

**I HAVE
TO
SPEAK**

COLOMBIA AND UGANDA
**FEMALE EX-COMBATANTS
IN THEIR OWN VOICES**

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IN MEMORY OF ELIANA GONZÁLEZ

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet seeks to amplify some of the hidden and forgotten voices in conflict. The stories of female ex-combatants from diverse political, religious, ethnic and national backgrounds show that women and their experiences of armed conflict and its aftermath have to be taken seriously for building sustainable peace.

These are their stories as they tell them to each other. Two ex-combatant women collected the stories, reflecting as they did so on their lives before joining the groups, their time as women in war, and how their lives unfolded once they returned to civilian life. Theirs are stories of community and camaraderie, of life and death, of joy and suffering, perseverance and resistance, and of rebuilding lives after war and continuing the struggle in peaceful ways.



This booklet contains descriptions of violence and sexual violence against minors that may be harmful to some readers.

THE PROJECT BACKGROUND

The stories are the result of a participatory action research project, which collected first-hand knowledge on female ex-combatants' experiences during and after armed conflict in Colombia and Uganda. It analysed the various challenges, opportunities and lessons learned by women who were members of non-state armed groups in both contexts. Women in both groups had vastly different experiences, in terms of how they became members of the group, what their roles were during the conflict and how this time shaped their lives post-conflict. This underlines the importance of not homogenising the experiences of female ex-combatants but highlighting how their different experiences shape their lives. Still, some similarities between contexts are striking, such as the stigma the women often face from their communities, the lack of educational and socio-economic opportunities for them and their children, and the need to turn to each other for support.

Two researchers, one from Colombia and one from Uganda, with support from partner organisations in each context, lead the development of the research questions, interview questionnaires, participant selection and interview process. 23 women and one man, the son of combatants, shared their stories with the researchers and all of them are included in this booklet. Following on from the Berghof Foundation's work with non-state armed groups, former female combatants had expressed a desire to have their experiences – both positive and negative – collected and shared within their own societies, in other conflict-affected contexts and with an international audience. Since 2018, with funding from GIZ and in collaboration with partner organisations, we have supported female ex-combatants from Aceh (Indonesia), Burundi, Mindanao (Philippines) and Nepal, and now from Colombia and Uganda in recording video interviews with their peers and presenting the results to other female combatants from their own and other contexts.

COLOMBIA

The origins of the over 50-year-long civil war in Colombia go back to clashes between impoverished and dispossessed peasants and the Colombian government in the first half of the 20th century. In 1964, the leftist guerrilla group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo, FARC-EP*) was founded by *campesinos* (small farmers) and rural workers. FARC fought for the redistribution of wealth in Colombia, to stop the oppression, displacement and violence by the government against the poor and to oppose the influence of multinational corporations and foreign governments, especially the US, in Colombia. Several attempts at a negotiated peace agreement culminated in an agreement signed in Havana in 2016, ending more than 50 years of conflict. Although initially rejected by a public referendum, a renegotiated accord was finally ratified and implemented.

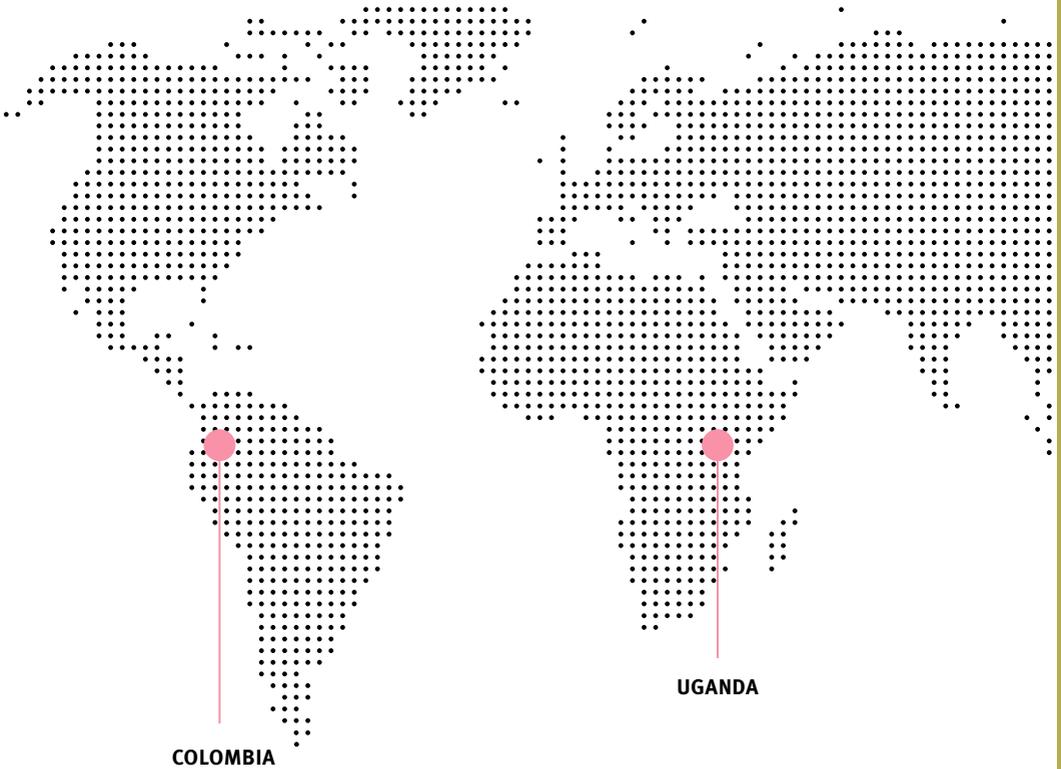
Women represented up to 35 per cent of FARC’s membership and they largely had the same roles and responsibilities as their male comrades, including active combat, although they were less likely than men to take on leadership positions. Many women joined to break out of traditional gender roles in civilian society and felt a sense of liberation and agency during their time in the FARC. Even though the 2016 peace accord includes many specific gender provisions, there is a sense among former *guerrilleras* that this progress towards gender equality has been reversed in the post-agreement period. The majority describes a return, or expectation to return, to traditional gender roles, including care work and child-rearing.

UGANDA

After independence from the UK in 1962 and Idi Amin's military rule from 1971-1979, Yoweri Museveni's guerrilla group, the National Resistance Army (NRA), waged war against the government and instituted him as president in 1986. Museveni is still the president of Uganda to this day, having won several elections since. In 1987, Joseph Kony formed the rebel group the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), combining Christian fundamentalism and Acholi nationalism as its ideology. Throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s, the LRA waged brutal attacks in Northern Uganda from its bases in South Sudan, abducting tens of thousands of children to serve as soldiers and sex slaves in its ranks and terrorising and displacing two million Ugandans due to its atrocities, which included widespread rape, murder and bodily mutilation. Although peace talks with the Ugandan government were ongoing since 2004, no agreement was reached and although largely driven out of Uganda by 2008, the LRA is focusing its activities on South Sudan, the Central African Republic and the DRC where it remains active until today.

In Kony's vision of recreating an 'Acholi way of life', abducted women and girls as young as 12 were given to LRA commanders as 'wives' with the expectation to bear as many children as possible, to populate a new Acholi society. If they were not pregnant or with young children, they also actively participated in combat. An estimated 30 per cent of LRA members were female, almost all of them forcibly recruited, and they spent almost twice as long in the group as their male counterparts. Almost all abducted women and girls returned with children from captivity. Without an official peace agreement, there was no formal DDR process, although the Amnesty Act from 2000 fulfilled many

of the same functions. Many women and girls who escaped the LRA returned directly to their families without going through any reintegration or rehabilitation programme. Some were welcomed back with the children they had in captivity but all face continuing stigmatisation by community members and exclusion until today.



INTERVIEW



NORALBA

from COLOMBIA

*A life like the one I lived
in the FARC, I don't think
I will ever live it again.*

My name is Noralba, I am a peace signatory. I was in the FARC for 17 years, and now we are here in this process of reincorporation.

I have always, since I was a child, looked at myself and envisioned myself in the FARC. I thought it was a very good life in the FARC. Also because the guerrillas who passed by the house when I was little, I always thought that they were very nice. They had a very nice way of treating you. They were very caring, very kind to the civilian population. I always thought I was old enough to join. I studied until the third year of primary school, but I always imagined myself there. And finally, after I joined, it looked the way I thought it would.

I was very much in love with the FARC. When I joined, I knew a lot about what life in the FARC would be like already. In my case, most of my family were guerrillas, my father, my mother, so it was easier to integrate because I had no family to return to. And anyway, I joined and, well, you suffer. You can't pretend it's nothing, or say that it was the best thing to do. But for me it was. A life like the one I lived in the FARC, I don't think I will ever live it again. From the point of view of how we lived in harmony. I always had a companion extending a hand to me, always. You were never alone. There was always a lot of solidarity, a lot of comradeship.

Yes, there were needs and there was suffering. For example, one suffers from carrying heavy loads, staying up all night. It's hard. And especially during military operations, or in the times when you had to go into combat. All of this is to say that yes, there are hard times, but when something happens, if you get hurt, there is always someone to help you. So for me, this collective effort was one of the very good things about being in the FARC. Of course, there were still divisions between commanders and troops. But still, a commander without a troop is nothing – and the troop without its commander is nothing.

This point is very important, the collective was one of the essentials, one of the pillars, that allowed us to survive as FARC. It was everything.

And within the collective, you were formed with principles and values. In my 17 years there, I learned everything. I only had three years of primary school, the rest of my education was in the group, and that is what is helping me now in this process of reincorporation. Because we always had colleagues who were constantly available to teach those of us who didn't know, just like when they joined, someone else taught them. They were taught, and they taught us, generation after generation. I learned and got better prepared. Now that I got out, I felt confident enough to validate my high school diploma, which includes spelling, Spanish and mathematics. I didn't have this degree when I joined because I was still young.

And so, we were always in constant education. Because we understood that the collective is formed of individuals – although I don't like the word individual very much, we didn't use it – we should better say 'the collective is formed from the personal'. So the need to educate yourself was clear, in order to contribute your bit to the collective and it felt good. Of course, you also had menial tasks, one day you cook, the next day you are in the outpost, but that is secondary as a guerrilla. The first thing was always your political education. I always had a book in my hand; I always had to go to a classroom to discuss. Having farming or security duties and forgetting to listen to the news or forgetting to read, was not a thing. Your political education comes first. I told myself: 'I'm going to study, I'm going to prepare myself to contribute' and then, the reality after the peace accord was very different.

This was very unexpected for me, the reincorporation process, because I never thought we would live like this, the way we live today. That we would have to struggle this much. It is harder than what I was used to in the FARC, the subsistence struggle here. In the beginning, we kept going as a collective, but now it has disappeared. We are in - what do they call them now? – reincorporation zones, right? In some ETCRs (*Espacios Territoriales de Capacitación y Reincorporación* – Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation) we managed to build prefabricated houses that lasted two years. But now, everything is like an eggshell, you touch it and it breaks because it has been five years. Everything breaks and people live in rubber shacks, in tents covered with tarpaulin, with mud up to their knees and that's how we raise our children.

But many comrades have not been able to stay here, we have not been able to stay united, because the economic situation does not allow for it. Many have had to look elsewhere for work, and so we are all divided, separated. Now we live with people who were not guerrillas and who did not share all those principles that we had. It is very difficult to demand of someone to behave in a way that they never learned about, never internalized. So there is no space to apply the things we learned.

Ultimately, I think that as a collective, we did not fail. But our leadership failed, signing some agreement that promised us many things but that until today has not been implemented. Here our members are disappearing or being killed, the peace signatories, the former FARC members. And this is dividing us even more because people are leaving for different regions both for economic reasons and to escape the violence.

So many of us were aware that while we were signing these agreements, non-compliance was to be expected because history taught us so. History repeats itself. Of all the revolutionary groups that have signed agreements worldwide, or here in Latin America, there is not one revolutionary group that has fully implemented its agreement. On the contrary, they have always been betrayed.

PATHWAYS INTO THE FIGHT

What was your life like before you became part of the group?

Comrade, could you tell us how did you join, and what motivated you to take that decision?

ELIANA





EVEYDY | COLOMBIA

My decision to leave for the guerrilla was because I couldn't study. We were ten brothers and sisters so my father didn't have enough money to send us all to school. The other thing was that I had to work in the family home from when I was 11 years old. The guerrillas started coming to the house, to the village, to visit us there, including my brother who was in the guerrilla. I asked what life in the guerrilla was like, and they explained to me, what the rules were, what things were like inside the FARC.

FLORENCE | UGANDA

Before I was abducted, I was a lovely child who was loved and given anything I needed. I used to go to school. I was abducted at the age of 10 in 1992. In captivity, there was only pain. When we arrived in the rebel camp, we were tortured to remove any memory of civilian life. They indoctrinate you through severe beating and they say they use children as rebel recruits because children follow orders fast and don't lie.

SUNDAY | UGANDA

I was abducted when I was 16 years old and I stayed for six years in captivity. When I returned, I found both of my parents dead. My brother who loved me so much decided to join the army with the intention to go

follow the rebels and find me, but unfortunately, the rebels killed him while he was in the Ugandan army.

NELLY | COLOMBIA

I joined the FARC through a relative, he was very close to the insurgency. He knew everything about what it was like. He was the one who explained things to me.



ELIANA | COLOMBIA

When I joined the guerrilla, it was a very small movement. There were very few women. We women were more in the background. As more and more women joined, the movement began to develop a broad participation of women. In any case, we went on fighting internally, discussing the need for militancy between men and women. Because they weren't just fighting for themselves, they were fighting for a whole people. And we also went to the guerrilla to fight for a whole people.



LIFE IN CONFLICT

When you joined, how did they welcome you? What were those first days like?

Can you describe what life was like inside the group?

Could you tell us an anecdote about how to explain to people who were not in the group, who don't know what life in arms is like, about your experiences?

MARGRET





MARGRET | UGANDA

From day one when I was abducted, there was no rest. Every day we experienced attacks, we were beaten for dropping luggage. I remember I only started resting when we reached the camp in South Sudan. We had to move with swollen legs, if you tell the rebels that you can't walk anymore, you get killed. When we reached South Sudan, the girls were distributed to the men. We had no say about who we are given to as a sex slave. The second step after arriving in South Sudan was enrolment in combat training. I was given a gun and received basic training. They selected me to go back to Uganda to store guns acquired, fight, abduct children and loot. While back in Uganda, I saw all kinds of death and suffering – death from bullets, hunger, and walking long distances with a baby on your back.

VICTORIA | COLOMBIA

Those of us who lived through the violence before we joined, those of us who practically lost our families – I had a sister killed, my parents displaced, and my siblings were all scattered. When we came to the insurgency, it also became an emotional, collaborative, comradely support; a support for each other. They became that great family that we were in guerrilla life. The big *familia fariana*, we were one. We had trust and affection, we made up for the absence of the blood family.

When I arrived in the insurgency, the collective work was not new to me. There was a command, there were

daily, permanent activities, and also everyone had certain roles. In my case, I was always involved in communication and education. These tasks were important, but I still also had to do the day-to-day work. And what were the daily tasks that we did as a collective? Everything from food preparation, farming, cleaning the camp area, and healthcare. Then there was the study work, which was fundamental. I already had some experience, and a pedagogical vocation, so I helped people with literacy. Many comrades arrived without knowing how to read or write. So we had to work hard with them so that they could debate, so that they could participate, so that they could have a much more active political life.

TANJA | COLOMBIA

Life in the FARC collective has very negative and very positive aspects because life in a collective is life in a collective 24 hours a day. So I remember life like that, life as an everyday life in which you of course had very little privacy; and that's what I find rich today, to have that privacy. But you had the daily companionship of people, which is what is often lacking today.

FLORENCE | UGANDA

The first weapon they gave us during recruitment was a log to use for looting and beating people. Armed with only the log, so many girls died because the log cannot shoot anybody in case you are attacked by the enemy. The majority of those who die in captivity are girls and mothers with children. I remember one girl who was given a gun but during an attack, one of the rebels took her gun. We were asked to cut the girl into pieces. But we tricked the commander and did not kill her but instead cut her ties with a machete so that her arms would bleed. This way, that could show the commander that we have killed her and let her run away. That was one of the good things I did to save the children in my custody.



LIFE IN CONFLICT



Eliana



Ayaa



Yamile



Eveydy

ELIANA | COLOMBIA

Well, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, from the beginning, their struggle was mainly a struggle for land. Then the comrades, the peasants who took up arms, worked collectively. In other words, it wasn't just one person who made the decisions but the whole assembly. They had the need to create their own schools, health posts, housing, land, education. All of this was done collectively, and to this day, there are still some things that are done collectively. For example, here in the reincorporation zones, the projects, we say that they are collective. Although it is a collective in inverted commas because people no longer believe much in this collective. But, anyway, we have been solving the problems here, of this community, collectively.

EVEYDY | COLOMBIA

So it was hard in the group when I lost my brother, who died in combat, and a cousin. But otherwise, guerrilla life taught me many things: it taught me to value people, to respect, to look after other people's wellbeing, to take care of the children at least. All that we learned, I learned in the FARC. It wasn't just about fighting the enemy, it was also like a university.

YAMILE | COLOMBIA

If I had to carry out a mission – to tow or to do explorations, to farm, make latrines, or make holes for the rubbish – if I left to do that, my comrade would be in charge of taking my clothes for me, getting my food or if it rained, they would pack my clothes and cover my equipment.

AYAA | UGANDA

They selected fighters to go and loot. When I saw that, I joined that group who already had guns. When they asked why I joined the group even though I had no gun, I told them that I wanted to go and fight. In my heart, I was looking for means of survival because I realised that the best means of survival in the bush is to have your own gun, fight and loot important supplies to present to the commanders. They accepted me and gave me tins of bullets to carry. It was very hard, I suffered, without food or rest, and attacks every day. But through that operation, I managed to acquire my own gun and that is how I started getting breathing space and commanding other captives to follow my orders and carry my luggage.



KETTY | UGANDA

While I was in captivity, predicting if you would see the sun the next day was hard. When the shelling attacks started, I had to run while carrying my two children, one on my back, and one around my neck. Getting food and water to drink was a big challenge, we could stay one week without food and yet I needed to breastfeed. It was very difficult for me to comprehend having a child at childhood age, moreover with a man the age of my father. I was young, I needed to be taken care of as a child but instead, I was taking care of my own children... this was so unjust and I could not believe that it was me in this situation.

NELLY | COLOMBIA

For a long time, I couldn't maintain that family bond through a phone call or anything. When my father died of cancer, when my brother died, it was very hard for me because they did try to contact me. But I couldn't go, it was not easy to go out, because the permissions were difficult to get. They looked at the potential consequences, that something might happen to you, that you would bring problems to your family. Then when the peace process took place, when we were able to meet them again and explain the situation, that was very nice.



Ketty

AMONY | UGANDA

I have no problem operating a gun. I know every step of how to operate a gun. We were trained guerrilla fighters; we knew how to manoeuvre around bullets and fire from the helicopter gunship. It was only newly abducted captives, women and children who mostly died because they didn't know where to run when the fighting started. Killing was just the order of life. Any person with authority could just order you to go and kill a colleague, if you don't go and kill the person you are ordered to kill very fast, they would turn around to kill you instead.

PAULINE | UGANDA

We were trained by Kony on how to operate guns. It was not an easy life in captivity, it was a life of slavery. Beating, hunger, military attacks. But compared to life at home later, life in captivity was better because there was no stigma, at least we were all the same.





ANJELLA

from UGANDA

Life in the community is showing us violence and teaching us to remain violent. We are segregated, rejected, stigmatized.

Before I was abducted, life was good. The only problem was education because it was really difficult to access education during military rule in Uganda. My father had already been arrested. One day, LRA rebels came to my village, they were capturing children to make them fighters and to become wives. I was abducted from my husband's home, after some boys from the village who were with the rebels and knew my family and my husband showed them where I was.

Immediately once I arrived in the LRA camp, they gave me a gun and told me to go with a group to loot food, pick up wounded fighters from the battlefield in Uganda and escort them to South Sudan. In South Sudan, they made me the wife of one commander. Fighting also broke out in South Sudan and we kept defending our camp even though especially the child soldiers were dying in huge numbers.

The worst part of the war was in a camp called Aru. This was one of the bases, the LRA was settled there and rape and forced pregnancy were the norm, often of very young girls. When the base was attacked, young

women were running around with dead babies on their backs, after the bombs have killed them, but you had to keep moving yourself if you want to stay alive. I have seen death from hunger, thirst, bullets and disease. I saw my sisters and brothers die and couldn't do anything, I couldn't even cry. They told me "Cry and you'll see, you will suffer the same fate".

As a fighter, I had the power to make a plan and decide on what to do for myself. After I realized that I was pregnant, one day, they selected some people to go to Uganda for combat. I had the idea to escape with this group while in Uganda. At first, they wouldn't let me join them but I insisted and managed to go with them. When we got to Uganda, there was a moment when it was possible to escape – I pushed all our newly abducted recruits and captives to the front and remained behind with my gun and other belongings. I took off my uniform and left my gun, put on civilian clothes and my shoes on the wrong foot so that if anyone was tracing my steps, they would be confused.

I ran into a woman who took me to the local council and then to the Regional District Commissioner who called my father to pick me up. He requested to take me straight home with him and they gave me an amnesty letter and let him take me home. I never passed through any rehabilitation centre.

Neither my father nor my husband cared that I came back pregnant. My husband told my father that I am still his wife and he is happy to embrace me the way I am – they treated me very well. But living in the community was a different story. After some time, I realized there is no difference between life in the bush and life at home. Nothing was being done by families, communities or the government to help those who were forced into captivity to deal with their past. I have a child born in captivity, he has no father, no clan, no family. He only has very little education and we cannot help him continue because we have no money. The community stigmatizes him and we receive threats against his life every day as he grows up.

While I was in the bush, I carried guns and heavy luggage. My head is bold because I always had to carry luggage on my head. There are bullet splinters all over my body and I never got any assistance to remove them.

We hear that in other districts like *Gulu*, people are being supported economically but here in *Kitgum* we have nothing. We feel so angry if we see people come to us empty-handed to talk about our experience.

We need support in the form of counselling, shelter, land to settle on with the children we returned with and tangible support, like skills training or education that can change our lives to live in dignity. We returnees are the poorest in this country, no institution cares about us, we don't even exist. Life in the community is showing us violence and teaching us to remain violent. We are segregated, rejected, stigmatized. I didn't go to school but I thought at least my children would – but no way, life is made so impossible for us and we have nowhere to go and share our problems. I was forced into slavery, it was against my will, then who are you to always judge and condemn me? What I went through in captivity cannot be compared to what I see in the community here.

We returnees should be supported by our own groups; we understand one another much better.

My advice to fellow women who went through this horror is this: There is nothing we can reverse from our past. We were forced to use the gun, to fight, to shoot and to kill. It was not our will to fight. Take me as an example, when you first see me, you can't tell I came back from the bush. If you ask me and I don't tell you, you will not know what I was before. Women, don't hang on to the past, face the world! As women we are special, we forgive, a man can hurt you but you forgive and forget. If you decide to be angry because of a man, who will take care of your children? We need to be strong and raise the children we returned with. Let's not separate them from other children, take them equally but let them know their life story when it's time. One day they will take care of us.



TATIANA

from COLOMBIA

*We went back 100 years.
Because the real woman,
the woman I saw, the revolu-
tionary woman, the woman
I saw liberated to make her
own decisions, is no longer
like that.*

My militant name is Tatiana. I was thinking about this yesterday, I have seen and read about many things because I like history. In the history of armies and war, when you are away from your family, away from your mother, you start really valuing them. If you are with them, you don't really feel their importance. But when you are far away, with other people you don't even know, as was the case when you were in the FARC, where you didn't know anyone. But you arrived, and you felt as if you were with another family, with a lot of respect, a lot of affection, a lot of love, that they welcomed you into their midst.

That is what I have always picked up on when I was there, that there was a lot of solidarity, a lot of companionship. You got sick and everyone was looking out for you. There was a bedside nurse to look after you. You wouldn't have to worry about eating, you couldn't walk anyway. You felt very well looked after. And if I had a family emergency, I was very supported in those days. That's what I really, really miss most about life in arms.

But the collective has totally changed nowadays because we are all individualised. The current circumstances force us to live in another reality. For example, I have to go cook by myself, I don't go to study collectively anymore. The dynamics for everything have changed completely. You have to do everything individually and not collectively.

The peace process has really been a difficult moment. We were always prepared to seek a political path, a path of dialogue. During the peace process, many times, we had the opportunity to take up arms again, but we kept going for a political solution. So we, or I, in particular, knew that there was always talk of reaching an agreement. But we didn't think it would be so quick. I think the transition from armed life to civilian life was very quick. Speaking for myself, we were not prepared for this moment. There was talk, but there was no preparation that we were going to arrive here and that we were going to be in such a difficult situation, which is where we are now.

It's a difficult situation because we don't have housing. When it rains, it gets wet, it's super wet. When it's hot, it is unliveable. Then you remember the past and say to yourself "I used to live in a tent but I had better conditions". We didn't get sick. Many things have been difficult for us and I'm not saying that we like war, no. But I have been shocked by many things in civilian society. It has been very shocking seeing people, old people, children, begging for food and sleeping in the street. I mean, I've been here for five years and it's still shocking.

People also need to be told about their own history. Memory is so important for people, to know what happened and how it happened. If you don't know your own history, you are bound to disappear. We should also tell the people that there is a replica of a FARC camp to visit and a house of memory, so they can learn what a day in the FARC was really like. So that the youngest children also know about what happened in Colombia.

I was not part of the gender committee, but I still have my own opinion and I say that if anyone knows what role gender plays, it is us who were members of the FARC. Because in the FARC, we were militants. I was a militant for 20 years in the FARC, and the participation and experience I had in the FARC in terms of gender equality was maybe 50 or 100 years

ahead of this society. I can say it with certainty because in the FARC there was really no discrimination based on whether you were a woman or a man. You had to wash the pots, you had to wash your clothes, you had to carry your backpack and you had to carry everything. I didn't have to discriminate against men because I was a woman. We had mutual respect. We moved forward by 100 years.

But I come back here to this society and I say "We went back 100 years" because I see totally different things. And maybe we could contribute and help with these issues because we really lived through it. We wouldn't say no, we wouldn't say 'Look, read this so that you can learn'. We lived it in our own flesh, in our own experience. If it was time to go to the front line, we went, and whatever we had to do, we did it. I said it and I say it again: We went back 100 years. Because the real woman, the woman I saw, the revolutionary woman, the woman I saw liberated to make her own decisions, is no longer like that.

WOMEN AT WAR

*What was it like as a woman
in the group?*

PROSCOVIA



AYAA | UGANDA

When I first I started seeing my menstruation, I thought I had been shot because I started bleeding between my legs. In the bush, we don't put on under-pants. When you are menstruating, you are exempted from work, you sit in an isolated place until your period is over, then you clean yourself and are allowed to come back to join the others.

MARGRET | UGANDA

Most painful was having to go to bed with the man I was given to, who was the age of my father, when I was still a child. There is so much shame and I cannot comprehend it until now. The man was old and he was beating us with a wire lock for refusing him. The worst I felt was when I realized I was pregnant. I got pregnant when I was very young. I had to suffer silently and to make it worse, my sex enslaver got shot and killed in battle. In captivity, it is a problem when your husband dies because you suffer a lot, no one loots things for you or takes you as a wife again. The combatants always want to abduct fresh girls from Uganda to be their wives, they don't go for widows. When he died, I started to plan my escape.

PROSCOVIA | UGANDA

They gave me to a man who was maybe 50 years old. That man impregnated me when I was 14 years old. I didn't know how people have babies, how they conceive, how they deliver, so it just happened. When I got pregnant, I felt very sick but you need to keep moving with your pregnancy, with your sickness, with your hunger, with your loot on your head. There was no medical attention, prenatal. You don't know the expected delivery date, you don't know how the baby is doing in your stomach, you're just there. It was not easy carrying the pregnancy with the gun by your side, the food on your head and the bag on your back. Thank God, I escaped before I delivered. It was not a normal delivery and if I were in the bush, I would have died.

EVEYDY | COLOMBIA

There was respect between all of us, men and women. They respected us and we respected them, and it was normal. I did not experience cases of the male comrades sexualising the female colleagues. I never saw that. No one who wasn't your partner would dare to touch you.

NELLY | COLOMBIA

Within the organisation, they made it very clear why you couldn't have a family. They explained why you couldn't have children, that you had to use birth control. First, we had nowhere to have them, because having a child was a responsibility for both the father and the mother. Nobody wanted to see their child abandoned. So if you don't want to abandon the child, a child who goes hungry, who is in need, then don't have one! At that moment, I understood that it was the right thing to do, because I would have a child who might suffer, and then later on he will judge me because I had him, because I couldn't avoid it. And when I became pregnant, it was practically the beginning of the peace process. I worried that they were going to tell me "No look, you have to have a curettage, you can't have your son, you can't have your baby girl" and for me, that was very painful to think about. But fortunately, I was able to have my child. For me, the most beautiful

thing that the peace process has given me is my daughter. Because I have not been separated from her, because I have been able to enjoy her, because I have had the possibility of having her. The one thing that the process left me with is that little girl. When I was in the FARC, I thought I didn't want my daughter to face the suffering that we had to face. I wanted her to live in a better world, you know what I mean? That if I didn't have the right to education, she could be a student, she could be a professional, she could be someone, she could have her rights.

RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE
PEACE AGREEMENTS, REINTEGRATION

During the time you were abducted, did you attempt to escape? And after you escaped, how did you reach your home to your family? And what was life like at home?

It was a transition from being in arms to now, after the peace process – as a woman, as a revolutionary, how have you experienced this process?

AMANDA



RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE PEACE AGREEMENTS, REINTEGRATION

AMANDA | COLOMBIA

The process of reincorporation as a woman, both for me and for all the women who signed the peace agreement, has led to many anxieties and disappointments because the expectations we had when we signed were very high. We really thought that the gender aspect in the peace agreement would be mainstreamed, we thought that we were going to feel it, that it was going to benefit not only us as women from the FARC, but also women from the communities.

MARGRET | UGANDA

I escaped from the bush with one child; he is now 21. When I came back home, things were not the same as when I left. Yes, I found my parents, and they celebrated the moment of my return with joy. But after some time, we started feeling hate from the community, insults, stigmatization. Whenever my child goes to play with other kids or goes to fetch water, people point their fingers at him as a rebel child. That is how my child started learning that he is different. It hurt me so badly, I don't know what I can do for the community to accept my son, I am heartbroken when I think of the dark past me and my son went through and the dark future he is facing now.

TANJA | COLOMBIA

When we were in Havana during the peace process and when we left Havana, we didn't take into account the psychosocial aspect, which we women are increasingly experiencing. The psychosocial problems, for us women, stem mainly from other problems in the reincorporation process. From this clash between collective life and individual life, collective life with discipline and individual life without discipline. Also about family reunification, they always told us "Guerrilla, surrender, your family is waiting for you". And it turned out that many of our families were not waiting for us. "You've been gone for many years", "You don't know what's going on here", "We don't want you here

anymore”. There are also families who don’t accept that you were in the guerrilla because a woman carrying a rifle is unforgivable.



SUNDAY | UGANDA

When I returned, our names were not even registered to receive food, but relatives had to collect food to support us. Even the child I returned with is hopeless, no one is there to support us. I have not seen any girl who returned from captivity and is successful in life. Our community does not consider us, who returned from captivity, as important. We are stigmatized, abused and insulted, and we have no capability or space to complain.

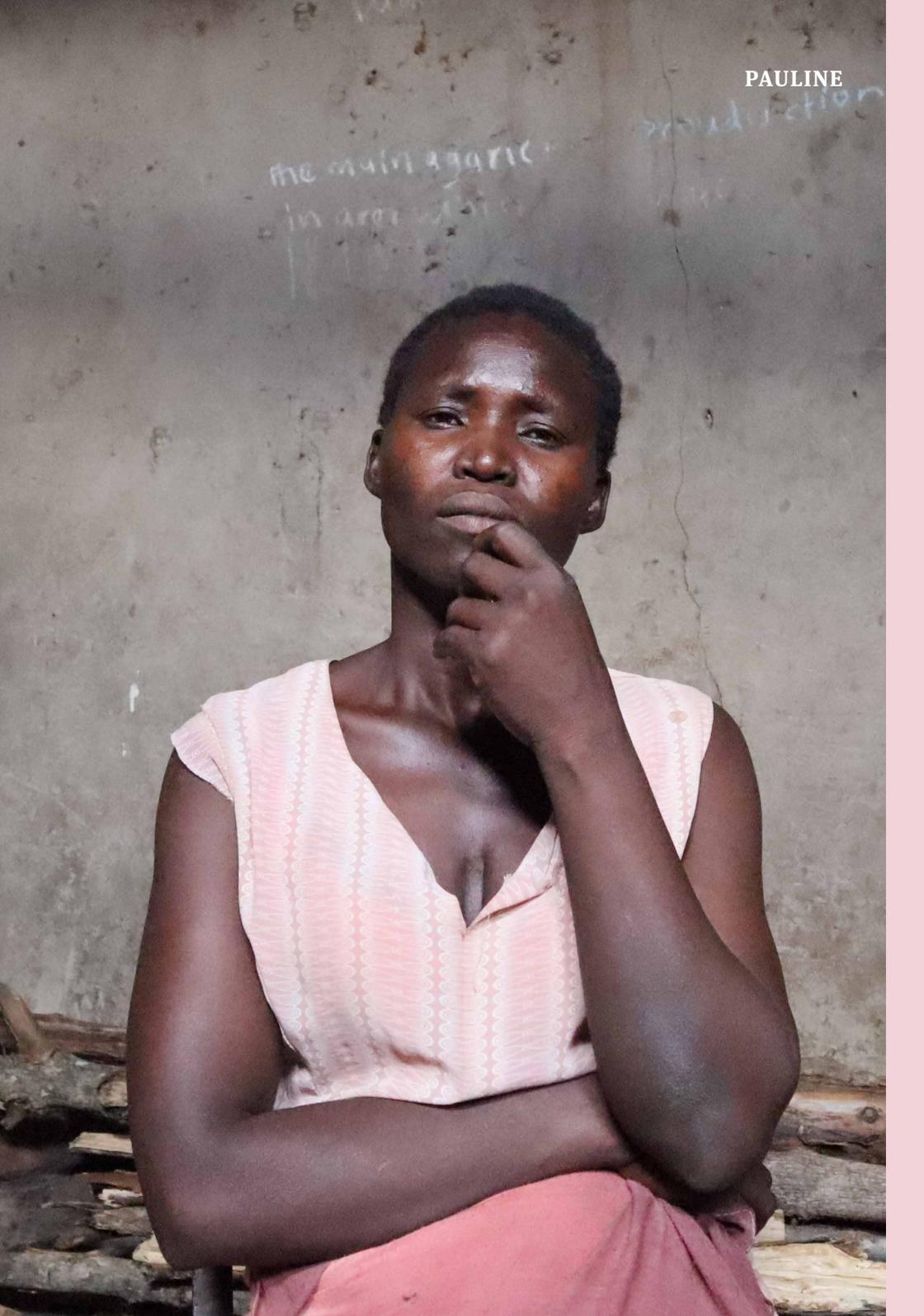
RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE
CHILDREN, FAMILY, WORK, LOVE,
COMMUNITY

*In your life, your family,
in the community, at school,
what do you and other
women who returned,
go through?*

PAULINE

the main agric
in area

production



RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE CHILDREN, FAMILY, WORK, LOVE, COMMUNITY



Beatrice, Ketty, Oyella Harriet (Ketty's daughter)

AMONY | UGANDA

After two years, I eloped with a man but the community destroyed our relationship. They kept telling him not to stay with me because I was a rebel, any time I could change my mind and kill him. So the man left me. Right now, I am back in my home. None of us who returned from captivity from my village is in a stable marriage, and we are all back home with our children. One of my girls I brought back from the bush is also back at home. Stigmatization by his family has forced her to separate from her husband; she is at home now with me, young as she is.

KETTY | UGANDA

At home, I started experiencing stigma against my children especially one with a bullet scar on the mouth, to the extent that my child refused to continue with school because of the humiliation from other children who are calling him a rebel. I was welcomed very happily by my family although community members were hateful after knowing that I was in the bush and my children were born in captivity. Back home, I started taking care of my children alone and working hard to educate them too but still, my dream to have my children educated was not possible because of poverty. Education is a privilege and a luxury when putting daily bread on the table is already a challenge.

MARGRET | UGANDA

I returned from captivity when the people in northern Uganda were still in the IDP camps. When people started returning to their villages, we continued experiencing hate from the community, it got even worse when my father died because no one could stand to speak for me. I tell my son to avoid people who talk ill about his origin. My son is a very good footballer, but he faces stigmatization on a daily basis from the community. He is very emotional, he cannot control his temper, he fights whenever his emotions are triggered. He one day fought and was chased away from school for fighting and eventually he dropped out of school. This is a child born in captivity, he has no father, he doesn't know his origin, where can I take him when the family rejects him? I will have nowhere to go. When I returned, an organization trained me in tailoring but they did not equip us with starting capital or machines for tailoring. So I had no means to practice what I learnt till now. What I do is farming together with my son. If by luck I get a sewing machine, I will start practising what I learned again. What we are praying for is to get money, buy land, and settle elsewhere with him. A piece of land we call ours and he can call his home.

PAULINE | UGANDA

When I came back from the bush, I learned so many skills, tailoring, baking, catering ... But I had no start-up equipment to make any of it into a business. When we went to register for government support, they gave us the information that the computer had deleted our names and there is nothing they can do.

AGNES | UGANDA

The child I suffered with in captivity and returned with had epilepsy and at the age of 15, he had already survived an epileptic attack and was living with my mother. One day a dark-hearted person poisoned him and he died. We buried him at my mother's home because there was nowhere else I could bury him. I feel hurt because I thought this child would wipe my tears whenever I remember my past. Now, that he is no more, I am so empty in life, I am ashamed, I am worthless, I will never forget. I will have to live with this pain for the rest of my life. However weak he was, I was happy to see him alive but someone took his life because of hate... I am totally broken-hearted.

RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE CHILDREN, FAMILY, WORK, LOVE, COMMUNITY

AMANDA | COLOMBIA

There was a lot of talk about the baby boom, everyone talked about the sons and daughters of peace. But today, nobody remembers the sons and daughters of peace. These children are growing up, but they do not have the guarantees that they need for their own development. They are also growing up in a society that stigmatises them, in a society that is not opening its doors to peace, to inclusion, but on the contrary, tends to relegate them and close its doors more and more.

SUNDAY | UGANDA

One other part that gives me so much pain when I reflect back, is the kind of child I have, she has no father or origin. The government is not supporting us and paying school fees is not possible for us. She is a girl anyway, but I don't want to see her suffer or live the kind of life I lived. I want her to live better, find a better place where she can feel accepted. People may stigmatise her by reminding her about her past but, if she is empowered, she will resist such humiliation. Because even the men we marry do not want to care for the children we return with from captivity as their own.

NELLY | COLOMBIA

In Colombia, there are many good people. While we are living here in the space where we are, we saw very good people, very supportive, with a great desire to help, for us to move forward, for us not to have to go back to war. I'm not saying this for myself, because I'm already an old person. Many people want young people not to have to go to war, to have opportunities where people can work, where people can live in a country of equality, in a country with better living conditions.

TANJA | COLOMBIA

It is very difficult to explain what our political project was. People don't care, what matters to them is that you were in an armed group for years. They don't even distinguish between paramilitaries and guerrillas. They don't care about that. You were a woman in an

armed group. That is a macho thing too. The communities often see it that way, too. Plus the fact of having new families, of having to take care of children, who we don't even know how to support. We wanted children, but why did we want children? Maybe we didn't even think about it.

CHRISTINE | UGANDA

If the father of my children was not dead and he returned, I would give them back to him. To be sincere, I love my children especially the ones I had in captivity, even more than those I had when I returned. I suffered with them, I understand their plight and they understand my plight. My husband does not like the children I came back with. Sometimes he even denies them food but I try my best to make sure they eat. I want to struggle and find land for them and put them in their own place.

AYAA | UGANDA

When I returned, all our land had been taken by relatives of my father. When I complained, they threatened me and said that my rebel mentality should not be brought to their clan and if I complain, they will slaughter me.



Christine



DANIEL

from UGANDA

*In your life, have you ever
met anybody in this world
without a home?*

Daniel shares his story as an orphan of two parents who were abducted by the LRA.

I was born in captivity. I grew up in the bush until a friend convinced me to come out. I have no relatives, no trace of my background, heritage and clan. I stay with different families but no matter where I go, when the extended family finds out about me, they chase me away. All of this is because I was born in captivity and don't know where I belong. In Acholi culture, a boy child must know his father so that if anything happens, the clan of the father or the father himself can stand for him.

When I tried to trace my origin, I was told this story: Both my father and mother were abducted, they gave birth to me in captivity. In the process, my father managed to escape. Whether he reached home or was killed in the process, no one knows. My mother was killed in one of the attacks in the bush. I was put into the hands of another woman, one of her co-wives and friends.

One day, from the bush, I was listening to the radio and I heard the voice of one of my friends who escaped, I used to live with him. He was speaking on the radio and asking me to come out of the bush. He was very

convincing and that prompted me to escape. But once I came out, where to live was really a challenge. When I was looking for somewhere to stay, I met a kind-hearted man who allowed me to stay with him and work together at the Lake *Kyoga* fishing site. We worked together as a family but then the government banned fishing there and everyone had to return home. The man I was working with wanted to bring me back with him as a child of the family but, after consultation, his clan refused.

A concerned mother who witnessed all this called me one day and asked why I was not going back home after the fishing ban. I asked her this question: “Mama, in your life, have you ever met anybody in this world without a home?” The old woman did not believe me, she thought I was joking. After I explained my circumstances to her, she understood and said: “My son, from today onwards, you will be my son, I will take you home and you remain my son.” We moved to her village home in *Omiyanyima*. She and her husband introduced me to their clan and they welcomed me. After three years, when the husband died, the clan turned the entire issue on its head. They started telling me that I have no place in that clan, that I should go and look for my rebel parents. I was shocked, frustrated and helpless, not knowing where I should go. At this point, I already had a wife with children and changing my situation permanently has never been possible. By now, the clan has removed all the land they previously gave me to farm and they asked us to



leave. A lot of support comes to this sub-county for vulnerable people like me but none of it reaches me. I tried tracing my father but there is still no sign of him. We moved and started staying on a plot of land near the trading centre that we got temporarily. I tried to commit suicide twice but my wife rescued me and I stopped attempting it. We still have nowhere to go. If the woman who gave us this land temporarily dies, we have nowhere to go.



RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE

TRAUMA, HEALTH

Did you suffer from consequences of having participated in the armed groups?

AGNES



RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE TRAUMA, HEALTH

AGNES | UGANDA

For me, the horror I went through is deep. I had no hope of coming back home. I had my gun, I was always involved, in war, in atrocities. I killed, I killed on a firing squad, I cut humans using panga, I tortured, I killed with no fear and did not even think it is something bad. I was used to life there, killing seemed normal to me; we were used to it. Killing was like eating food that you eat in the morning, afternoon and evening. I could see human blood flowing like a river and feel nothing. I used to think that even I will die in the same way, let me use my time to kill as long as they have not killed me yet.

PROSCOVIA | UGANDA

Another thing, which cannot go from my head from the bush, is killing people like chicken. You can move in a pool of blood of people who have been killed, you can step on your friends, your brother, your sister. And you need not to cry. If you cry, they will kill you. That is what I can remember but there are very many things, which I could not tell you about at this time. Which are not good to be even spoken about. You cannot bear to hear them. I feel like I cannot speak them out loud. That was life in the bush.

PAULINE | UGANDA

I still have a bullet in my leg from my time in the bush. It is there until now, it has not been removed. Even now, when it is cold, my leg gets paralyzed.

AMANDA | COLOMBIA

We women have many other challenges and issues that have affected us. With the particular sensitivity and empathy that we have, it is really painful to remember the loved ones who have passed away. It hurts us very much to see our comrades fall, our comrades left alone, abandoned with their children and without any safeguards. That is a weight on our shoulders every day and it is affecting us psychologically. That is one of the things that weighs most heavily on me in this process.



RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE REFLECTIONS AND LOOKING AHEAD

What do you think is useful to society from everything you learned in the group?

What can you tell women who also were in armed groups like you as you dealt with many difficult situations?

This is going to be my last question. Other than what you have shared, what plans do you have for yourself and your children?

SUNDAY



RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE REFLECTIONS AND LOOKING AHEAD

VICTORIA | COLOMBIA

I believe that Colombian society lacks a lot of solidarity. The issue is not to eradicate inequalities completely. I believe that difference is indeed necessary. The issue is that in the midst of inequalities, let us be able to build and have a nation of principles. To have as a principle that we are interested in the country, that we are interested in the common good, that we are interested in society and not in individualism. This is completely at odds with the neoliberal culture we live in. "Save yourself if you can. You can succeed, with entrepreneurship" and so on. But in reality, you alone cannot do anything. So we continue to fall into poverty, misery, hatred, stigmatisation and resentment. When we can, with all our differences, build a nation, build a culture, a culture of peace, we can build reconciliation. Because we lived through the war, because we suffered the war, because we all lost in the war, that's why we can understand each other as Colombian society.

AGNES | UGANDA

A person like me has seen all kinds of problems. Abuse, insult, stigmatisation but I have remained strong. I do everything, no one supports me, I do small business, I do casual work and save in a group and borrow. I ask fellow women to work hard, forget the hate from the community, stay in the group, engage in activities like farming, business, group savings. Count on the support of fellow women economically, socially and emotionally. Pray and never get tired. God does not give you if you cannot support yourself, start something then God will lift you up.

CHRISTINE | UGANDA

If you return and find your parents alive, your survival is fairly good, but when you come back and find your parents dead or not welcoming you, you develop the feeling that it is better you take away your life or should have remained in captivity and died there. My advice is, let no temptation take away your life becau-

se you had enough pain in the bush. I advise fellow women to be strong, let the children know God, and teach them love, unity, peace, morals, humility and hard work. Education is expensive, but that does not stop them from learning how to survive.

AMONY | UGANDA

I request that if possible, you create awareness in local radio. This is to make people who were not abducted understand that they hurt us; they remind us of our past. Stigmatisation and reminders of our past by the community are more painful than the rape we went through in captivity. It keeps reminding us of the negligence of those who should have protected us. Everywhere we move, we are reminded, even when our property is destroyed, we are not allowed to complain. We understand that the government has done so much to make some of us return home but if stigmatisation continues, it was useless to return.

AMANDA | COLOMBIA

We would like to be able to have a successful peace process and say to the world “See, we signed this peace agreement, we’ve made progress and we’re moving forward”. Yes, we have made progress, and yes, we are moving forward, but not as it should be, not as agreed, not with the Colombian state’s full compliance. Greater accompaniment from the international community and commitment from the new incoming government is still required for the real, full implementation of the peace agreement that can really allow for peace in Colombia.

Secondly, FARC has historically worked hand in hand with the communities. It worked with the communities on the environment, on the issue of strengthening the social fabric. Our experience has taught us some extremely important lessons so that we can now build on that in this peace process.

NELLY | COLOMBIA

I personally have come up against very good people, supportive people. As I said, when we arrived here, we received the basic income. We arrived here and the books, the magazines, the children’s things were coming to me, and I never knew the people who helped me. They came and reached out to us. And by those people, you don’t feel stigmatised. When we came here to this space, people wanted to meet us. They had a different image of what we are. We are people of flesh and blood, we are children of families, we are children of peasants. We have no other intention than to

RETURN AND POST-WAR LIFE REFLECTIONS AND LOOKING AHEAD

integrate ourselves into society, and to be able to make friends, to connect with people that we can live with and that we can count on. To live in a society where all the little we have we can share.

TANJA | COLOMBIA

We could have contributed so much. For example, when we talk about women's equality, right? Because I feel that, despite everything, there was machismo in the FARC, let's not tell ourselves lies about that. But many women joined FARC precisely because there were opportunities. Opportunities to grow, opportunities to do a nursing course, to go to combat, opportunities to be in a collective where you really had the same tasks as men. There was still machismo, yes, it was more difficult for women to become commanders for example. But I think that if you compare it to the tremendous machismo out there, it was very different.

I think that we women in particular could have shared a lot about what was done within the guerrilla and what we have to do now out here. But I feel that we are going down a path where society ends up crushing many of us. The norms and values of society end up being absorbed. We could – again I am speaking in the past subjunctive tense, because I don't think it's going to happen anymore, unfortunately – but we could have played a very important role in non-violent conflict resolution. And that didn't happen, precisely because of this stigma that is attached to you, "You are a violent person, you shouldn't even be talking. You shouldn't even have an opinion because a person who has used a gun to defend himself or to achieve an objective is no longer entitled to anything."

VICTORIA | COLOMBIA

But also and in spite of all these inequalities and all these manifestations of machismo, of violent personalities, accustomed to hierarchy, in spite of all this, we managed to be a great collective. As a large collective and as a trial for society, it seems to me that it is

fundamental to remember the principles and feelings of solidarity. In other words, how you help others, how you receive help from others. My life depended on the other person, but their life also depended on me.

SUNDAY | UGANDA

I advise that we stay strong and take care of the children born in captivity. Join a group, attend public gatherings, work in a group, ignore those who remind us of our past because that was not our choice. Pray, prayer will relieve you from trauma. Count yourself lucky because so many died in captivity but you are the luckiest one who managed to survive all the horrors. Stop anger, hate, revenge and any negative emotion. War on women is all over the world, let's unite instead of isolating ourselves, let us speak out when we feel oppressed.

YAMILE | COLOMBIA

What we dreamed of was that there would be a change where the poor, the rich, the mestizo, the black, the different races and different generations, would all be equal.

NELLY | COLOMBIA

I imagine the country I want for my daughter, a country where justice prevails, where people can live without selfishness. Where we can live as brothers, where we can share what little there is, where we can be safe, where we don't have to go out on the street and think that our mobile phone will be stolen, that anything could be stolen. A society that is built on the principles of loving your neighbour. A society where everyone fits in. That is the society that I want to live in and that I want my daughter to live in.





BEATRICE

from UGANDA

We went through a lot but that will not determine our future. We should use the previous life we had to help us have a good future.

My name is Beatrice. I come from *Padibe, Atwol* village. I am a mother of two children. A girl and a boy. They are grown up. They are now like my sisters and brothers. I'm from one of the families, where children were abducted by the LRA. I stayed there for ten years, and before I was abducted, I was a student. Before, we could go to school without any interference. I'm the eighth child, and I was the most loved in the family. So things changed drastically when I was abducted.

The first thing they do when you arrive is give you a gun. You have to take care of it. If it is lost, you're going to be killed. And if it means going to the battlefield, you run. You run with your gun. In case of anything, you go with your gun and you fight, straight away. You also kill.

They also give you straight away to a man, no matter how old you could be. And when you're given, the best way I could put it, you become the slave for the sex. They use you the way they want, no matter your age. I was given to a man who was my father's age. And you have no way of saying no to them. Everything they tell you, you just need to comply.

I was 13 years and some months. And within a few months, I conceived. I didn't even know that I was pregnant. Even when I was having labour pain, I didn't know I was already in labour. I thought I was just very sick. I cried that I was sick and the pain was just localized in my waist and my back, I could just cry that I was sick. But the baby was already coming outside. Remember, that there you have no hospital, you have nothing. You give birth just like that. That was a time I could not forget.

I missed being a child. I missed being a girl. I was a child, then I went from childhood to a mother and a mother of many. A mother of one. A mother of two. Life wasn't fair, but there was nothing you could do about it. I'm telling you, if we are to begin narrating the life we had there, it cannot be finished. I'm just telling you the briefest part of it. I kept praying to God if you want to kill either of us, kill all of us, don't leave any one of us.

Then one day, it was a very quick thing. We had been running for two weeks, no food, nothing. We couldn't even get water. When you reached a water point, instead of fetching water, you find an ambush. They'll begin firing at you straight away. We were only just surviving on cassava that you will eat while running. Then the helicopter gunship came and the soldiers by foot, the battle started. That is when I got the opportunity to come back home. The gunship started bombing and everyone ran but we hid ourselves under a tree. A bomb hit the tree and we were covered by a big trunk so they couldn't see us anymore. When the gunship was gone, we got up. We started following the path that the government soldiers were taking. Immediately I saw some other women and children, who had been hiding, coming towards me. Together, we decided that we should go home.

In *Gulu* town, they took us to the World Vision Rehabilitation Centre for some months. They started promising us they are going to take us to school but that never worked out. I started hoping that maybe if they don't support me, my parents could. Thank God, when I came home, they never looked at me as somebody who came from the bush, they were all welcoming and happy to see me coming home – they thought I was dead. But life was never the same, all my family was still in the IDP camp. I thought I was coming home and life would be like before I left. But things had changed and things were hard.

We had no money but I wanted to get back to school. It was dangerous to go out of the camp and get food because the rebels could come and take you or kill you but I went anyway and I sold at the market and I got a little money and managed to go back to school. But people started talking, you know this girl? They started saying, this girl is just pretending. She looks like a girl but she's not a girl, she's a mother, she has many children. Others started asking, how did she get them? She was abducted, she was once in the LRA, she has just escaped. And so people started stigmatizing me, leaving me aside. I did well in school but I couldn't even talk to my classmates. They are still young girls and I'm a mother. I was one of the rebels. Maybe I might have even killed their relatives.

They could abuse me, they could segregate me, they could stigmatise me. But I was humble. I persevered and I could do much better than them. I am now a midwife at diploma level. My vision is to become a Gynaecology and Obstetrics Specialist. I want to know more about women and I want to manage pregnancies at any stage, to know the complications that women are going through and to have the knowledge to help them with their problems and pain.

We are pushing on with life. I'm not sitting, I'm not relaxing, I'm not waiting for someone to come. I am the mother, I am the father, I am the grandpapa and I am the grandmother to my children. And I am doing everything to make sure that these children attend school. My girl finished midwifery school but she has no job. My boy is now at university in his first year but things are not easy, university is very costly.

This is my advice to the rest. Yes, we went through a lot but that will not determine our future. We should use the previous life we had to help us have a good future. We should not rely on the challenge that we went through. Instead, it should be our stepping-stone to see a brighter future.

“You people may be in Uganda here, you may be in Nigeria, in Ukraine, you may be wherever in this world. I’m telling you that the problem you went through, it is your master key to a brighter future. Remain standing strong. Be with your head high. You will attain what you want. But don’t keep quiet about this problem you went through. Use it to help others. They are waiting to hear from whoever has been through the same thing that they went through. And they also made it out one way or another and it will make them also attain things. Please come with it or talk about it, it will also relieve you. It will give you courage. You will be a living testament to the rest and the world will see that you are going ahead, educating others and opening the way. You will lift them up. Thank you so much.”

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I HAVE TO SPEAK

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Asking my sisters

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OF WOMEN** FROM THE MORO
ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT IN
MINDANAO

 Berghof Foundation

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ETCR	<i>Espacios Territoriales de Capacitación y Recincorporación;</i> Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation
FARC-EP	<i>Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo;</i> Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LRA	Lord’s Resistance Army
Panga	Machete-style bladed weapon
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

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