that this did not happen to them, and they found it uncomfortable for the girls. They said they felt powerless for not being able to defend their friends from adult harassment. In their own terms, the girls expressed that:

When they meet at *La Arboleda* court, they close it with the motorcycles. I never go alone [because] I am afraid that something will happen to me. I rather turn around, so I do not go there (Girl, 15 years old).

The conflict over the use of *El Palo* park on weekends is another complex situation that became evident. Since these are days off, many adults take the opportunity to gather around liquor and music, and the park or the surrounding buildings become the meeting point. The presence of adults and their activity marginalizes other uses, such as children and youth play.

I do not like to go to the park when they drink [liquor] and start fighting. It happens in December and some weekends when [the adults] are drunk (Girl, 6 years old).

When they play dominoes in the park, they take the ball away from us and we cannot play (Boy, 11 years old).



Photograph 30. *El Palo* park
Source: Enzo Mosquera, 2021.

When the adults come to the park, they prevent us from training
(Boy, 12 years old).

In the intersectional mapping process, the power relation tensions that coexist in public spaces became evident: power related to gender (men over women), age (adults over boys, girls, young people, and older adults), and even ethnic condition. Because these spaces are so limited, multiple interests and incompatibilities converge there. Even so, these are the places where recreation, leisure, entertainment, and neighborhood gatherings concentrate: positive characteristics that should be enhanced through ISU processes.



BRISAS DE LAS PALMAS IN THE ISU PROGRAM



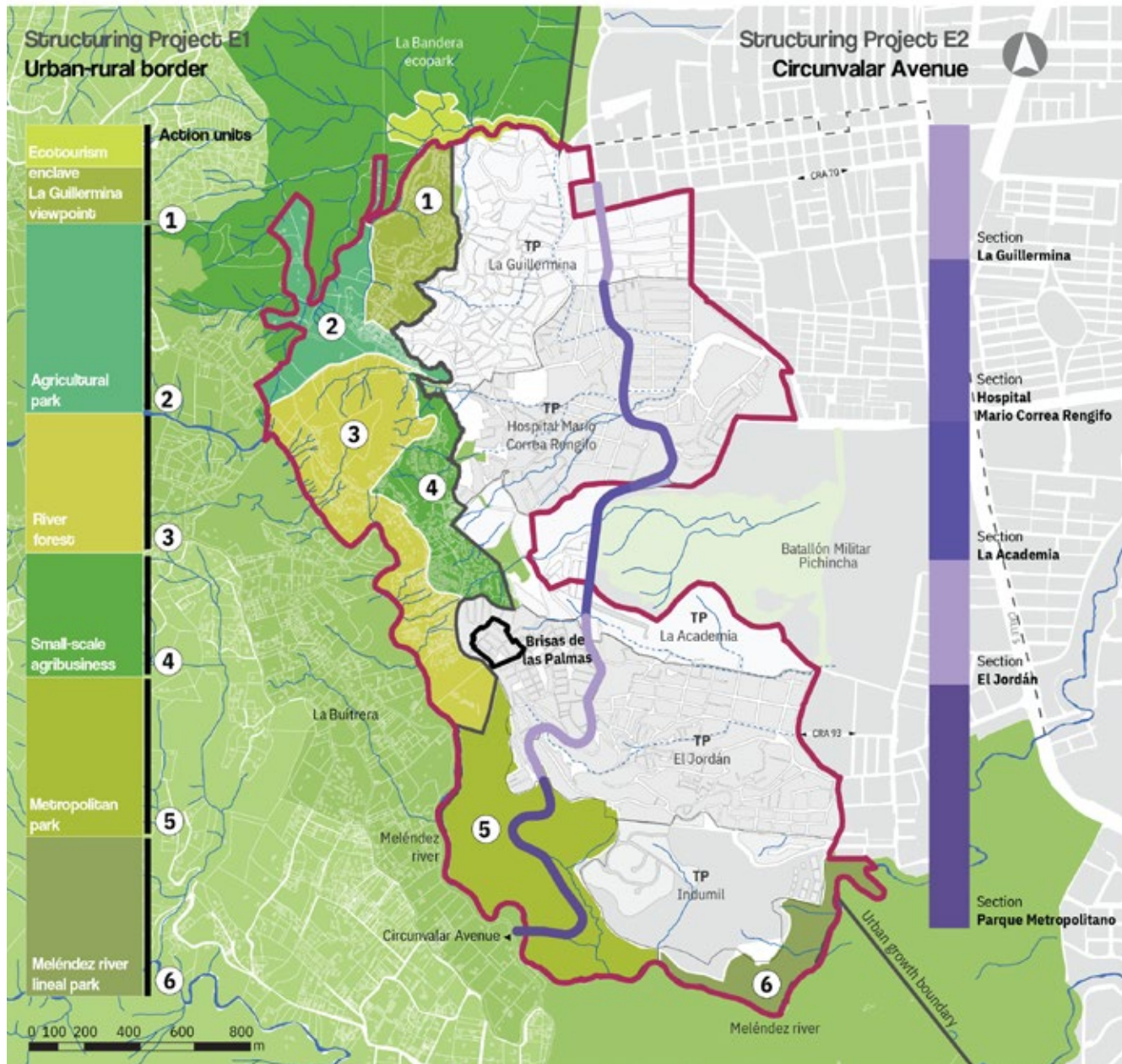
To apply the intersectional approach to the formulation stage of the ISU Program, we started from the findings of the participatory processes, the survey, and the territorial analyses carried out in the neighborhood:

- Large socio-spatial imbalances and segregation between the “formal city” and the “informal city”, even though the dividing line is porous.
- Significant number of victims of the armed conflict who live in the hillside area and continue to exercise community work such as *mingas* and bartering, traditional in their territories of origin.
- Permanent community work in the social construction of the habitat, and the preponderant role of women despite they have more economic and care burdens in the household.
- Community groups that have been working on the spatial configuration of the neighborhoods: members of the LGBTIQ+ community, ethnic-racial groups, environmental promoters, youth groups, older adults, and people with functional diversity.
- Need to work as a community to build territorial peace and guarantee more peaceful and inclusive neighborhoods with opportunities for future generations.
- Meaningful places for the community and problems associated with urban life are key to be considered to guarantee the success of the ISU process.

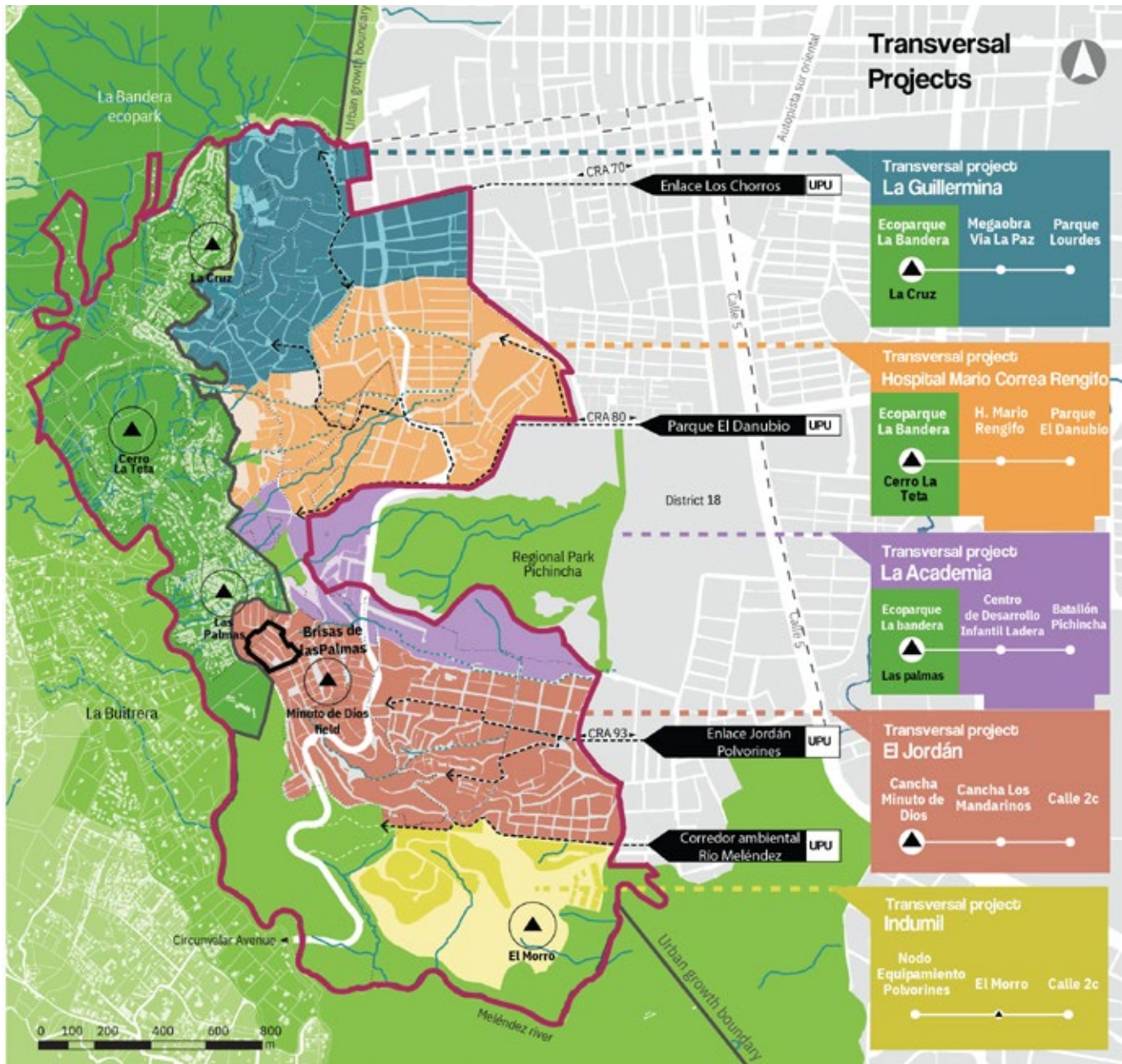
With this framework of analysis and based on the three scales addressed in the ISU Program for District 18 and its surrounding areas—mentioned in Chapter 3—, we could project land use planning and its management instruments. It was made in a way that they not only represented the premises of the planning apparatus, but recognized the contributions of the community to the social construction of the territory. Although the zonal scale of the ISU Program that covers the entire territory does not impact *Brisas de las Palmas* directly, it is important for the neighborhood since it defines the protection mechanisms for the environmental structures of the urban-rural border, and the articulation of this area with the city through the Circunvar Avenue project. It is an urban road that crosses District 18 from north to south (Map 4).

For the sectoral scale, the ISU Program proposed five projects that seek the transversal articulation of the territory from east to west. *Brisas de las Palmas* was in *El Jordán* Transversal Project, as shown in Map 5. This proposal aims to improve the connections between the eastern side (flat area) and the western side (hills), which are not expeditious due to the sloping topography and the spontaneous way in which the hillside neighborhoods were developed. To this end, the program not only considers the actions established in the city's Comprehensive Territorial Plan (Municipal Council of Santiago de Cali, 2014), but also projects proposed by the Urban Planning Unit (UPU), adopted for this area as an intermediate planning instrument (Municipal Council of Santiago de Cali, 2017).

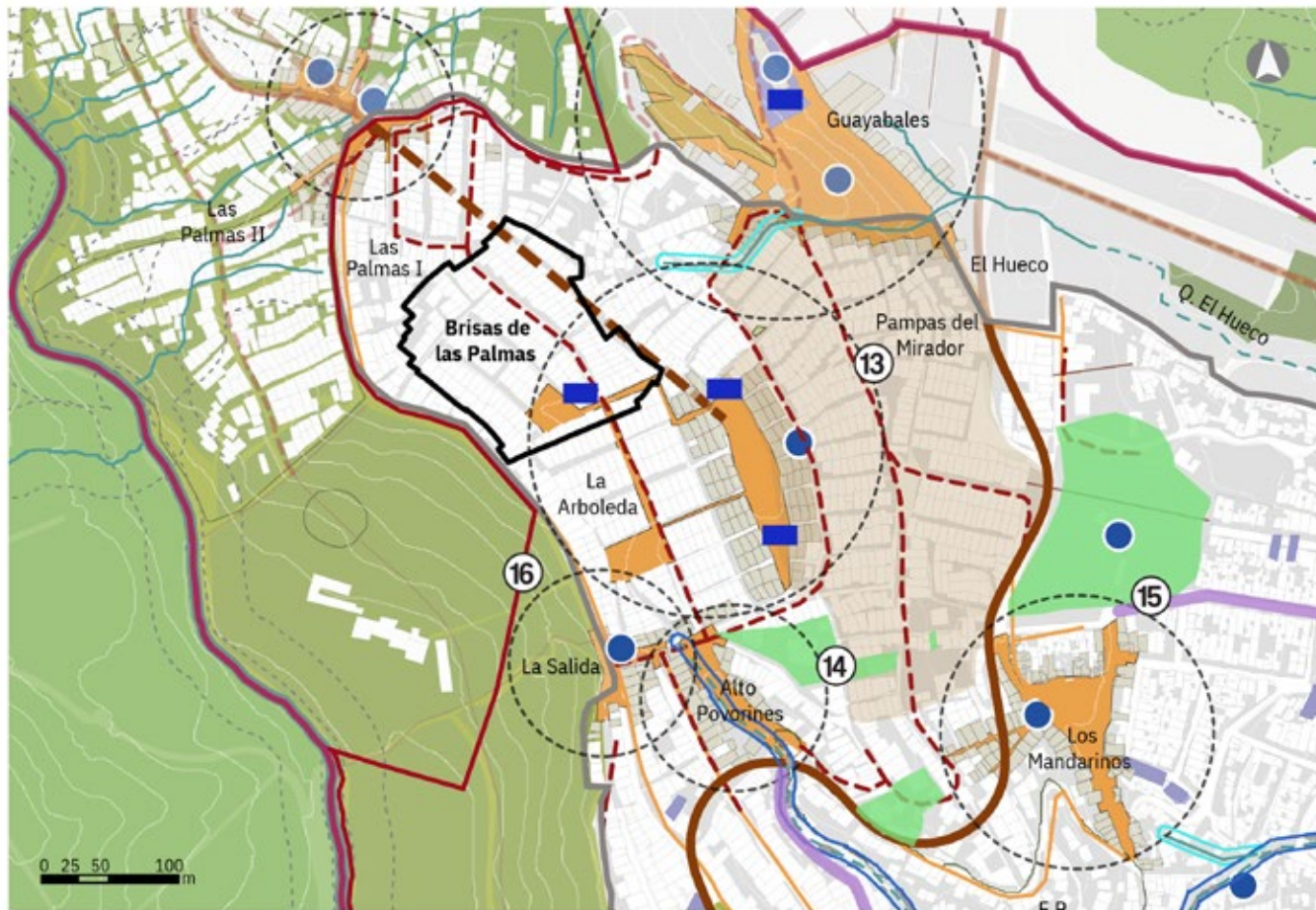
This transversal project also proposes the integration of areas recognized by the community as public spaces, and the consolidation of the nodes or 'neighborhood hearts' that have been managed by the community. To achieve a level of detail on the interventions recommended by the ISU Program, a fiche was prepared for each of the five projects. Below, we show the fragment of the sectoral proposal for *Brisas de las Palmas* that appears in *El Jordán* fiche (Map 6).



Map 4. Structuring projects of the ISU Program
Source: SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021.



Map 5. Transversal Projects of the ISU Program
Source: SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021.



Public space and facilities

- Nodes
- ⑬ Arboleda, Brisas de las Palmas, Pampas del Mirador
- ⑭ Alto Pavorines
- ⑮ Los Mandarinos
- ⑯ La Salida
- Public space, stabilization works
- Facilities City Plan
- Parks
- Proposed facilities
- Urban Planning Unit (UPU) projects

Environmental projects

- Program for the recovery of public space above streams channeled into box culverts
- Implementation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in watercourses intervened by the community
- Conservation strategies in available properties

Structured projects actions

- 1 Ecotourism enclave La Guillermina viewpoint
- 2 Agricultural Park

Mobility and accessibility projects

- Transportation: public transportation subsystem
- Road structure: pedestrian transportation subsystem
- Road structure: bicycle transport subsystem
- Road structure: public transportation subsystem
- Public transportation: cable cars
- Road structure: private transportation subsystem
- Transportation: escalator area
- Brisas de las Palmas
- Urban growth boundary

Map 6. Detail of *El Jordan* Transversal Project proposal for *Brisas de las Palmas*.
Source: SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021.

The ISU Program proposes, at this scale, to promote collective activities by improving and articulating the parks of *Brisas*, *La Arboleda*, and *Pampas del Mirador* with pedestrian routes and equipment that improves their current availability. This is part of a proposal for spatial rebalancing between the flat and hillside areas. Due to the current deficit of public space, areas of opportunity were also identified to undertake environmental conservation strategies and zero-waste pilots with the community. They have a rural vocation due to its place of origin and, as part of its local economic dynamics, they already have small-scale urban agriculture and recycling projects.

In terms of mobility and accessibility, the program seeks to improve the public, private, and alternative transportation systems' structures to ensure greater accessibility—with emphasis on people with reduced mobility—in response to the problems expressed by the community. A short aerial cable for tourism linking *El Filo* park in *Pampas del Mirador* with the rural area was also proposed. It would aim to promote income generation through community-led environmental tourism projects. These initiatives are linked to specific guidelines of the Decalogue for participatory slum upgrading described in the first chapter: 1. territorial governance; 3. infrastructure provision; 4. territorial planning; 5. solidarity economies; 6. social diversity; 8. dialogue of knowledge; 9. collective memory; and 10. climate justice.

For this scale, indicators, baseline, goals, stakeholders, and guidelines on the concrete application of the intersectional approach were defined. It enables not only a quick visualization of the transversal project's intention, it is also a clear guide to implement the proposed initiatives (Figure 21).

Finally, at the neighborhood scale, the node or centrality formed by the public spaces of *Brisas*, *La Arboleda*, and *Pampas del Mirador* stands out. This node integrates the community in recreational spaces and basic service facilities such as education, sports, and community welfare (Map 7).

Risk mitigation



Housing units in landslide high-risk areas

Goal AO: **0 units**

TP: **1 units**

TP baseline: **476 units**



Housing units in riverbanks

Goal AO: **0 units**

TP: **37 units**

TP baseline: **359 units**



Stabilisation and adaptation of high-risk landslide areas

Goal AO: **10 ha**

TP: **0,01 ha**

TP baseline: **0 ha**

Resettlement of the population located in areas of high landslide risk. Relocate the occupants of constructions.

S	M	L	P
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Resettlement of the population located on the banks of bodies of water.

S	M	L	P
---	---	---	---

Stabilisation and adaptation of areas at high risk of landslides in active erosion areas 0.01 ha.

S	M	L	P
---	---	---	---

Development of detailed studies of landslide risk. 51.32 ha.

S	M	L	P
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Actores

Secretariat of Risk Management and Disaster Response, Secretariat of Infrastructure, Secretariat of Social Housing, Administrative Department of Planning.

Conventions

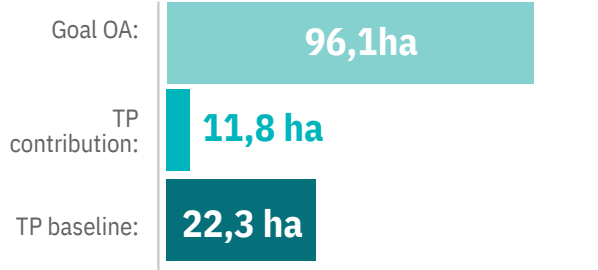
AO: Occupated Area
PT: Transversal Project

S: Short term
M: Middle term
L: Long term
P: Permanent

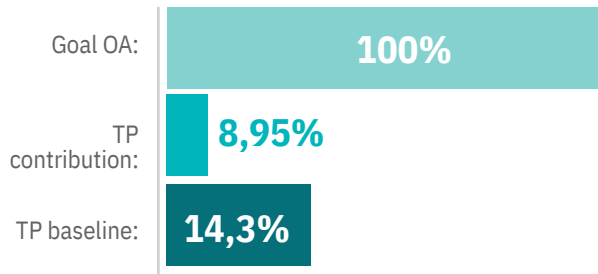
Environmental projects



Environmental protection areas associated with water bodies



Water resources



Program for the recovery of public spaces on box culverts occupied by constructions. 14.500 m² in *El Jordán*.



Implementation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in watercourses intervened by the community. 112 m in the *El Puente* stream. 75 m in tributary source of the *El Jordán* creek.



Conservation strategies for potential sites. 21.929 m² in the Transversal Project *El Jordán*.



Environmental education for effective actions. 6 sessions per year at each of the informal settlements.



Rain water management program with nature based solutions (NBS) 11,84 ha.



Actores

Administrative Department of Environmental Management, Secretariat of Social Housing, Administrative Department of Planning, District 18 Environmental Committee and community.

Conventions

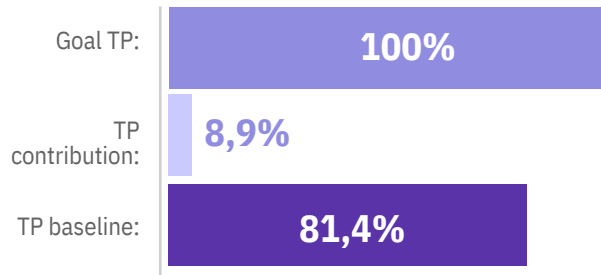
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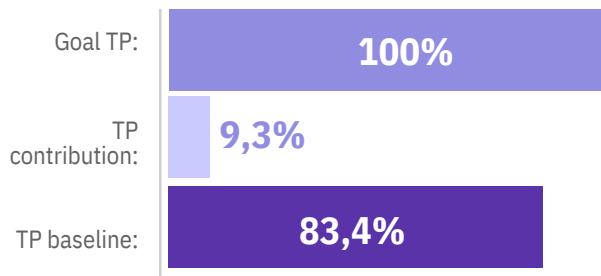
Network upgrading



Area with water supply



Area with sewerage



Replacement and normalization of water and sewerage networks.

IS: *Las Palmas I, Alto Polvorines, Brisas de las Palmas, Pampas del Mirador, La Arboleda y Mandarinos* prioritized through the project for the Normalization of Informal Settlements. (IS) District 18 (2020-2023).



Technical study of hydraulic infrastructures.



Rehabilitation and modernization of the infrastructure of streams in box culverts. 14.500 m² in *El Jordán* creek.



Maintenance of sanitary and rain sewer infrastructures. Separation of sewerage combined infrastructures.



Actores

Municipal Utilities Company, Secretariat of Infrastructure, Secretariat of Social Housing, Administrative Department of Environmental Management, Administrative Department of Planning and community.

Conventions

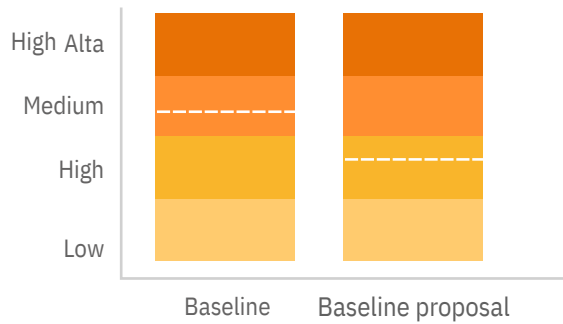
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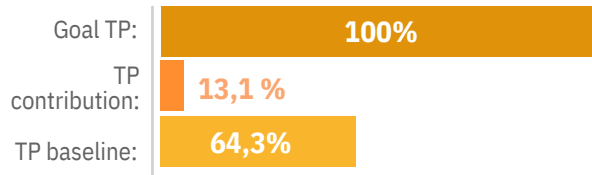
Mobility and accessibility



Formal public transport density



Percentage of vehicular lanes in good condition



Mobility infrastructure:

- Design and implementation of cycling infrastructure: 2,1 km; *Las Palmas I, Brisas de las Palmas, La Arboleda, Alto Polvorines, Algarrobos, Mandarininos.*
- Infraestructure design: 0.9 km; *Pampas del Mirador, Mandarininos, Algarrobos, Alto Polvorines.*
- Pedestrian infrastructure upgrading: 0.2 km; *Alto Jordán* neighborhood.
- Road infrastructure upgrading: 1.4 km; *Las Palmas I, Brisas de las Palmas, La Arboleda, Alto Polvorines.*

S M L P

Transport:

- Expansion of BRT-MIO card recharging points: 9 units; *Pampas del Mirador, Alto Polvorines, La Arboleda y Mandarininos; Sector Alto Jordán, El Jordán* neighborhoods.
- Bicycle rack equipment: PCISU entire target area.
- BRT-MIO's stop distribution: PCISU entire target area.

S M L P

Bicycle racks: 2 units; *Alto Jordán, El Jordán* neighborhoods.
BRT-MIO's routes articulation: 0.8 km; *Alto Polvorines, Mandarininos, Algarrobos.*

S M L P

Cable car proposal: 0.3 km; *Las Palmas I, Brisas de las Palmas.*
Scalators: *Pampas del Mirador, Mandarininos.*

S M L P

Traffic control and management:

- Road management study: PMIH entire target area.
- Traffic management and control plan.

S M L P

Actores

Secretariat of Mobility, Secretariat of Infrastructure, Administrative Department of Planning, MetroCali and Gualas Cooperative.

Conventions

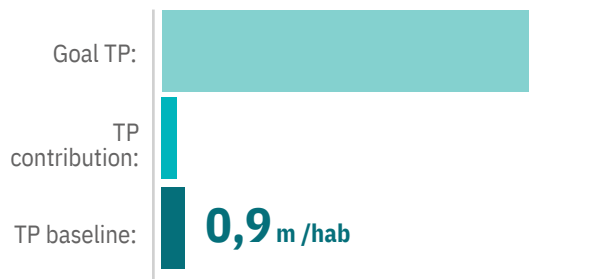
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Public facilities



Public facilities



Upgrading of existing public facilities:

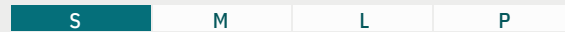
- Education: 883 m².
- Pedestrian path: 2.830 m².
- Social welfare: 1.001 m².
- Health: 305 m².



Construction of social welfare facilities in nodes.



Upgrading of education facilities in nodes.



Integration of facilities in public spaces located in environmental recovery areas.



Actores

Secretariat of Education, Public Health, Culture, Territorial Development and Social Welfare, Sports and Recreation Secretariat.

Conventions

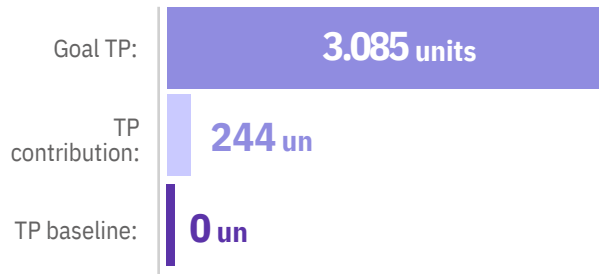
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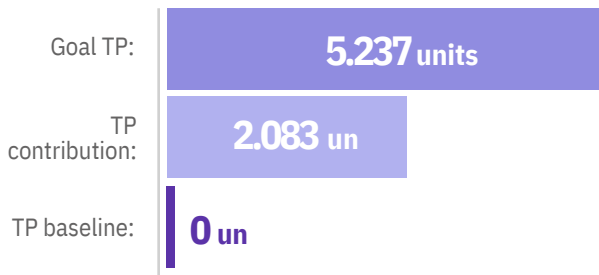
Upgrading and resettlement



Resettlement



Upgrading



Housing units to be resettled in the sector:

- High risk: 1 building.
- Dwellings occupying watercourses (covered and open-air): 37 buildings.
- Housing in environmentally fragile areas (other than watercourses): 31 buildings.
- Dwellings affected by the construction of the Avenida Circunvalar. at risk from high-voltage power lines: 8 buildings.
- Dwellings affected by the construction of the Avenida Circunvalar. at risk from high-voltage power lines.
- Resettlements: 244 buildings.



Homes to be upgraded in the sector (constructions with a qualitative deficit greater than 20%): 2.083 units.



Actores

Secretariat of Risk Management and Disaster Response, Secretariat of Social Housing.

Conventions

AO: Occupated Area
PT: Transversal Project

S: Short term
M: Middle term
L: Long term
P: Permanent

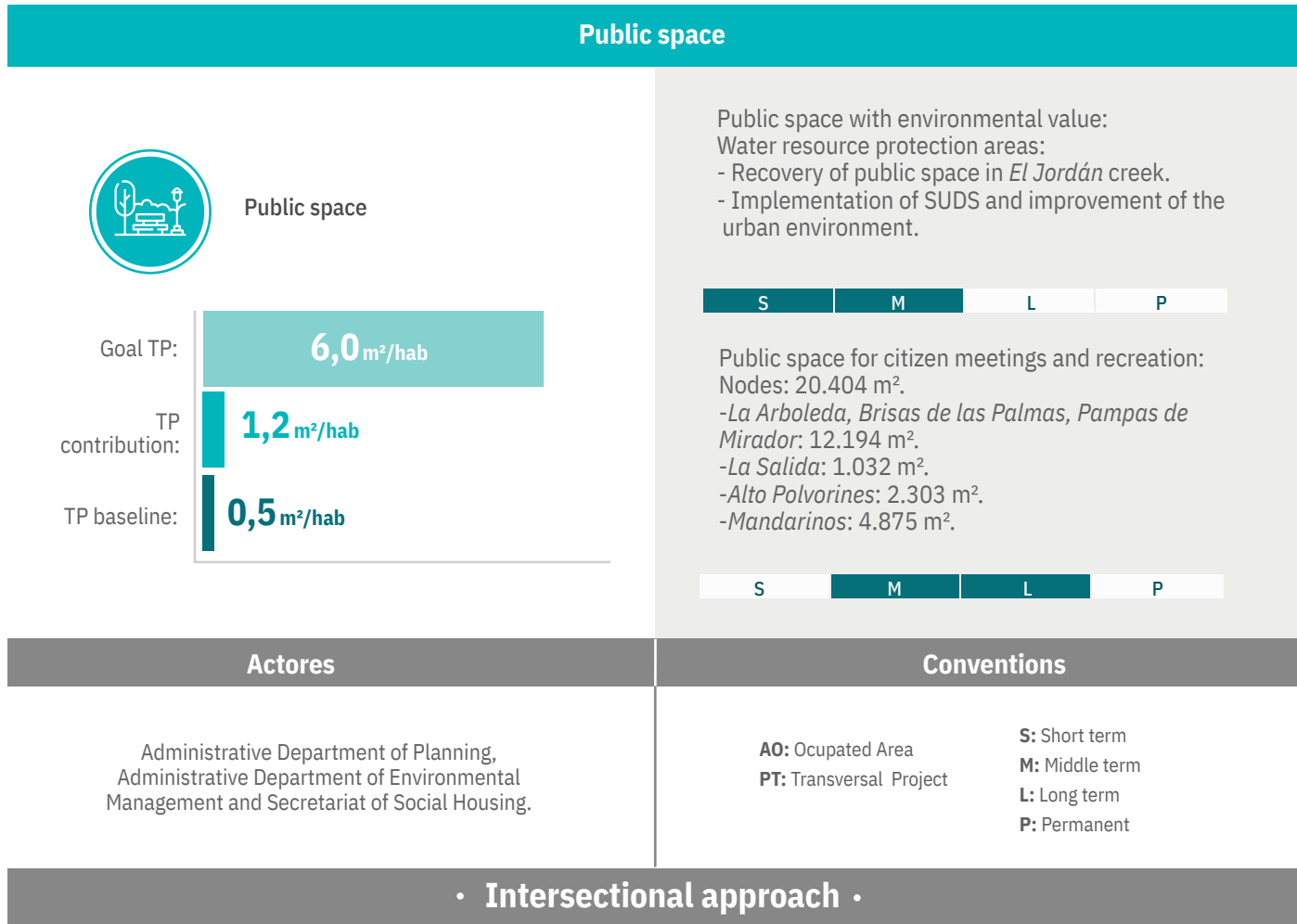
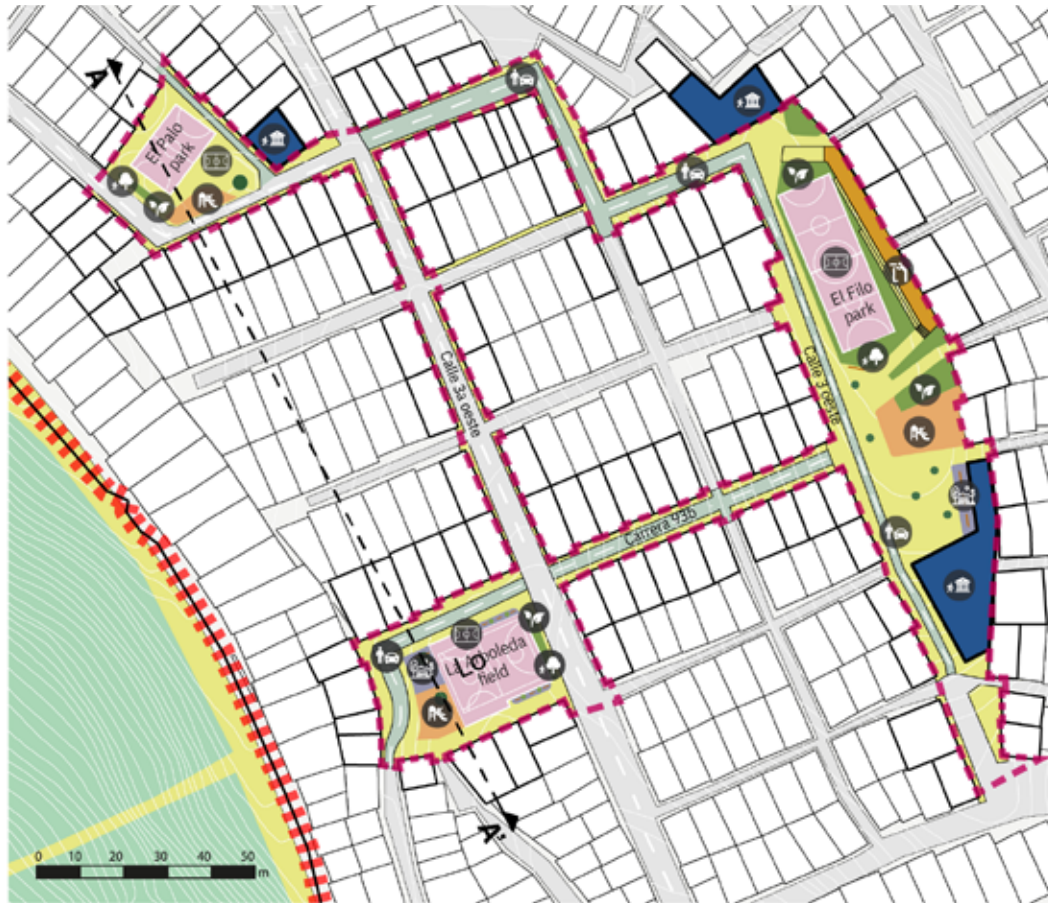
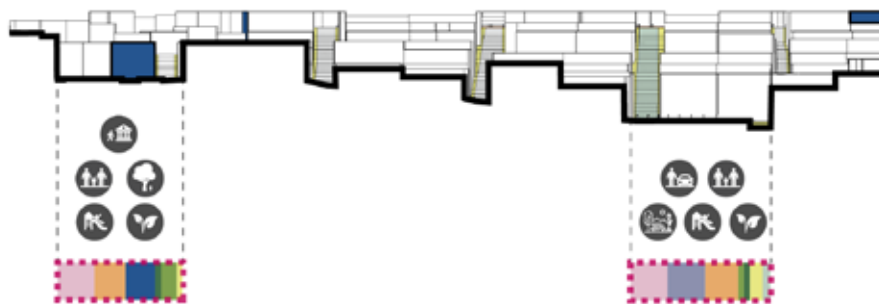


Figure 21. Example of indicators, baseline, goals, actors, and intersectional approach, El Jordán Transversal Project.

Source: SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021.



- Road improvement
- Facilities
- Sport facilities
- Children's playground
- Tree planting
- Sidewalk improvement
- Node area
- Urban growth boundary



Map 7 and Section 1. Proposals for the *Brisas de las Palmas*, *La Arboleda*, and *Pampas del Mirador* node.
 Source: SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021.

At this scale, the ISU Program reaches an important level of detail both in terms of location and design of public spaces, and in the definition of guidelines to implement complementary projects and achieve a comprehensive improvement of the area (Figures 22a and 22b).

In sum, using the methodological strategy of project-based territorial planning and a participatory planning scheme, the ISU Program with an intersectional approach determined, with a high level of detail, the actions, indicators, and goals for each scale of intervention. In addition to providing the institutions in charge of implementing the program with a solid roadmap to materialize what was planned, this strategy enables measuring the impact on both the socioeconomic and physical-spatial dimensions. In this context, the architectural scale is presented below and shows an example of participatory design of *El Palo* park in *Brisas de las Palmas*.



Figure 22a. Axonometry of the *Brisas-Arboleda-Pampas del Mirador* Node
 Source: SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021.

	Actions		Stakeholders
Environmental projects	<p>Construction of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cobblestone pavements for runoff retention and infiltration. - Rain gardens for runoff retention, treatment, and filtration. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative Department of Environmental Management - Valle del Cauca Autonomous Regional Corporation - Environmental Committee - Community
Network upgrading	<p><i>Brisas de las Palmas, Pampas del Mirador, La Arboleda and Mandarinos</i> are neighborhoods prioritized through the project for the Standardization of utilities network infrastructure in informal settlements in District 18 (2020-2023).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal Utilities Company - Secretariat of Social Housing
Mobility and accessibility	<p>Mobility infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Road infrastructure upgrading: roadbed of the corridor on West 3C Street, Carrera 90A, West 3A Street, section between Carrera 90 and Circunvalar Avenue. - Pedestrian infrastructure upgrading. 	<p>Transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General integration project of the BRT-MIO through cable car transport. - Escalators: biblioteca - <i>El Filo</i> connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Secretariat of Mobility -Secretariat of Infrastructure -Administrative Department of Planning -MetroCali -Gualas Cooperative
Public space	<p>Upgrading of public space for citizen meetings and recreation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paving area: 4,781 m². - Green area: 800 m². - Viewpoint: 135 m². - Children playground: 327 m². - Area for passive recreation: 126 m². - Sports court: 721 m². 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative Department of Planning - Administrative Department of Environmental Management - Secretariat of Social Housing
Public facilities	<p>Renovation and refurbishment of existing buildings to incorporate community development facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>El Filo</i> park: school 470 m², community house 200 m², multipurpose room 80 m² and courts 672 m². - <i>El Palo</i> park: community dining room 127 m², multipurpose room 127 m². - <i>La Arboleda</i> court: multipurpose court 600 m². 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secretariat of Education -Secretariat of Public Health - Secretariat of Culture - Secretariat of Territorial Development and Social Welfare. - Secretariat of Sports and Recreation

Figure 22b. Details for the implementation of the *Brisas-Arboleda-Pampas del Mirador Node*.
Source: SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021.



PARTICIPATORY DESIGN OF *EL PALO* PARK



As part of the implementation of the ISU Program in *Brisas de las Palmas*, we defined the design of *El Palo* park as one of the actions to be implemented in the neighborhood, considering its importance for the community, but also the problems to be solved. Based on the results of the four participatory design phases explained in Chapter 3, the main objective of the project was to facilitate the simultaneous development of recreational activities, so that the park can be enjoyed by people of different age groups at the same time. A reorganization based on current use allowed us to better delimit the activities to reduce the possibilities of oppression, tension, or conflict expressed during the workshops. As shown in Figures 23 and 24, the park design was configured around three clearly differentiated sectors:

- **Sector A:** the playground area is reorganized with an extension towards the street using floor textures and colors designed to slow down the vehicular traffic in the neighborhood in order to protect the children using the park.
- **Sector B:** setting a small square that becomes an atrium and expanding the community center that also serves as a dining room. In this way, we achieve a spatial extension of the community center and a projection of communal activities into the public space.
- **Sector C:** the community defined it as an area for sports, whose clearer delimitation and peripheral protections seek to reduce conflict and inconveniences with neighbors due to sports played on the court.

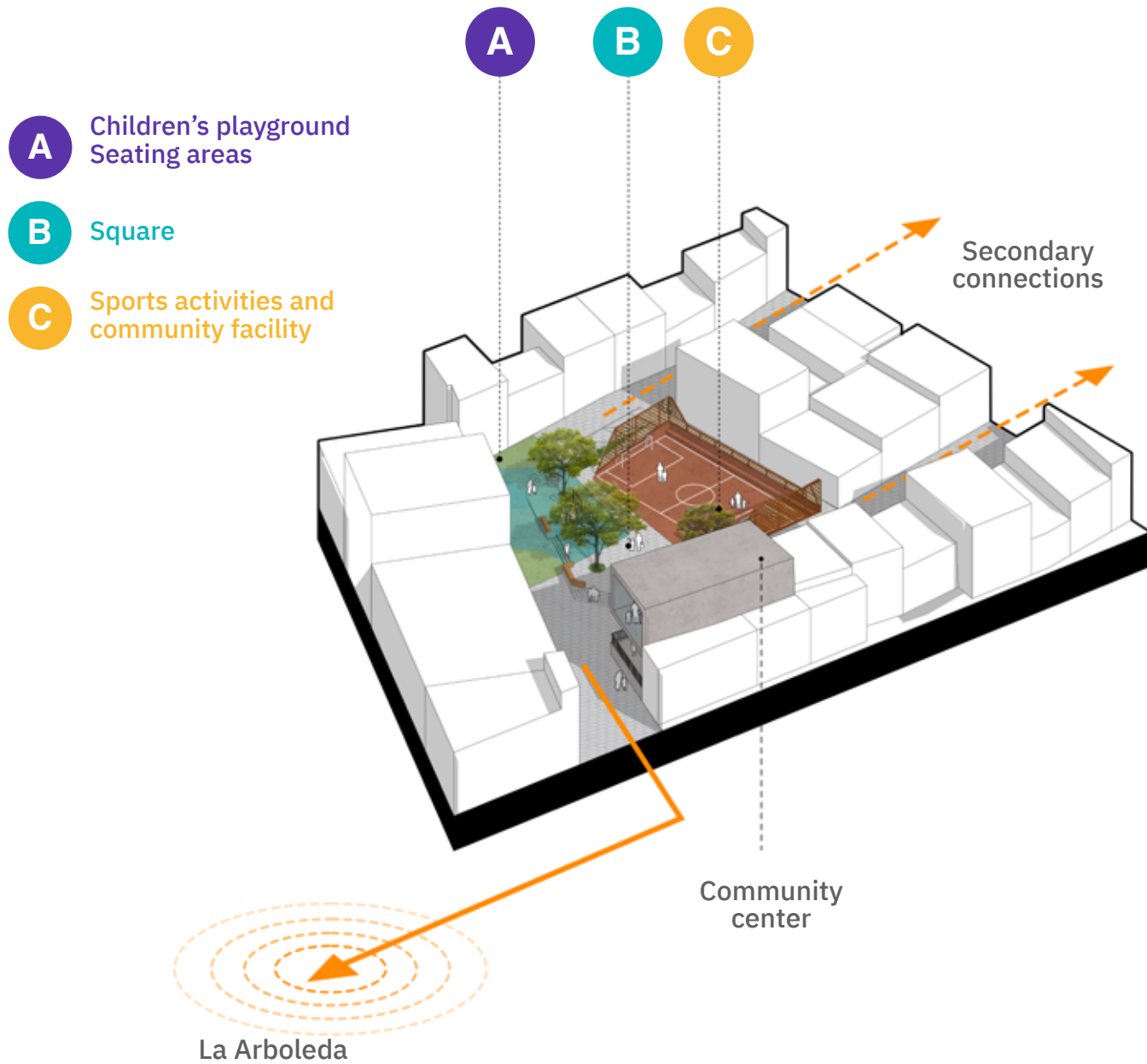


Figure 23. Axonometry of *El Palo park*
Source: Diego Valencia, Open Arquitectura, SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021.

A Area: 227,76 m²

B Area: 100,13 m²

C Area: 501,56 m²

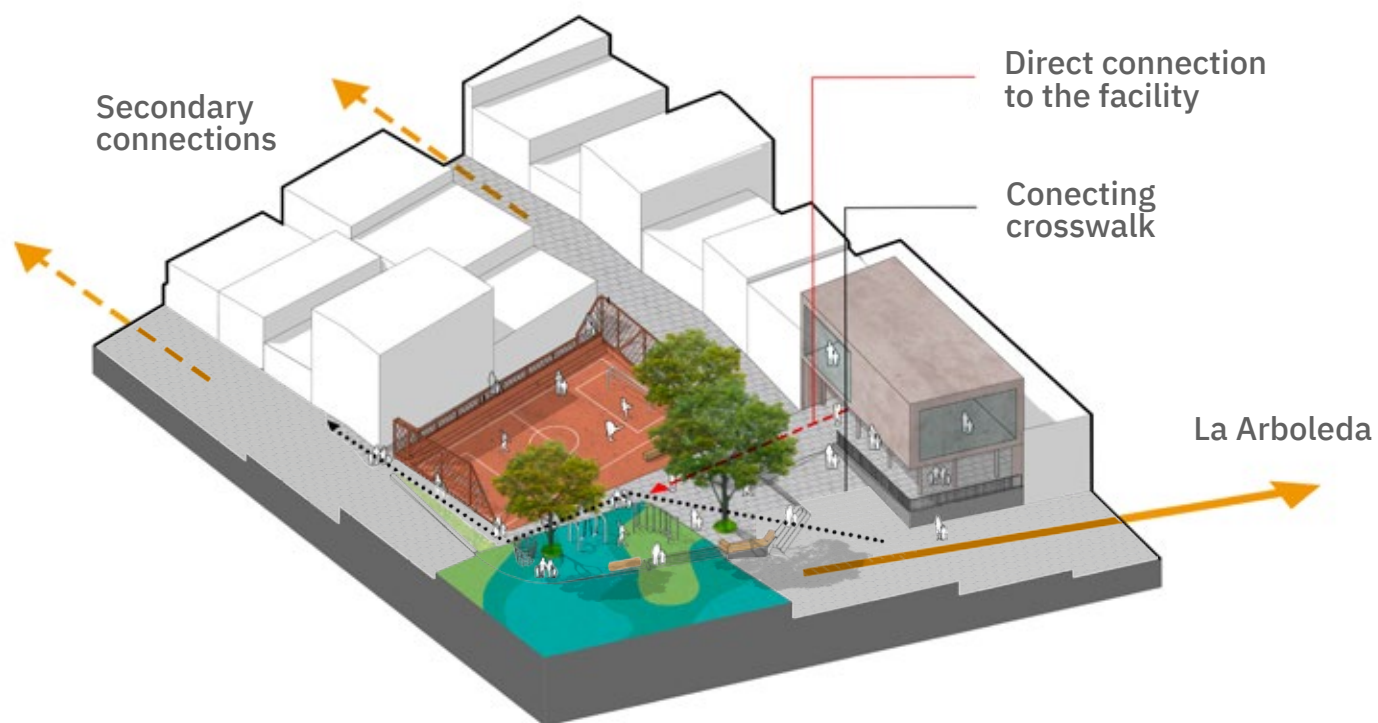


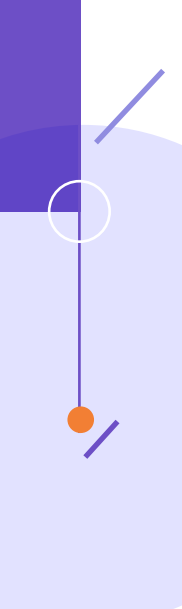
Figure 24. Axonometry of *El Palo* park and connection to the community center
Source: Diego Valencia, Open Arquitectura, SVSH and *Universidad del Valle*, 2021.

The intentional separation of the court, the passive recreation space, and the extension of the community center in direct relation to the children's playground seeks to improve coexistence in the park and provide safe and adequate spaces for each population group. To meet these objectives, we resorted to design strategies such as the clear definition of spaces by changing textures, colors, and vertical architectural elements such as transparent and low barriers in the court, which seek to reduce the impact of sports activities on neighboring homes (Figure 25).

Finally, the atrium created for the community center emerged from the co-design workshops carried out with the community. This space will facilitate a more comfortable interaction between users who visit the park daily, not only for the informative activities of the Community Action Board, but also for a better functioning of the community dining room.



Figure 25. Pre-figuration images for the improvement of *El Palo* park. Source: Diego Valencia, Open Arquitectura, SVSH and Universidad del Valle, 2021.



ART AND CONSTRUCTION OF URBAN TERRITORIAL PEACE



I learned life lessons, art teaches us not to reject others because of their gender or color. I learned how to act and how not to laugh during scenes (Michelle, young woman, 16 years old).

The theatrical performances of children and young people become a sort of reflection on their daily lives, their family relationships, their emotions, and concerns. The work on *tableaux vivants* focused on staging scenes on two main themes: drug addiction and racial discrimination. Based on illustrations presented by the facilitators of the drama workshops, we held discussions on their meaning; then, participants proposed fixed scenes about what they wanted to represent. For example, in one of the workshops, participants proposed the *tableau vivant* of an Afro-descendant girl who did not know how to multiply and who was teased, instead of receiving support from her classmates. With the older participants, the scenes had a greater emphasis on drug addiction.

In addition to this activity, the **body photographs** became a learning tool that revealed multiple perceptions and interests of the participants, from family life mediated by the eroticism of young people to the creation of sports scenes in which the children are champions of a soccer tournament. They also expressed their role in community work and explained how they contribute to cleaning activities in the neighborhood to protect the environment.

The narrative of these photographs was driven by everyday dynamics. For example, the oldest in the group chose to represent love scenes; they are experiencing their first erotic-affective relationships. Soccer is the main recreational-integrative activity that children and young people have in the neighborhood, so it was given prominence in their representations. Those who addressed environmental care are participating in recycling workshops with their parents.

In the **storytelling meetings**, two scenes were created to tell experiences lived in situations of personal conflicts and concerns. The first one was related to the problems of some residents for not having title deeds, and the second was about the Covid-19 pandemic and the urgency of finding a vaccine.

STORY 1. A person sells a house and then the buyers realize that it has faulty water pipes. The seller does not want to pay to fix the damage and the buyers go to the police. In the end, the seller agrees to fix the damage and they reach an agreement.

STORY 2. The story takes place in a laboratory in the United States where scientists are working on the development of a vaccine against Covid-19. In the end, they break one of the test containers, which causes everyone to become infected.

As a learning experience, we realized that workshops allowed participants to get to know their neighborhood peers better and to identify aspects of their lives of which they were unaware. Likewise, we corroborated that art and play are appropriate strategies to promote the encounter around playful activities, to consolidate gestures of peace among adults, youth, boys and girls, and reflect on daily conflicts and violence in the neighborhood.

The first time I did not want to come because it seemed silly, but when I came, that is when I started to like it. I felt very good with the games and with my classmates. You must be obedient and support others (Kleider, boy, 10 years old).



Photograph 31. Playful activity with children and youth. Source: Luisa Fernanda Afanador, 2021.



Photograph 32. Delivery of certificates of the theater workshops. Source: Laura Carrillo, 2021.

With respect to drama as an artistic expression, the activities brought out the talents of some participants, who saw an academic and professional alternative in it. The activities showed them that they could express themselves fluently in public and that theater could be a vehicle to overcome some attitudes they considered negative such as envy, divisions, and apathy to participate in cultural events.

I really liked learning how to speak with no shame when people are looking at me, I learned respect and how to tell stories. Art means to create, to express oneself, and I want to repeat this experience (Mabel, girl, 11 years old).

Theater also allowed them to express their dreams of possible worlds for themselves, their families, and the neighborhood; as well as to recognize comedy as a way to bring messages of peace and mutual respect.

Additionally, identifying individual talents was important for building self-esteem. One of the most problematic children at the beginning, due to his hyperactivity and lack of concentration, had a particular form of expression that eventually turned him into one of the group's leaders.

The neighborhood leaders were consulted about the results of the drama workshops, they concluded that the activities helped fostering a culture of peace in the children and young people, who became closer because they started working as a team and improved their collaborative disposition and ways of relating to each other. It was also possible to see how some parents demonstrated their sense of belonging by encouraging their children to participate in recreational activities to make better use of their free time. Finally, for the neighborhood residents who accompanied this activity more closely, it became evident that it is necessary to diversify cultural activities for young people to promote fun and learning beyond soccer.



The application of the intersectional approach in ISU programs is a new proposal arising in Cali through the research projects *City and Peace*, GREAT, and the collaborative work among communities, the Secretariat of Social Housing and Habitat, and *Universidad del Valle*. This novel initiative seeks to transcend the physical-spatial approach that characterizes public interventions in poor neighborhoods. As infrastructure works are more visible, central aspects such as social inclusion and citizen participation are tangentially addressed or even overlooked. This chapter presents a series of lessons learned and reflections on methods, results, and planning and management of the ISU with an intersectional approach. The last section highlights the opportunity to build urban territorial peace through comprehensive upgrading processes in neighborhoods that have emerged mainly because of rural-urban migration in contexts of violence and poverty.



LEARNINGS ABOUT RESEARCH METHODS



Informal settlement upgrading programs focus on providing a better quality of life to the inhabitants of self-managed neighborhoods, which are known by inequity in access to utilities, concentration of poverty, uncertainty about land and housing tenure. However, they are also known by a high degree of solidarity and the ability of neighbors to work together and promote collective initiatives. To transcend conventional approaches, methodologies, and planning analyses in these urban areas, it is necessary to incorporate new tools such as intersectionality, which constitutes an analytical strategy that provides a broader vision of social relations, inequalities, and potentials in specific territories and communities.

In this context, the participatory action-research project *City and Peace* focused on exploring innovative methods and testing them with the *Brisas de las Palmas* community to propose new ways of approaching the ISU and bring the inhabitants closer to the processes, and the institutions closer to the territories, so that the proposed solutions are more in line with reality. In terms of methods, multiple lessons were learned:

The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods with an intersectional approach provides a real picture of a neighborhood from multiple perspectives. It facilitates recognizing and appreciating the community management and organization spaces, in addition to the trajectories, achievements, and challenges shared by the inhabitants. In this sense, the intersectional approach enables a holistic understanding of personal and collective situations that take place in this space. It goes beyond the territorial configuration to incorporate social, economic, and cultural dimensions. It also reveals forms of interaction between individuals and groups among them and with the territory.



Photograph 33. Workshop on the intersectional matrix. Source: Néstor David Velásquez, 2021.



Photograph 34. Active pause during theater workshops with children and youth. Source: Néstor David Velásquez, 2021.

The transformation of oral memory into written memory of a neighborhood enables compiling a historical archive and learning about the evolution of the space built through self-management processes. Activities such as the creation of the timeline also make visible the challenges and achievements shared over time, **strengthen the sense of belonging**, and involve more children and young people in community initiatives. The historical reconstruction of the neighborhood invites them to look back to the outcomes of the solidarity processes.

Socioeconomic surveys with an intersectional approach should include variables that make possible to cross-reference factors of advantage or disadvantage inherent to individuals (ethnicity, race, origin, gender, functional diversity, etc.) and questions that account for the **perceptions of neighborhood inhabitants about their territory** (coexistence, participation, community initiatives, etc.). They can also include questions that allow the respondent to answer based on comparisons with other areas of the city to motivate deeper reflections on the quality of collective spaces (parks, streets, squares, basic facilities, among others), and on the role of the neighborhood in the city.

For the **construction of narratives**, the horizontal relationship with the community through principles such as action without harm is fundamental. Working under this premise facilitates permanent, fluid, and respectful dialogues that stimulate activities and enable the construction of new knowledge on community management, memory, and social resilience as relevant aspects in ISU processes.

Intersectional mapping makes aspects related to the feelings and perceptions of the inhabitants of a territory visible, both individually and collectively. Maps resulting from these exercises become fundamental tools for decision-making on specific ISU actions and projects. For example, working on the conflicts between groups through the appropriate design of public space contributes directly to improve intangible aspects such as coexistence, appropriation, and care of the place. Moreover, there are visible contributions such as the healthy recreation of residents in a place that meets infrastructure quality requirements.

Community participation in the development of projects in informal settlements that traditionally work spontaneously and with high levels of organization. To that extent, this characteristic of communities that have built neighborhoods and housing on their own should be leveraged in ISU processes. Both in those and in the specific case of *City and Peace*, phased participation processes were fundamental to meet the goals. Each project must be thought out individually so that the result responds precisely to the place and the community that inhabits it.

The inclusion of art in ISU processes facilitates the work with children and young people to learn about their unique perspectives, realities, problems, concerns, and dreams about the neighborhood.

In practical terms, **the use of free and open-source software for mapping, surveys, and statistical analysis** contributes to the democratization of access to new technologies and to the construction of public data that can be used by communities and grassroots organizations to manage projects, and by decision makers and academics in areas related to urban studies.



LEARNINGS REGARDING ISU PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT



An applied academic research project such as *City and Peace* has the potential to facilitate respectful and constructive interactions among the community, public institutions, and third sector organizations. The ISU is a long-term, dynamic, and progressive process, to that extent, projects of this nature should aim at building a solid multi-stakeholder relationship to develop contextualized proposals that respond adequately to the complex challenges of self-managed neighborhoods.

- **Ignoring the value of citizen participation and intersectional approach in urban processes based solely on the physical-spatial dimension** can contribute to the reproduction of oppressions experienced by individuals or groups in a given territory. Therefore, exploring an innovative approach to urban planning that articulates the ISU with the notion of intersectionality is considered valuable.
- We recommend to **build indicators, baselines, and precise goals in the implementation of ISU programs with an intersectional approach.** This will enable measuring the impact of actions in the neighborhoods including social, economic, and cultural aspects, and monitoring the effectiveness of municipal administrations in the implementation of plans, programs, and projects.
- To transcend the conventional physical-spatial approach in ISU processes, we recommend **incorporating the intersectional approach in urban studies and territorial planning training programs.** They can cover both undergraduate and graduate students as well as open courses for consultants and public officials working in areas related to



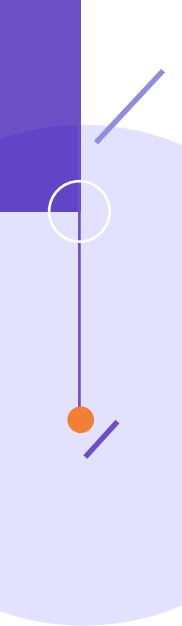
Photo 35. Wooden house in front of *El Palo* park
Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.



Photograph 36. Panoramic view from one of the streets of *Brisas de las Palmas*
Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.

planning, housing, environment, peace building, economic development, and community participation, among other areas. This novel approach to urban processes can promote innovative methods that include the dynamics of informal settlements, the interrelationships of the natural and built environments, and the community processes that contribute to the ongoing transformation of territories.

- The intersectional approach offers public institutions the opportunity to **articulate and strengthen public projects related to urban management** through the design of initiatives with a comprehensive perspective of the settlements and the communities that inhabit them.



ABOUT THE BRISAS DE LAS PALMAS CASE STUDY



The violence resulting from the armed conflict in Colombia contributed to the transformation of the spatial configuration of urban areas—mainly in capital cities—through the spontaneous occupation and social construction of habitats in the city outskirts. *Brisas de las Palmas* is one among hundreds of neighborhoods with a history related to the conflict and the forced migration derived from it. There, day by day, communities seek to improve their living conditions to ensure a promising future for their families.

In recent years, due to the crisis generated by the Covid-19 pandemic that began in 2020 and lasted for two years, plus the National Strike accompanied by a social outburst in 2021, which had its maximum expression in Cali. Both the demonstrations and the contradictory responses of government sectors and some social segments showed the different faces of the conflict; a segregated city in which social divisions became even more visible. In the case of *Brisas de las Palmas*, where the *City and Peace* project was developed during the pandemic and the strikes, the main lessons learned were the following:

- **Informal settlements in the southwestern slope of Cali, such as *Brisas de las Palmas*, have spatial-temporal logics linked to ethnic-racial and cultural relations rooted in their inhabitants, who come mainly from rural areas.** This is evidenced by vegetable gardens in the small spaces of the houses, their own medical beliefs, community work based on indigenous traditions such as *minga* and barter, neighborhood festivals, and participation in city and nation building as a right of every citizen. *Brisas* is understood, then, as the vindication of the right to live the city and the right to multiculturalism in urban space.



Photograph 37. Girl from *Brisas de las Palmas* enjoying the playground at *El Palo park*.
Source: Miguel Galeano, Monoceja, 2021.

- **Community work and the continuous improvement of collective spaces through self-managed processes** contribute effectively to the consolidation of informal settlements.
- **It is urgent that the ISU acquires more relevance in the public agenda of Colombia and Cali.** Although the program formulated for District 18 and its surrounding areas, in which *Brisas de las Palmas* is a pilot that provides new knowledge on this type of processes, we must not ignore the fact that the growth of informal settlements in the peripheries of the city is still a latent problem that requires concrete projects and public investment. Actions should be aimed at improving collective spaces and housing, as well as promoting coexistence, inclusion, respect for differences, income generation and, in general, opportunities to improve the quality of life of inhabitants of poor neighborhoods.
- As in various aspects of daily life, **care work, both in individual and collective terms, has been endorsed to women.** In the case study, they lead the main initiatives for habitat improvement, peace building, coexistence, and support to the most vulnerable groups. These burdens should be balanced, and women's work should be more visible in ISU processes with an intersectional approach.



Photograph 38. Workshop on the intersectional matrix
Source: *City and Peace* project archive, 2021.

- **The recognition and legitimacy of the neighborhood leaders by their community is relevant.** It generates trust in the community management and contributes to promote their actions focused on habitat upgrading through self-managed collective projects.
- The intersectional approach facilitates **interaction with the community based on the identification of common elements among people, that is, identities** that led them to build a neighborhood on the hillside of Cali. In addition, it allows to clearly identify the contexts and realities of *Brisas de las Palmas* as a neighborhood of informal origin and what it has meant in the lives of its inhabitants.

The final reflections indicate that the *City and Peace* project harmoniously linked diverse fields of knowledge such as architecture, urban planning, sociology, communication, and drama as mechanisms to implement the ISU with an intersectional approach. This allowed us to know the territory by

recognizing, invigorating, and valuing the contributions of people of different ages, ethnicities, identities, and origins. Applying intersectionality to urban studies allowed us to go beyond the triad of individual categories (race, gender, and class) to incorporate, in an innovative way, other categories related to territory and collective life.

If we really want to change the downward spiral of poverty and inequity that affect a significant number of people in Latin America and other countries of the Global South, it is necessary to focus public, private, and third sector human and financial resources on initiatives that recognize and support the efforts of communities in the social production of habitat. The articulated work between the inhabitants of *Brisas de las Palmas*, the work team of *Universidad del Valle*, and the Secretariat of Social Housing and Habitat of Cali demonstrates that it is possible to develop novel methods based on projects that admit multiple perspectives and that value local knowledge and community participation in a special way.

This experience and the lessons learned from it are an invitation to see the informal settlement upgrading through an intersectional lens; one that enhances it, complements it, and provides new ideas to carry out projects according to the complex realities of popular neighborhoods.



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