

University of New Mexico
UNM Digital Repository

English

Latin American Social Medicine

3-30-2009

Migrations Forced by Violence: The Colombian Case

G Gómez

A Astaiza

M C. Minayo

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/lasm_cucs_en

Recommended Citation

Gómez, G; A Astaiza; and M C. Minayo. "Migrations Forced by Violence: The Colombian Case." (2009).
https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/lasm_cucs_en/159

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin American Social Medicine at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in English by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

DOCUMENTO CUCS # 54B

C&SC200813(5)Gomez

Gómez G, Astaiza A, Minayo MC. Las migraciones forzadas por la violencia: el caso de Colombia. [Migrations Forced by Violence: The Colombian Case.] Ciencia & Saúde Coletiva (Rio de Janeiro, Brasil) 2008 Septiembre-Octubre; 13 (5): 1649-1660.

Objective: To show an overview of the phenomenon of forced migration due to violence in the world, and to discuss the specifics of this issue in the Colombian experience.

Methods: Systematic review

Results: The review states that people migrate for different reasons. Forced displacement by violence is a component of human migrations in the twenty-first century world. Africa reports an increase in internal displacement. In Latin America, the largest estimated number of populations displaced by internal armed conflicts is from Colombia. The authors observed three times in the history of Colombia displacement as a result of military confrontation between two or more actors, or a strategy of armed actors to consolidate its sovereignty over strategic and economically exploitable territories. The main causes of displacement are threats, assassinations and torture.

Between 1985 and 2005 two households per hour were displaced by the Colombian violence. The vast majority of the displaced belong to ethnic minorities and impoverished populations. They have two features in common: their status as victims of armed conflict and their inability to meet their needs. These people show negative living and health conditions in reception sites: health infrastructure and housing are precarious; access to basic services and public health is low; management of solid and liquid waste is poor and overcrowding is a risk for contracting infectious diseases, especially respiratory and diarrhea diseases. The forced displacement situations show rupture, uprooting and scattering. Moreover, the conflicted coexistence of displaced with residents of host cities is another consequence. This configures new social relations and reconfigures the urbanization process in itself as consequence of forced displacement.

Conclusions: An understanding of internal forced displacement is based on a critical reading of the general and structural aspects of societies from a historical perspective. The displacement in Colombia is the product of historical, social, economic and political factors that have been characterized as unfair and exclusionary. This is an explicit violation of human rights. The authors conclude that the quality of life and health of the displaced is being adversely affected by conditions of poverty and destitution.