Recovering Care Networks Through Food Sovereignty: A Case Study in Wayúu Communities, Colombia

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February 2023
This thesis is dedicated to my aunt Stella for all her unconditional love, care and support.
Summary

This thesis analyses the importance of care in a humanitarian crisis context in La Guajira (Colombia) which disproportionately affects the Wayúu indigenous community, and explores how this community recovers its care networks. I start from the premise that the humanitarian crisis faced by the Wayúus is a care crisis. I argue that it is critical to identify the causes for the loss of care networks and practices and the crisis responses from this community and humanitarian assistance institutions.

For this, I use three academic fields: the ethics of care, (feminist) political ecology and food sovereignty. I take the quotidian and the Wayúu food systems and food sovereignty as the place for analysing care networks and practice transformations, arguing that food and the body are the first dimensions to reflect environmental and socio-political changes.

This research is the result of ethnographic work in Wayúu communities located in three cities of La Guajira. I explore care transformations (loss and recovery) guided by the Wayúu experiences and stories, tracing how the community's food systems have been shaped in response to territorial and social shifts and identifying the sources of these changes.

I do this exploration through three empirical chapters. In the first one, I discuss La Guajira's large-scale extractivism activities' impact on Wayúu's care network transformation. A second chapter focuses on the crisis, discussing the role of humanitarian institutions and their crisis management approach, and pointing out how it leads to bad care policies. In the last empirical chapter, I focus on the Wayúu community's response to the crisis, emphasising that the community has not remained immobile in the face of the crisis. Instead, they are deploying a series of practices and actions that celebrate and position care at the centre of decisions and systems.

Interestingly, and what constitutes the main contribution of this thesis, the Wayúu communities are using food sovereignty arguments and practices to recover care networks, showing how care and food sovereignty are co-created and co-dependent and highlighting the everyday as a place where transformative proposals and actions can emerge in a powerful way.
Declarations

This work has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award.
Date 10/02/2023

This thesis is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD
Date 10/02/2023

This thesis is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated, and the thesis has not been edited by a third party beyond what is permitted by Cardiff University’s Policy on the Use of Third Party Editors by Research Degree Students. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references. The views expressed are my own.
Date 10/02/2023

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### Acronyms

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>IACHR</td>
<td>Inter-American Court of Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMW</td>
<td><em>Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu</em> (Colombia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMO</td>
<td>Genetically Modified Organism</td>
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<tr>
<td>FARC</td>
<td>Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELN</td>
<td>National Liberation Army (Colombia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNPD</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>United Self-Defences of Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACRIM</td>
<td>Criminal groups in Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICBF</td>
<td>Colombian Institute for Family Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONU</td>
<td>United Nations Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINEP</td>
<td>Centre for Research and Popular Education (Colombia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OXFAM</td>
<td>Oxford Committee for Famine Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENSAT</td>
<td>Centre for Health, Environment and Work (Colombia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPM</td>
<td>Colombian public utility company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODEPAZ</td>
<td>La Guajira Peace and Connivance Committee Corporation.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Human Rights Platform</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1. From ichthyology to geography

Before starting this doctorate, I worked as a biologist. I was studying fish migrations in the Magdalena River in Colombia, and then, carried by the waters and the desire to work in the Amazon River, I moved to Manaus, Brazil, where I continued my career as an ichthyologist (fish studies), studying a master’s degree there. Eventually, I began to work in the fishery resources area of an NGO based in the Purus River, an important tributary of the Amazon River. During these experiences exploring and trying to understand different rivers, I was always captivated by how nature and species rhythms and cycles define researchers' decisions during fieldwork (such as when to go, how long, where to sample, at what time, and in what ways). The researcher and financer’s wishes and plans or the times and pressures of modern life have little or no influence on the fieldwork schedule or goals.

It is according to the cycles and the times of the species or ecosystems with which the researchers should synchronise, and those natural rhythms define the schedule. For instance, when I was working with migratory fishes in the Magdalena River, all the field logistics, the dates of the trips, the sampling points, the hours in which we would fish, and the fishing gear that we would use were defined by the cycles, biology and species rhythms. These non-human beings define the entire project design and all our actions as researchers: the times when the fishes go upriver or downriver (when the fish swim towards the headwater of the river (subienda) or when they migrate down to the floodplains located some kilometres before the Caribbean Sea) indicate the research time, as well as the rainy seasons that trigger these migrations, the sampling points depended on the areas where the fish spawn or stop to feed and protect themselves from predators, and the sizes and feeding habits of the fish defined which fishing gear we would use, at what time of the day, or for how long we would leave them installed in the water. None of these decisions depended on the researchers. We allowed ourselves to be guided by other rhythms and times and accommodated ourselves to the fish rhythms, understanding that it was that synchronisation of nature with the species and then the activation of
multiple systems and ecosystems which allowed the life continuity and life cycle development.

In these research journeys, the fishermen were crucial figures. They are high-level experts, capable of reading the rivers to know when to go fishing or not; the fishermen had learned to detect signs of the place that the electronic devices we took to the field were unable to capture, such as relating the song of the cicadas with the imminent arrival of rain and with it the beginning of migratory cycles. I considered the fishermen our primary informants in the field. They were almost translators between what was happening in the water and outside. Their lives and those of the riverside community they belong to are also synchronised with the river. For example, the different animals these communities eat throughout the year were a kind of calendar: in April and October, when the rains begin, they eat *bocachico* (a fish species that migrates during these months), and during the dry season, they eat catfish; in times of higher rainfall (and consequently higher water levels), their source of animal protein is game meat. The same thing happens with agriculture; there are months of cassava harvest, others of beans, others of fruits, and even the festivals of the towns are guided and receive the name of the crop, such as the avocado festival in San Miguel or the chestnut fest in the Purus River communities.

Thanks to this constant and fascinating interaction with the fishermen and their communities, I became interested in the human side of research. I wanted to understand how the communities had learned to synchronise their lives with the rivers and seas, how some people linked their job, being a fisherman, for example, to an identity that made them proud. A curiosity to answer and understand these questions prompted me to make an amphibious migration: I left the water and entered geography.

### 1.2. La Guajira’s food crisis

The decision to enter the social sciences through a doctorate in geography coincided with the outbreak of a humanitarian crisis in La Guajira, where, according to official figures from Colombian institutions, between 2007 and 2015, at least 4,770 children (most of them indigenous Wayúu) had died of malnutrition (CIDH, 2015). I am
not from that region, nor did I have emotional ties, family, or memories in that department, but this number hurt me deeply. It was hard to understand that people were dying of hunger in a country as diverse and fertile as Colombia.

The fact that this humanitarian crisis mainly affected the Wayúu was a symptom of the loss of community resilience. As I present in chapters three and five of this thesis, the Wayúu community has occupied the La Guajira peninsula for centuries. For the Wayúu, hunger and drought are not unusual events, so much so that their lifestyles (such as migrations after the rains) and eating habits (the food they grow and how they preserve it) are signs of their ability to sustain and reproduce life in desert conditions. However, the fact that they are going through a humanitarian crisis means that those strategies to support themselves in their territories have been altered.

The decision to carry out this research with the Wayúu responds to several questions. On the one hand, the Wayúu people could better explain what has changed in their territories that have affected the community’s response capacity in the face of disturbance. On the other hand, although the humanitarian crisis affects the entire department of La Guajira, the Wayúu are the community most affected by this crisis. In addition, this research is carried out with the Wayúu to explore the unique forms of resistance in this community in the face of socio-political and economic changes in Colombia during the last 50 years.

Researchers such as Sam Halvorsen have highlighted that one of the peculiarities of indigenous social movements in Colombia is that the defence or construction of territorial autonomy "requires negotiating other overlapping territories, including drug traffickers, paramilitaries, guerrilla organisations and international NGOs" (2018, p. 9). This occurs in Wayúu communities, who must negotiate with illegal armed groups (including guerrillas, paramilitary groups and criminal gangs in Colombia and Venezuela), traffickers, migrants, Colombian and Venezuelan authorities, different extractivist companies (from the coal company Cerrejón to ecotourism companies), and especially since the humanitarian crisis, with various national and international assistance organisations and institutions. Faced with this scenario of diverse territorial actors, in which power in the territory seems to be ‘diluted‘-and at the same time concentrated in few hands- among the territorial actors, the Wayúu have become one of the most active
indigenous communities in political and social mobilisation in Colombia.

In addition to being a community particularly active in political terms, as well as highly affected by actions that occur in their territory, the Wayúu, together with Afro-indigenous communities of the Colombian Pacific, are challenging notions about what territory represents and the relationships between the human and the non-human created in it. As I present in chapters five and seven of this thesis, Wayúu social movements are proposing debates on water territories and rights (Ulloa, 2020) and demanding the inclusion of these rights and territories in national institutional policies.

Discussions promoted and led by indigenous communities on the urgency of recognising the relationships between the human and the non-human seek to point out that events such as a crisis are the result of interruptions in multiple and diverse relationships occurring on different scales and times and with other actors, that a crisis is a systemic failure.

Biology has taught me that life results from a series of systems, cycles, and rhythms that are permanently synchronised to give continuity to existence and that being alive results from multiple relationships that co-occur between our systems and external ones. So, I intuited that the root of this humanitarian crisis was not the lack of food, it is just a symptom of something much more profound.

Initially, I understood hunger as the result of a significant systemic disruption, or something so large, frequent, and unusual that it had disrupted or blocked connections and relationships between systems, like some event or series of events that had caused the systems to lose resilience and response capacity. The initial driving force behind this research was the need to understand which systems had been broken in La Guajira, specifically within the Wayúu communities, that resulted in a humanitarian crisis.

Then, while starting the doctorate, I came across theories and perspectives that shed light on the root of the crisis in La Guajira. Firstly, the encounter with the works of the economist Amartya Sen (1981, 1999) allowed me to explain why hunger is not exclusively a lack of food but physical, economic, and social access could also contribute to it. Later, the arrival of feminism on my journey, and the
encounter with (feminist) political ecology, were crucial for beginning
to associate hunger (or any other inequality) with power.

Feminism brings me a pair of glasses that I can no longer take off,
allowing me to see problems from more intersectional perspectives,
give value to relationships, and detect and value the invisible network
that sustains life. Feminism brought the awareness that few things
are neutral, that the positions we occupy in the world and the
privileges that support us necessarily lead us to live reality in very
different ways, for some with many inequalities and obstacles, for
others in more fluid and dignified ways.

In the first moment of this investigation, the feminist perspective of
Sara Ahmed (2017) and Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), together with
the arguments of Sen, were essential to begin to perceive that a
humanitarian crisis, such as the one that occurred in La Guajira, had
a political root. The hunger faced by the Wayúu people is not a
problem of lack of food, it is a problem of inequalities and power
imbalances. Thus, seeking to understand the invisible causes of the
crisis in La Guajira and primarily guided by the hand of feminism (and
some feminists), I encountered food sovereignty, the ethics of care,
and the (feminist) political ecology.

These three main theories entered this research at different times,
first food sovereignty in unison with (feminist) political ecology and
later the ethics of care, which gave me tools and perspectives to
explore this hunger crisis and constitute the three theoretical bodies
on which I heavily rely in this thesis.

Food sovereignty is defined as:

“The right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food
produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods,
and their right to define their own food and agriculture
systems” (Declaration of Nyéléni: Forum for Food Sovereignty,
2007).

It is simultaneously a field of study, a right, a social movement, and
an alternative to development that has received increasing attention
from different areas of academia (Grey & Patel, 2015; Holt-Giménez
& Altieri, 2013; Levkoe et al., 2018; B. M. McKay, 2019; Schiavoni,
2016) and governments mainly located in Latin America (McKay et
al., 2014; Peña, 2016; Soper, 2020), as by the new Colombian
government led by Gustavo Petro (and Francia Márquez), who in his
presidential inauguration speech on August 7, 2022, mentioned the
urgency of achieving food sovereignty in Colombia (this was probably the first time that this concept was mentioned in the first speech of a new Colombian government).

Food sovereignty is essential for the context of this thesis because the way that this viewpoint understands and deals with hunger and avoid future crises is to put people and relationships between humans and more-than-humans at the centre of the system, identify power relationships created around food systems (Edelman et al., 2014; R. C. Patel, 2012), and demand that systems are fair, participatory and ethical. Food sovereignty pays particular attention to practices in minor scales of life, such as household and community life, both in how food systems are created in those places and in the forms of resistance and activism that emerge from there.

Political ecology, and in particular feminist political ecology, enters this research through its emphasis and proposal that social and environmental phenomena should not be studied separately, but rather the social, political, ecological, and economic aspects and context of each event should be considered together, and because reinforces the need to identify power location on different scales. Political ecology is an approach that questions and cares about understanding the impacts, who wins, and especially who loses, in the face of social or environmental events, such as hunger or climate change (Kull et al., 2015; Sultana, 2011).

Alongside, feminist political ecology clearly warns that the effects of these phenomena are not distributed homogeneously in the population since issues such as gender, race, or socioeconomic context determine how a situation is experienced (Ojeda, 2021; Rocheleau et al., 1996, 2004; Sultana, 2018). The emphasis of (feminist) political ecology on the particularities and imbalances of power was a permanent reminder in this research that required me to try to identify the different ways the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira affected members of the Wayúu community.

The ethics of care came to this research bringing three crucial contributions or perspectives. On the one hand, the care perspective points out that resistance and re-existence strategies of the Wayúu (see chapter seven) are processes woven around the practices of care and relationships, which occur on intimate and daily scales and have tremendous transformative power. Care, in this thesis, is understood as:
"A species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web" (J. C. Tronto, 1995, p. 141).

On the other hand, throughout the research and writing of this thesis, the perspectives, practices, and theory of the ethics of care pointed out that the recovery of community food systems and food sovereignty, such as the Wayúu, could not be achieved if care networks were not considered. That is, care is a prerequisite to sustaining the systems and interactions that make food systems possible; impacts or transformations in care will be reflected in the food sovereignty of a community. However, as I will explain later, the results of this thesis indicate that although care is a ‘raw material’ for food sovereignty, food sovereignty practices, perspectives and conditions can recover care networks. That is, food sovereignty elements could also take place before care, reaffirming that food sovereignty and care are co-dependent and cogenerated results (Giraud, 2021).

Finally, the ethics of care- like food sovereignty- points out that a way out of humanitarian crises like the one in La Guajira, and a way to avoid future crises, is putting people and relationships between humans and more-than-humans at the system's centre. This invites reformulating, creating, or demanding institutions to ratify the idea of putting humans and more-than-humans and their relations at the centre and then endorse that "individuals act politically, then, not only on the basis of their self-interests but as a result of the particular constellation of caring relationships and institutions within which they find themselves" (J. C. Tronto, 1995, p. 142).

In this research, I argue that the ethics of care, political ecology, and food sovereignty contribute from their fields of action and perspectives to jointly propose an alternative, long-lasting and worthy solution to the hunger crisis. These academic fields share views, priorities, and practices that permit us to see beyond the crisis and identify daily responses, resistance, and transformations taking place in communities.

Without overlooking or failing to denounce what happens on broader scales- such as regional institutions or policies that are sustaining
structures of domination, inequalities, and injustices (such as hunger)- these three theoretical bodies tend to focus on what happens in everyday life, in more minor scales such as the home, or the body itself, recognising these as tremendously powerful places of analysis and transformation (Coulson, 2016; Hayes-Conroy & Hayes-Conroy, 2013). Along these same lines, both the ethics of care, political ecology, and food sovereignty warn that, during a crisis, people and communities do not position themselves as simple receptacles of aid; instead, from their positions, people carry out actions that challenge structures and propose solutions to crises, where care networks and practices and relationships are central axes of community action.

The COVID pandemic is an excellent example of how care networks and relationships are relevant in times of crisis. The pandemic made visible the fragility and failures of various systems, as well as the interrelation between them: a zoonosis affected all social systems at all scales, from the health system, international relations, migratory conditions, tourism, recreation, forms of work, distribution of tasks in families, use of space within the home, and food systems (Clapp & Moseley, 2020; Sanderson et al., 2021).

It showed that society's functionality relies on the care practices and roles performed by a generally invisible and underestimated group of people. Proof of this occurred in Bogotá, where I was when the pandemic began: the city hall had to determine which workers were essential for the city to continue to function and thus be able to calculate and define which urban systems should continue to operate and in what ways (for example, how many buses should circulate in the city), so the town hall asked the citizens to remain home for a week, at least their jobs were vital for the community. As a result, the city streets were occupied by essential workers: health workers, those who work in the food sector (as transport, production, and sale), people who took care of garbage management and city cleaning, and those who repaired or installed water, electricity, and internet networks. They represented the group of people who sustained the life of eight million inhabitants (the population of Bogotá), the rest - bankers, ministers, designers, and even doctoral students, like me - were (we were) completely expendable during the pandemic. Life in periods of crisis is only possible thanks to those who took care of us.
Community solidarity networks were crucial in the most critical moments of the pandemic. In the cities, the neighbourhoods and social movements became organised and mobilised to care for the most vulnerable. Feminist urban movements, climate activists, and the LGBTQ+ population were some social actors who actively and quickly organised themselves to create a social fabric and sustain the community in times of hunger and uncertainty (Montoya et al., 2021). At least in Latin America, the streets became *living laboratories* of social activism, mobilisation, social justice, and space reappropriation, and much of this was around food.

Behind a community pot (*olla comunitaria*), there was a previous work of community coordination to find the ingredients, prepare the meals, and distribute them. A group of people gave their time or money to respond to the crisis with solidarity and empathy, contrary to the response of those governments that seemed to be more concerned with taking care of economic growth rather than people.

The centrality of relationships and the evidence that care networks are what sustain life are facts that are more apparent in crises such as the pandemic. Likewise, in the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira, the reaction and response of the community (of the Wayúu and non-Wayúu) has also emphasised the power of the relationships, exhibiting one of the main focuses of the ethics of care: "the compelling moral salience of attending and meeting the needs of the particular others for whom we take responsibility" (Held, 2006, p. 10).

To face hunger, the Wayúu carry out daily practices characterised by being *attentive, responsible, competent, and responsive* to other humans or more-than-human beings (J. C. Tronto, 1998). Starting from daily experiences and those that can be transformed from everyday life- and echoing principles of political ecology, the ethics of care, and food sovereignty related to participation, inclusion, diversity, and dignity- in this crisis, the Wayúu have focused on deploying collective actions and practices that mitigate hunger, while containing *collective trauma emotions* (Whittier, 2001) such as anger at social and environmental injustices, impotence and humiliation for not being able to feed their loved ones, or the sadness and resignation for living in poverty (Montoya et al., 2021), leading them to represent *resistance emotions* (Whittier, 2001) of hope, pride, mutuality, respect, and transformation.
The study of the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira proposes two parallel and complementary debates: on the one hand, to understand the social, political, and environmental causes of the crisis, and on the other hand, it invites the exploration of the responses and strategies of Wayúu (and not Wayúu) communities to face this crisis and prepare for or avoid future ones, as well permits the assessment of national and international assistance institutions’ responses to this event.

To explore these two paths (the causes of the crisis and the responses of the community and institutions), tools and perspectives from the ethics of care, food sovereignty and (feminist) political ecology had a central role in guiding decisions, questions, and dialogues throughout the process of this research (from the formulation of questions for the fieldwork to the writing of this thesis).

However, due to my previous academic training in biology, as well as personal interests and curiosities such as feminism or literature, I also made use of a series of concepts, theories and debates coming from areas that allowed me to connect with the participants' experiences and interviews and with the data analysis from other perspectives perhaps more familiar or easier to understand for me and that helped me to make associations. The decision to bring tools and theories from different areas, or even fragments of stories and poems, taught me that knowledge is produced from diversity and that in addition to theories and concepts, emotions, memories, affections, and relationships also play a crucial role in the process of connecting ideas to explain a problem.

That is why in this thesis, I use a series of concepts, theories, and ideas from areas as different as biology, ecology, geography, history, sociology, anthropology, economics, and critical studies of development that allow me to investigate this crisis from different scales, times, and perspectives. As a result, autopoiesis (Maturana & Varela, 2004) share lines with pluriverse (Escobar, 2018), imaginary realities (Ulloa, 2021), and green grabbing (Vigil, 2018) in the process of a holistic understanding of La Guajira crisis and the community and institutional responses.

This thesis highlights the idea that communities carry out actions that challenge oppressive structures (Hanmer, 2021), even if this is not their primary or explicit objective, being more of an organic and
creative process in which communities are using care networks combined with tools of the system that oppresses them (i.e., institutional policies) to transform their realities. I argue that Wayúu communities use food sovereignty tools and arguments to challenge inequality structures and put care relationships and networks at the centre of systems.

1.3. Aim and Research questions

This thesis explores the roots of La Guajira’s hunger crisis and the community response and resistance strategies. For this, I developed an ethnographic study with Wayúu communities, food institutions, and organisations in three main cities of La Guajira (Riohacha, Maicao, Cabo de la Vela) and six indigenous communities (rancherías) distributed across the department, as well as an extended secondary literature analysis. The fieldwork was developed in three visits from January to September 2019, totalling approximately three months in the field, and four months in two Colombian universities and an anthropological research centre in Bogotá from October 2019 to February 2020.

The main objective of this thesis is:

To examine, through a food sovereignty perspective, changes and transformation in care practices and networks in Wayúu communities, Colombia

This research objective is explored through three research questions, resulting in three empirical chapters:

1. In which ways have large-scale extractivist projects modified the care practices of the Wayúu people?

To understand how care networks and practices of Wayúu people are affected by the arrival of large-scale salt, coal, and water extractivist projects in La Guajira, I explore through the review of historical documents and field interviews the motivations and institutional narratives that allowed (and allow) the installation of these projects in La Guajira, besides the negotiation processes with the community,
and the effects of these mega-projects on the Wayúu community care networks, specifically on their food systems and food sovereignty.

2. During the La Guajira crisis, was it possible to identify any incidence of ethics of care in the food programs and policies implemented by national and international food institutions and organisations?

I investigate whether food organisations and institutions incorporate care ethics in their policies during the La Guajira crisis and explore the Wayúu people's perspectives and responses regarding institutional crisis management.

3. To what extent are Wayúu people using ethics of care and food sovereignty arguments to create and support alternatives to development?

I explore different forms of care and care networks within Wayúu communities, emphasising those related, created or strengthened by food sovereignty practices and arguments representing or supporting an alternative to development possibilities.

Each of these questions takes Wayúu food sovereignty and food systems as the tools to analyse the transformations in the community care networks. Furthermore, each research question has a specific time context. The first has a period of analysis of the care network changes in the Wayúu communities due to large-extractiveist activities before the humanitarian crisis of 2015. The second question analyses the place of the ethics of care in the policies implemented at the crisis's highest point. The third question is developed primarily from the middle of the crisis until now, giving a future vision of the state of care in the Wayúu communities and their recovery strategies during the crisis. The following graph (Figure 1-1) summarises the main research questions’ attention points and their temporality:
1.4. Main contributions

As a result, this thesis contributes to current debates and gaps in the literature on crisis management through the ethics of care (Y. Herrero, 2020; Montoya et al., 2021; Smith, 2019), to studies that are exploring the effects of territorial transformations (such as extractivism) in care networks, and specifically in those research that explores how these transformations are impacting the food sovereignty construction or maintenance (B. M. McKay, 2019).

Likewise, this research contributes to the literature that explores the changes in the relationships between communities due to extractivism, specifically in interactions between indigenous groups (Ulloa, 2016c). I also contribute by pointing out how the ethics of care, together with food sovereignty, offer arguments and practices in favour of alternatives to development (Ezquerra, 2010, 2011; Ulloa, 2016a, 2016c).

Also, this thesis support scholars that indicate household and the quotidian as places for resistance and transformation (Berman-
Arévalo & Ojeda, 2020), besides being the places from where women are displaying ‘gendered forms of resistance’ (Leguizamón, 2019; Sultana, 2018), such as the creative and careful ways that Wayúu women are responding to the crisis.

This thesis is novel in three aspects: it shows the impacts of extractivism in the Wayúu care networks, especially in those that sustain food systems; it proposes using the lens of the ethics of care to evaluate the institutional actions and policies that are implemented in times of crisis; and by indicating how institutional food policies and programs are being appropriated in resourceful ways by communities to rebuild their networks of care.

1.5. Thesis outline

This thesis is organised into eight chapters. The first of them is this introductory chapter. The second chapter is the literature review, where I describe, analyse and dialogue with the three central theoretical frameworks of this research: the ethics of care, ecology politics (feminist), and food sovereignty, in addition to other concepts such as indigenous geography.

In chapter three, I give a context of social, historical, economic, cultural, and political factors in Colombia that had, and have, a substantial impact on the Wayúu community and that also provide elements to explain the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira.

The fourth chapter refers to the methodology of this research. It is divided into two sections: in the first one, I introduce pragmatism and feminist pragmatism as the research philosophy of this thesis, and in the second one, I describe my positionality, the reasons for choosing ethnography as the most convenient methodology for this research, besides some strategies, decisions, techniques and valuable tools employed during fieldwork and data analysis. This research’s ethical considerations are mentioned in all sections of this chapter.

Chapters five, six, and seven are the empirical chapters of this investigation. In the fifth chapter, I explore the territorial transformations in La Guajira due to the arrival of large-scale extractive projects in the department, identifying the government discourses, narratives, and promises that led to the implementation of these projects and how these impacted the Wayúu care network,
especially those related to food systems. Likewise, I explore why these projects remain in force in the government's discourse despite their recognised and radical effects in socio-environmental terms. I justify that the exploration of large-scale extractivist projects' effects on care networks is relevant to understanding the leading causes of the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira.

In chapter six, I focus on the humanitarian crisis period in the department (from 2005 to 2015) and explore crisis management by national and international humanitarian institutions and organisations. I focus on identifying if the ethics of care perspectives somehow guided the actions of these institutions in the face of the crisis. Also, I argue that food sovereignty arguments must drive food crisis management to overcome current crises and avoid future ones.

In chapter seven, the last empirical chapter, I focus on the response of the Wayúu communities to the humanitarian crisis. I point out that the community, and especially the Wayúu women, respond to the crisis from different fronts aiming at their body-territory defence, exhibiting self-care practices, practices with the closest networks of companions and family (which I named sorority networks), and community practices, which involve and depend on members inside and outside the Wayúu community. In this chapter, I suggest that Wayúu women use institutions and organisations’ food programs creatively and daily to camouflage the community's claims for rights to food sovereignty, care, and territorial autonomy.

The thesis concludes in chapter eight, where I summarise the main findings of the thesis, some literature contributions and point out future paths and fields of research.
2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

In recent years, care has begun to receive significant attention from academia and institutions, who are discussing and expanding the use of the ethics of care to analyse current problems such as climate change or the food crisis and to add perspectives and experiences that allow the creation of public policies in ‘not care related’ areas, such as political science, human geography (Ahmed, 2021; McDowell, 2004; Sultana, 2011) or food studies (Giraud, 2021).

As I discuss in the empirical chapters of the thesis (chapters five, six and seven), the La Guajira crisis is a care crisis whose symptoms were beginning to appear decades before 2015, and it is a crisis that largely persists due to the approach of the policies that are implemented to address it (in chapter six I explain the institutional policies failures to address this crisis). In this chapter, I argue that the ethics of care, (feminist) political ecology, and food sovereignty are theoretical frameworks that should be incorporated into hunger crisis management. These three approaches could bring sustainable crisis solutions and, above all, locate care as a politic sustained by relationships between humans and more-than-human beings. Perspectives brought by the ethics of care, feminist political ecology and food sovereignty could indicate that social transformations are already occurring from places as invisible as everyday life, that it is also the first place from which crises are faced and where approaches are created to avoid future events.

I begin by presenting some of the multiple care dimensions and how their arguments and main proposals or approaches, such as relationality, empathy, and the questioning of vulnerability, allow connections with other fields of action. I argue that understanding what care means, its scope, its relevance in daily life, and how care sustains life allows relevant connection and dialogue with perspectives and practices that point to different understandings and more sensitive paths regarding a crisis, such as the one in La Guajira.

Throughout this chapter, I indicate how the ethics of care, feminist political ecology and food sovereignty are connected. I argue that the dialogue between these three approaches highlights the value of the context, particularities, relationships, empathy and emotions as
crucial elements to understanding the multiple faces that a crisis has and, particularly, the ways and strategies in which communities are responding to these events on a day-to-day basis (in chapters five and seven I refer in more detail to community responses and approaches to the crisis). I end this chapter by briefly presenting how Wayúu community indigeneity connects and strengthens the proposals and perspectives of the ethics of care.

2.2. Ethics of care and why we should care about care

Caring is a daily activity. We care for and are cared for by others all the time, from birth to our last days, where our conditions and the conditions of those who care or care for us (the positions of caregivers and recipients of care) change over time. Care is commonly seen as an intimate activity carried out in closed spaces. It is associated with vulnerability and the dependency that is created between a person and one who cares for that being, and although it usually goes unnoticed and is even despised, care is valuable, transformative, and extremely powerful.

Defining care is complex. It can be associated with everything that is done daily to sustain life with dignity and meet one's own basic needs and those of others. Care can represent carrying out specific concrete actions (material or corporal) such as cooking, cleaning, curing, and caring for one's own body or others, as well as carrying out immaterial and intangible actions that relate care to feeling affections, emotions, create affective relations, and to feel empathy for something or someone (Pérez Orozco, 2006). Care is a value and a practice (Held, 2009) that seeks to do the best to provide well-being to others, humans or not, as mentioned by authors such as Val Plumwood (2003) and Wendy Harcourt (Escobar & Harcourt, 2007). They propose that care also means seeking and establishing relationships of justice, reciprocity, and respect with nature. For Joan Tronto and Bernice Fischer, care implies work, an action, proposing that:

“[Care] includes everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair ‘our world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web” (J. Tronto, 1993).
The ethics of care, a discipline in which the psychologist Carol Gilligan was a pioneer, has been concerned with critically studying care and proposing it as a central dimension and a structuring axis of life. The emergence of this discipline is traced to the responses generated by the proposals of the psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg (Kohlberg, 1981), Gilligan's mentor, who had studied the stages of cognitive development (in groups formed essentially by men), concluding that the fundamental principle of development (what makes one go from one stage of life to another) is recognising the value of justice and accepting it as the main idea that should govern and define actions. One of Kohlberg's main conclusions is that there would be significant differences in the way each sex faces moral mandates (or decision-making), where women would have a less developed notion of justice compared to men since women guide their criteria by emotions and a sense of responsibility for the other/others, while men used to be guided by universal standards of justice and individual rights.

In 1982, Gilligan launched the book *In a Different Voice*, a product of her studies to refute Kohlberg's arguments, which she criticised for considering bias, claiming that moral development is universal. Gilligan proposes that individuals cannot devalue or ignore the value of empathy, emotions, and relationships as engines of personal growth (Gilligan, 1993). In response to her mentor, Gilligan studies cognitive development (with a group of women) and proposes that caring and relationships are also virtues that enable development; where for example, what marks the transition between early childhood phases is going from being almost primarily focused on personal interest to become interested in the other/others.

Regarding judging criteria, Gilligan's studies and conclusions suggest that people not only make decisions using arguments from justice and individual rights, in rational and objective ways and excluding emotions. In the face of ethical and moral dilemmas, people also opt (and is equally valid) for solutions or analysis that reflects the understanding of each person/situation's particularities (Gilligan, 1993), noticing that although care, particularities, and relationships guide this development of moral reasoning is different from what

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1 Although Milton Mayeroff's book *On Caring* (1990) was probably the first to mention the ethics of care, the work of Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings stands as the most relevant and best-articulated starting point of this discipline.
Kohlberg proposes, this does not imply that it is inferior (as Kohlberg claimed).

Despite these differences, the importance of Kohlberg and Gilligan’s works is that they proposed different ways of understanding justice and resolving conflicts: one theoretical-legal and another expressive-collaborative (Urban Walker, 2007).

Where the first is a rational one, guided by rights, in which independence and impartiality (voice of justice) are valued, the other, the voice of care proposed by Gilligan, values the particularities, seeks to respond to situations considering their contexts, and formulates an idea of a loving justice approach (Secomb, 2007).

Loving justice is reached when moral reasoning is guided by the sense of solidarity and responsibility with the other, where judgment requires a context to understand the other's point of view, together with relationships and empathy:

"The contextuality, narrativity, and specificity of women's moral judgment is not a sign of weakness or deficiency, but a manifestation of a vision of moral maturity that considers the self as something immersed in a network of relationships with others" (Benhabib, 1987, p. 155)

For Gilligan, there is another way, another voice, or a complimentary voice, to face moral dilemmas where context, particularity, and diversity are valued. The characteristics of this other voice to which Gilligan referred gave the basis for the ethics of care, which is defined as "a conception of morality that is concerned with the activity of giving care, centres moral development around the understanding of responsibility and relationships, as well as the conception of morality as fairness link moral development to the understanding of rights and rules” (Gilligan, 1993, p. 19)

For Montserrat Busquets (2019), the ethics of care has three axes or main characteristics: responsibility and recognition for the other; empathy for the other that allows identifying people’s needs and limitations; and placing care and attention to needs as a society structuring axis, understanding that vulnerability and dependency are not harmful or reprehensible issues, since these are inherent life characteristics.

According to this idea, societies should be organised based on the premise that we are interdependent species and need relationships to
sustain life. In this way, the ethics of care is a proposal that questions independence, rationality, objectivity, and the ability to isolate oneself from emotions as priorities or valuable responses and practices and points to the need to organise systems and societies in different ways, "oriented towards the micro, towards the informality of horizontal networks of communication and social collaboration" (Balza & Garrido Peña, 2015, p. 151), more in line with the intrinsic characteristics of life.

The nascent ethic of care gained strength thanks to Gilligan's work, receiving the attention of researchers from different fields and disciplines who recognises and celebrates care as a central element of life, resonated. The ethics of care arguments especially had repercussions among those academics who, in the 80s, were critically questioning the hierarchy of specific values that generated biases and that are strongly marked by gender, such as the apparent superiority of culture over nature, reason over emotion, mind over body, or public as superior to private. Faced with this, for example, Plumwood argues that the proposals of the ethics of care allow another position to meet and signal the flaws of these dualisms that place on one side what is considered superior when compared to the other (Plumwood, 2003), where what is located on the upper side has traditionally been linked to the masculine (such as reason, mind, or the public), despising everything related to the feminine, such as emotion, nature, the private, as well as all practices that are carried out in these spaces, or the factors and motivations that guide decision-making, such as care for the other.

Academics such as Virginia Held (Held, 2006) and Tronto (J. Tronto, 1993, 2010) highlighted that the perspective provided by the ethics of care was not limited to interpersonal and close relationships but instead generated a route, a support guide, to create other societies and even exploring how care challenges physical barriers by caring for distant people, communities or societies. Likewise, the discussion and proposals generated by In a Different Voice were important in influencing the work Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education by Nel Noddings (1986), who argued that ethics has a tremendous personal component, where emotions and subjectivities inevitably play an important role when making judgments, thus rejecting ideas of objectivity and neutrality and abstract principles of justice. Likewise, Noddings was part of the group of academics who
found the ethics of care a great ally to highlight the value of relationships as a motor for personal and collective growth:

“The virtue described by the ethical ideal of one caring is built up in relation. It reaches out to the other and grows in response to the other” (Noddings, 1986, p. 81)

The proposals of the ethics of care are welcomed as well as criticised by different areas, mainly because, according to particular academics, this proposal reinforced gender roles that associate care with the feminine (Card, 1990), ignored political realities (Hoagland, 1991; J. Tronto, 1993), failed to consider the differences that exist according to sexual orientation, nationality, class, race (Hankivsky, 2014), overlooked dialogues from different geographies (Raghuram, 2016), and because their principles- although relevant- still seem utopian and laboriously applicable or transferable to the public life sphere (Hankivsky, 2014; J. Tronto, 2013).

These criticisms are overcome in two main ways: by the politicisation of care and by intersectionality, which allowed different disciplines and perspectives to begin to question care (or reinforce their arguments when incorporating care elements in their studies) and the relationships that care creates or allows in critical ways and from their fields of action, highlighting from different perspectives the transformational capacity of care and the various ways in which care is materialised.

Regarding the politicisation of care, one of the first steps was to clarify the place of care and who is responsible for providing or receiving it. Some academics (mainly feminists) criticised the ethics of care for reinforcing ideas that associated care as the domain of women, reinforcing essentialist notions about them (Jaggar, 1991; Sevenhuijsen, 1998; J. Tronto, 1993). Although Gilligan stressed that her work referred to the voice of care as different from the voice of justice, and her intention was not to reduce her findings to differences between sex, according to María Puig de la Bellacasa, Gilligan's proposal was not understood in this way and was considered as 'a women's moral voice'. For Puig de la Bellacasa, early articulations of the 'ethic of care' were “built from the standpoint of values grounded in women's maintenance of everyday relationships” (2010, p. 157).

In opposition, authors such as Victoria Camps and Gilligan made a further analysis, arguing that "the ethic of care is not a feminine
ethic, but a feminist ethic" (Gilligan, 2013, p. 31), so care would not be limited to a women's issue, as it is an issue that appeals to human interests. However, re-signifying care and exalting its role continues to be a difficult task because care is still perceived as something that solely occurs in private and invisible places:

“It is not a question of postulating a specifically ‘careful’ or ‘caring’ feminine nature, but of verifying the existence of a culture that men have not made their own and, therefore, has not been part of public life but has been considered rather a nuisance for public behaviour” (Camps, 1998, p. 75).

Tronto proposes that care must be politicised to incorporate the practices and ethics of care in the construction of fairer and more dignified societies where care is no longer designated or associated with certain people (women). Tronto argued in her book *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care* (1993) that the main reason for the devaluation and feminisation of care work is that it continues to be associated with private contexts, for which it is necessary to overcome the separation\(^2\) between the private and the public (one of the main boundaries that the ethics of care must face) so that ethics of care become adopted as a political and moral approach to creating more just societies.

Tronto demonstrates in her extended work (1993, 2010, 2013) that care, interdependence, and mutual obligations\(^3\) occur inside and outside private spaces, confronting the limits of individuality and situating care as a daily practice that occurs both in private spaces such as home, public institutions or can even be practised at a distance (2010), demonstrating that care actions, regardless from where they are done, sustain human life. For this reason, Tronto claims that care should be used "as an integral moral and political concept" (1993, p. 124).

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\(^2\) Tronto identifies three main boundaries: morality and politics, moral point of view, and the public/private separation. According to this author, these boundaries are the product of political, economic and overall power forces that impede care from being fully appropriated and valued for different spheres (J. Tronto, 1993).

\(^3\) Linda McDowell argued, “the notion of an ethic of care based on mutual obligations and relations of trust is as applicable to the public sphere of the labour market as it is to social relations in the familial or domestic arena” (McDowell, 2004, p. 157).
Selma Sevenhuijsen (1998) also contributed to the politicisation of care when she argued for an ethic of care to be within notions of citizenship and insisted on establishing public conversations regarding care led by those doing care work. Sevenhuijsen’s work focused on issues related to childhood care and protection laws and reforms in the Dutch health system, where the author used the ethics of care framework to illustrate how this allows reformulating the citizenship notions, incorporating ideas of attentiveness, responsibility, and responsiveness, as well as being a framework that makes it possible to highlight issues that other frameworks (such as the legislative one) cannot perceive.

By politicising care, understood by Tronto and Sevenhuijsen as the urgency of making visible the practices and ethics of care in both private and public spheres, these authors show how care is a theoretical-practical framework that allows the construction of different citizenships, more empathetic, fair and loving, pointing to the importance of care and extending the scope of the ethics of care from “the moral to the political realm, from personal to public relationships, from local to the global, from the feminine to feminist virtues and values, and from issues of gender to issues of power and oppression” (Koggle & Orme in Hankivsky, 2014, p. 253).

Making these transitions of care (from the moral to the political, from the private to the public, from oppression to freedom) needs, in my view, to make an urgent call for empathy, opening spaces to it when facing dilemmas and valuing an empathic point of view to resolving conflicts. Although it is worth mentioning that this empathy that Gilligan talks about, and with which I agree, does not refer to putting ourselves in the other's place, but instead "putting ourselves in our own place and directing the other to teach us theirs" (Gilligan, 2013, p. 34), which implies trust in the other, in their words and experiences, in their way of relating their life or a particular situation, so it would not be necessary to go through what other people are facing or seek to confirm it, to feel solidarity for them, because the reality that the other person relates would be as accurate and valid as mine. I think that one way to bring empathy back or allow others to show it is by listening to their voice⁴, and all other possible voices, is

⁴ The way of listening, the attention to what the other is telling, was central in Gilligan's work. The author created a "listening guide" in which she established a method that could be followed by other researchers (Gilligan, 2013).
to be and foster or push for what the feminist scholar Sara Ahmed calls a feminist ear (2017, 2021):

“To hear with a feminist ear is to hear who is not heard, how we are not heard. If we are taught to tune out some people, then a feminist ear is an achievement. We become attuned to those who are tuned out, and we can be those, which means becoming attuned to ourselves can also be an achievement. We learn from who is not heard about who is deemed important or who is doing ‘important work’, to return to the sharpness of Cary’s Black feminist insights. We learn how only some ideas are heard if they are deemed to come from the right people; right can be white. What would you say or do if you were the one being passed over?” (2021, p. 4).

The urgency for empathy resonates with Camps when the author affirms that the inability or lack of response to injustice results from losing the capacity for empathy (Camps, 1998). Camps suggests that a way out of this lack of response is to create means or bridges so that justice and care always go hand in hand, thus increasing the ability to detect situations of injustice and oppression. For this, more eyes, more lenses, and more perspectives that value care, relationships, and vulnerability (that make these elements visible and put them into practice) are needed, an invitation attended by disciplines as diverse as economics\(^5\) \(\text{(Federici, 2013)}\), geography \(\text{(Raghuram, 2016; Sultana, 2008)}\), biology\(^6\) \(\text{(de Waal, 2010)}\), or anthropology\(^7\) \(\text{(Blaffer Hrdy, 2011)}\). These disciplines have value and reaffirm the emotions and affections power, have recognised the caring role in the organisation and social reproduction \(\text{(Fraser, 2017)}\), and have globalised the discussions on care, as Raghuram

\(^5\)The philosopher and feminist Silvia Federici has shown in her work how care is an excellent engine of the economy. According to the author, 20% of global GDP is supported by unpaid care work, and she insists that capitalism could not be sustained without this type of invisible work \(\text{(Federici, 2013)}\).

\(^6\) The primatologist Frans de Waal, in his book *The Age of Empathy*\(\text{(2010)}\), observes that “empathy is part of our evolutionary history; It is not a recent ability, but a very old one”.

\(^7\) In the book *Mothers and Others* \(\text{(2011)}\), by evolutionary anthropologist Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, the author indicates that the capacity for "empathy, telepathy, and cooperation" was, and may continue to be, fundamental to human survival.
(Raghuram, 2016), who has shown how care promotes migrations between the global north and the global south.

Different disciplines have adopted care approaches differently, guided by their respective practices and discussions, and their perspectives have also been making valuable contributions to the ethics of care construction, mainly because when intersectional and political components are incorporated into the care discussion, new versions and understandings of this moral theory are achieved.

2.3. Incorporating politics in care through (feminist) political ecology

The central focuses and main contributions of the ethics of care have been the place and the discussions it generates around vulnerability\(^8\), (inter)dependence, responsibility for the other\(^9\), the value of emotions, and the importance of considering the particularities when making judgments or resolving conflicts. These questions, central to the ethics of care (vulnerability, feelings, and especially the importance of the context), were already being incorporated by different disciplines, particularly those that allowed themselves to put on feminist and intersectional lenses to see reality or their fields with different eyes.

Intersectionality is a theoretical and methodological concept that has markedly influenced feminist research in recent decades. It is a proposal by the black American feminist Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, who defines it as the phenomenon by which each individual suffers oppression or holds privilege based on belonging to multiple social categories (1989). By highlighting that every person belongs to several social categories, each of which can generate privileges or oppressions, intersectionality warns that an individual can suffer

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8 Some scholars have criticized the ethics of care because its arguments are familiar to other moral theories. Faced with this criticism, Held points out that the novelty of the ethics of care is the approach it gives to dependency (highlighting the human and inexorable need to care for ourselves, others and society), vulnerability, and in “stresses the moral force of the responsibility to respond to the needs of the dependent” (Held, 2009, p. 2).

9 Regarding this, Gilligan affirms that “no child can survive without being in a relationship” and that “interdependence is a common human experience” (1993).
multiple oppressions. For example, a poor black woman is more likely to suffer oppression and injustice for her gender, race, and socioeconomic status than a middle-class white woman exposed to fewer sources of oppression (her gender). In this sense, power position relative to each social category reduces or increases the situations of oppression to which a person is exposed. As Hankivsky argues, the ethics of care greatly benefits from intersectionality because it enriches analyses by focusing on the “interactive and interlocking social locations, power structures and processes” (2014, p. 253), where intersectionality could present a more complex human life context.

Within the disciplines that can contribute most to the ethics of care and its incorporation into different spheres and other relationships, it is possible to situate the political ecology, particularly the feminist political ecology. As I will later extend, this discipline has been an essential ally for the ethics of care for four main reasons: i) because it contributes to the politicisation of care by showing how care occurs and sustains life outside and inside the home, ii) because it points out the relationships that are created between humans and non-humans (going beyond familiar places where care is discussed, such as the medical area or disciplines related to the elderly and children), where emotions play a crucial role iii) because (feminist) political ecology frequently adopts intersectional approaches to broaden the understanding of a context or situation, iv) and for providing practical examples of ethics of care roles in complex situations as socioenvironmental crisis management.

Political ecology proposes that environmental conflicts result from the unequal distribution of power in the access, distribution, and impacts of natural resources and ecological issues (Rocheleau & Nirmal, 2015). For this discipline, power positions determine how nature and environmental impacts are perceived or experienced and recognise that power positions build different spaces and natures, such as sacrifice zones (Bolados García et al., 2017; Lerner, 2010; Reinert, 2018). As a result of these power asymmetries, benefits (such as health, dignity, and well-being) and prejudices (such as pollutants, waste, and diseases) are unfairly distributed, so understanding where power is located in a socio-environmental crisis is crucial to challenge injustices (Martínez-Alier, 2003).

By proposing to place power as the analysis axis for socio-environmental conflict, political ecology identifies that those with
greater power will have a greater capacity to transform spaces and impose practices and values in places where conflicts occur. Enrique Leff (2003) points out that political ecology seeks to include a significant number of voices, perspectives, and knowledge of nature as possible, as a way of including experiences historically silenced, those that power does not allow or does not want to recognise and listen to, such as the voices of indigenous, black, peasant communities, while privileging the voices from the market, development (also widely criticised by political ecology), science or specific geographies.

This interest in listening to less powerful voices has led political ecology to adopt tools from areas as diverse as public health, economics and history. For example, academics such as Héctor Alimonda (2011) indicate that when history is combined with environmental events, it is possible to notice that the colonising process in Latin America defines the society-nature-power relationship that we still see in this region. Indigenous peoples’ struggles, analysed from a political ecology point of view with environmental history, show how these are ecological issues or ecoterritorial struggles and point out that communities are defending their relationships with humans and non-human beings. For example, when communities highlight that their interest is not to protect or recover a non-specific land but to recover their territory, communities demand to continue living where they can develop relations and how people define them.

Political ecology explores the society-nature-power relationship and brings various tools to understand conflicts produced by this association, manages to extend its analysis to very diverse environmental conflicts ranging from water and soil pollution (Sultana & Loftus, 2011), deforestation (Delang, 2005), the use of pesticides and GMO seeds (Lawhon & Murphy, 2012), to more recent and seemingly innocuous projects such as the production of clean energy (Siamanta, 2019), ecosystem services (Kull et al., 2015) and the creation of natural parks and reserves (Ojeda, 2012b) (see chapter five). Likewise, political ecology pays close attention to decision-making processes, negotiations, and how knowledge is built, where the position of power of each agent comes to define whether someone’s voice will be heard.

These analyses account for the unnoticed effects of power imbalances and the useless but insistent separation of society and nature, where
it is necessary to recognise that the assessment of other perspectives and experiences regarding environmental conflicts is primarily thanks to contributions from feminist thought and practices (and intersectionality). Feminist perspectives make a valuable contribution to political ecology by demanding that conventional ideas of gender, sexuality, or identity should be challenged and open the door to an expanded socioecological imagination (White et al., 2015), highlighting that gender must receive special attention because it is a structuring axis in the relationship between society-nature-power (Ojeda, 2012a).

As the Colombian geographer and feminist Diana Ojeda indicates, the proposals that these feminist lenses are bringing permit seeing the logic and processes that sustain life, but lives that are worth living, or *vidas sabrosas* (Quiceno Toro, 2016), as well as the logics and processes that prevent worthy lives. A version of the political ecology that is more attentive and aware of differences is known as Feminist Political Ecology (FPE), which emerged in the 1990s at the hand of Diane Rochealu, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Esther Wangary, who, in their book *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experience* (Rocheleau et al., 1996) and guided mainly by arguments from the ecofeminism (Mies & Shiva, 2001; Shiva, 1989a), affirmed that there are differences in how people experience, create responsibilities and relationships with nature according to gender, but also, these experiences and relationships vary according to cultural or spatial issues.

The FPE maintains that conflicts and environmental impacts affect people differently (Rocheleau et al., 2004; Sultana, 2021a) but focuses many of its analyses and studies on the experience of women (and other feminised bodies such as children and the elderly). For the FPE, women have been particularly affected by environmental issues, and the story of their experiences is often underestimated or unknown, so it is essential to open spaces for them to relate their experiences and teach us their ways of dealing with and managing conflicts daily. The attention to women's experiences (or its focus on the gender category), which resonates with constructivist ecofeminism (Mies & Shiva, 2001; Puleo, 2000, 2017), is not seeking to reinforce essentialisms that relate women to nature or the emotional and the private. Instead, it aims to recognise that, due to the patriarchal system in which we are inserted, women have been assigned ‘by default’, many times without the possibility of choosing,
care tasks that often require frequent interaction with nature (planting, harvesting, looking for water), so when women face threats that impede them to being able to care for themselves and others (such as as result of environmental conflicts (Agarwal, 2014), women will probably be the first to perceive environmental degradation effects and take actions about it\textsuperscript{10}.

In a society that continues to give preference to values such as reason, objectivity, and rigidity, opting to limit its understanding of conflicts in terms of figures, statistics, and other tools that ‘quantify’ experiences and problems (such as values in carbon emissions, number of tons of waste, or poverty indicators), the feminist political ecology opens the door to emotions and affections, placing them as an equally valid way of relating and understanding individual and collective experiences due to socio-environmental conflicts.

Feminist political ecology, together with the ethics of care, has been concerned with removing emotions and affections from intimate and silent spaces and bringing them to the public, showing that these are helpful tools to understand better conflicts, fears and concerns suffered by individuals and communities, highlighting that emotions are also proof that we are capable of feeling empathy and being moved by environmental issues, that far from being, or wanting to be, independent and rational, we are relational and interdependent, that we need to care and be cared for. Emotions are helpful to

\textsuperscript{10} According to ecologists’ and geographers’ research, emotions are essential for the continuity of groups, to generate and sustain struggles for environmental rights, to generate activism and create policies for territorial transformation. However, promoting or supporting social mobilisation against ecological degradation is hazardous. Colombia, Brazil and Mexico are the most dangerous countries for socio-environmental activists; just in 2020, 115 environmental activists were killed in these three countries, 65 of them in Colombia, which according to Global Witness Centre, the most dangerous country for environmental leaders in the world. For Francia Márquez, environmental leader, winner of the Goldman Prize and vice president of Colombia (2022-2026), the violence has a clear origin: “There is a link between armed violence and the economic development model, that makes us the country with more environmental leaders assassinated” (Galarraga Gortázar et al., 2022, para. 10). As I will present in chapter three, the cruel violence against social and environmental leaders is one of the effects of the non-compliance, carelessness and negligence of the government of Iván Duque (president 2018-2022) with the peace agreement signed with the FARC in 2016.
connect with others and build ‘emotional communities’ (Zaragoza & Moscoso, 2017), from where the collective struggles are defended. The FPE, together with the ethics of care, gives strength to the idea that affections and emotions could assist in creating a different map to act, where other directions are proposed for paths that lead to the radical transformation of society (Held, 2009), and from where the transformative power of care is recognised, as stated by Held, who affirms that “care has the potential to shape new and ever-changing persons” (2009, p. 8), so then, also societies.

Authors such as Marisol de la Cadena and Mario Blaser have insisted on the need to sustain and create relationships that seek “the negotiated rapprochement of heterogeneous worlds (and their practices) to the extent that they seek what makes each one what it is, that also does not exist without the others” (2018, p. 4). This suggestion is interpreted as creating practices that simultaneously allow caring for multiple worlds or enable a pluriverse\(^{11}\) (Escobar, 2018). Along the same lines, authors such as Puig de la Bellacasa have wondered about the care that comes from non-human worlds, suggesting that the relationships created between humans and non-humans make care possible. The author proposes in her book *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds* (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017)- supported by arguments from Donna Haraway (2016)- that to note these other forms and sources of care, it is necessary to decentralise the analysis from the human world, which is also the first step to create more dignified and fair proposals or forms of coexistence:

“Care is a human trouble, but this does not make of care a human-only matter. De-centering the human subject in more-than-human webs of care has the potential to re-organise human-nonhuman relations towards non-exploitive forms of coexistence” (2017, p. 24).

For Puig de la Bellacasa, decentralising the care of the human domain- understanding that care also comes from more-than-human  

\(^{11}\) The concept of the pluriverse comes from the Zapatistas of Chiapas, who define it as a world where many worlds fit. According to Escobar, the pluriverse is threatened by the supremacy of a single world that denies other worlds, which also produces contemporary crises that result from deeply entrenched ways of being, knowing, and doing (Escobar, 2018). The debate on the need to embrace the concept of the pluriverse as a way out of the current crises will be deepened in chapter five of this thesis.
worlds—makes visible that it is impossible to continue maintaining the separation between nature and society, the private and the public, and the individual and collective. The author proposes to explore how to create affective relationships with other worlds, focusing on permaculture to carry out her research, in which she presents how the relationship of the communities of cultivators (and of herself) with the soil is not reduced to an interaction between people and an inert and static resource, but rather the soil “becomes felt as alive, that is: not only revealing a living world within it but even a spirit” (2019, p. 392).

The relationship that is created with elements, such as the soil, must first face the reality that these worlds are being destroyed at disturbing speeds, largely thanks to expansive agriculture, where, for the author, a way to stop its degradation (and ours) is “observing the soils from the angle of the affections cultivated towards them, from how the soils intimately entangle humans in a new sense of common material vitality, (from where) a search for more intimate relationships between humans and soils can be nurtured” (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2019, p. 393).

Different communities and academics believe that affective relationships are created with other more-than-human worlds and that these relationships are vital. Along these lines is the work of the Paraguayan anthropologist Mario Blaser who, in his studies with fishing communities in Paraguay, recounted how the community's concern about new environmental regulations for fishing was not limited, or was not, simply by the obstacles that this would bring for the fish resource use, but for the fishermen, as the government control agencies did not recognise that the fishing practices create a network of reciprocity between the water, the fish and the communities. According to Blaser, community-nature relationships contrast to what he called rational politics (Blaser, 2019), where the environment is understood (by government or business owners) only as a source of resources for human purposes, excluding the possibility of considering, recognising, or respecting any relationship that is not established in these terms. Instead of this rational politic, Blaser proposes a political sensitivity approach, defined as "a commitment to the pluriverse, or what is the same, a commitment to sustaining the future of diverse and partially connected worlds despite the impoverishment generated by the dominant universalism”(2019, p. 76). However, he warns that the commitment
to sustain other worlds will require different tools and instruments of analysis, probably coming from that denied pluriversality that, in its place, is brought to the surface by the ethics of care.

In line with the urgency for a political sensitivity to accept and value the pluriverse in which we are immersed, the valuable and extensive work of the feminist geographer Farhana Sultana could be located. Sultana has investigated how emotions direct or shape the use, access, and conflicts of resources in processes that happen daily, rejecting the idea that interactions with resources are governed by rational logic in which emotions have no place, then proposing an emotional political ecology approach that elucidates how emotions matter in nature-society relations (Sultana, 2008, p. 633). Sultana warns that the value of emotions is underestimated in political ecology studies and even in feminist political ecology:

“While some research has shown how specific environments and landscapes produce varied emotional geographies, little attention is given to assessing how environmental degradation and resource crises can produce differentiated emotions that influence the very ways that resources are imagined, accessed, used, and controlled on a daily basis” (2008, p. 634).

Sultana investigated water and arsenic contamination in rural communities in Bangladesh through a (feminist) political ecology and emotional geography approaches, with which she seeks to delve into the daily problems that people face by using a contaminated resource (water), specifically about the daily suffering of dealing with contaminated water daily, and how the contamination of water by arsenic influences a relocation of people in the territory who sought to be closer to safe water (Sultana & Loftus, 2011).

Sultana suggests giving special attention to the emotional geographies of water, as their narratives and experiences are essential for improving understanding of how people respond to environmental changes, as well as exploring how feelings are related to water and how this resource becomes a mediator of the social relationships created around water management, where cooperation between community members, sympathy and empathy play a key role. The author maintains, like others like Bolívar (2010), Camargo and Ojeda (2017), and Ulloa (2016a), that community articulation and collaboration networks created by communities are critical in
those places where the State is an absent actor. In these cases, community maintenance and continuity are likely to depend on itself.

Feminist political ecology works are relevant because they include emotions as proper channels to express experiences and inspire or guide solutions; because they point to the quotidian as an essential place to see the strategies (or micro-practices in Sultana's terms) that people exhibit to deal with realities and resources access, use and conflicts; and because it points to specific places from which relationships between the different worlds can be articulated and demonstrated, and how networks of care and cooperation sustain these relations. Authors such as Sultana have suggested more investigation of the relationships and affections created with resources such as minerals, fishing, timber forests, or food production systems, exploring how its management requires emotional and political negotiations (Sultana, 2021b).

It is possible to glimpse that (feminist) political ecology and the ethics of care share several concerns and priorities. Both theories place people at the centre of systems and show that life is sustained through relationships and care and that we are interdependent beings. These disciplines also share concerns for the current nature situation, pointing out that environmental degradation reflects political decisions and that these decisions, in general terms, respond to the wishes and needs of powerful agents, where environmental and social degradation (in all the ways this can be represented, from health crises, biodiversity loss, and extinction to humanitarian crises) are a reflection of power inequalities.

Similarly, the ethics of care and the feminist political ecology share paths or tracks to reverse these inequalities, proposing to focus on the most intimate and private scales, to value everyday life and everything that enables life to be sustained. Both the FPE and the ethics of care value care and the networks that make it possible as a powerful tool, where far from devaluing it and restricting it to the private, they warn about and celebrate the transforming power of care in society.

In this way, in addition to agreeing on the value of everyday life, the transformative power of care, and the need to include a remarkable diversity of voices and perspectives to understand a problem, its effects, and solutions, both the FPE and the ethics of care embrace and welcomed those initiatives, movements, and postures that place
people at the centre of systems and decisions. They value people’s experiences, emotions, and affections as good ways of supporting decisions, daily practices and relating the complexities and vicissitudes of everyday life.

2.4. Bringing food sovereignty to the table

Food sovereignty resonates with ethics of care and feminist political ecology premises about the quotidian value and the care and diversity power. This model also aims to place people at the centre of systems and decision-making, celebrate diversity, relationships, and interdependence and recognise the importance of particularities. Likewise, it is simultaneously a model, social movement, and mode of production where “care appears to be a positive force, offering opportunities for progressive political, economic and environmental actions” (Cox, 2010, p. 113).

Coined by *La Via Campesina* (LVC) in 1995, food sovereignty is described as:

“The right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.... Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes, and generations” (Declaration of Nyéléni: Forum for Food Sovereignty, 2007, p. 1)

Six principles guide the food sovereignty construction: i) focus on food for people; ii) value food providers; iii) localise food systems; iv) put control locally; v) build knowledge and skills; vi) work with nature (Table 1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Sovereignty Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food for people</td>
<td>The right to sufficient, healthy and culturally appropriate food for all individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values food providers</td>
<td>Values and supports the contributions and respects the rights of women and men, peasants and small-scale family farmers, pastoralists, artisanal fishers, forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and agricultural and fisheries workers and reject any kind of discrimination or oppression against them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Localises food systems</td>
<td>Brings food providers and consumers together for common causes, locating them at the centre of decision-making on food issues; protects food providers and consumers from inappropriate food, for policies that seem food as commodities, for corporative actions over food and against poor quality and unhealthy food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes decisions locally</td>
<td>Seeks control over and access to territory, land, grazing, water, seeds, livestock and fish populations for local food providers. These resources should be used and shared in socially and environmentally sustainable ways, conserving diversity while promoting interactions between providers, consumers and regions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Builds knowledge and skills</td>
<td>Builds on the skills and local knowledge of food providers and their local organisations that conserve, develop and manage localised food production and harvesting systems and rejects technologies that undermine, threaten or contaminate these.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works with nature</td>
<td>Uses and values nature’s contributions in ways that maximise the contribution of ecosystems and improve resilience and adaptation and rejects methods that harm beneficial ecosystem functions and contribute to climate change.</td>
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According to the food researcher Annette Aurélie Desmarais (2007), one of the food sovereignty’s initial aims was to contribute to peasants' rights recognition and the need for an agrarian reform to eliminate poverty and hunger. Eventually, LVC influenced political decisions and laws, representing one of the most radical forms of
resistance to neoliberal globalisation through expressions of collectivity (Desmarais, 2008). LVC movement particularly highlighted how current food systems are unacceptably unjust (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; Wittman et al., 2010), and the need for substantive food regime reform and change.

Looking for the food systems transformation, food sovereignty proposes reassessing the food security\textsuperscript{12} model. The most widely utilized definition of this concept arose in 1996 at the World Food Security Committee, where it was specified that:

“Food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (WFS & FAO, 1996, para. 17).

The food security model relies on four dimensions or pillars: Food availability, access\textsuperscript{13} (physical, social and economic), utilization (knowing how to use the food) and food stability (food and the food security pillars need to be stable through time). This model is widely promoted by international organizations (such as the FAO and the WFP), governments and institutions, where the food security guidelines and focuses have driven mainly the construction of public food policies on various scales (from regional to global).

However, as discussed in chapter six, although food security is a model that is continually updated, its proposals and approaches continue to be narrow and insufficient to provide long-term and stable solutions to situations such as a humanitarian crisis, events

\textsuperscript{12} This term, which first appeared in a 1975 World Food Conference report, was initially defined as “availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic food-stuffs ... to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption ... and to offset fluctuations in production and price” (Jarosz, 2014a, p. 170), responding to the main concern at that time which was the availability of food and prices stabilization, understood at the moment as the most appropriate ways to confront famines, as those occurring in North Africa.

\textsuperscript{13} According to Amartya Sen (1981), Indian economist and Nobel laureate, to combat hunger, the focus should be on guaranteeing access rather than on food availability, and in this context, people socioeconomic conditions are decisive. Sen highlighted that there are other determinant for accessing food in addition to economic (ability to buy it), as physical access (being able to get to places where there is food) and social access (social and cultural norms allowing access to food).
that, as I argue in this thesis, should be guided mainly under a food sovereignty approach.

The choice of the model that will guide the food systems construction or crisis management is relevant because this can define the community participation degree, the relationship value, the food system diversity, and the human and non-human response and resilience to future events. In the case of sovereignty and food security, although they share similar motivations (such as eliminating hunger), their trajectories and proposals differ notably. For example, discussions about power asymmetries effects and people's nutritional status are openly recognized by food sovereignty but little discussed by food security (Jarosz, 2014a; R. Patel, 2009). Likewise, food sovereignty understands food as something with cultural, social and affective value, more than commodities that provide calories (Valente, 2014). Also, there is an idea that food security is achieved through resources, while food sovereignty states that it is attainable by bottom-up processes (Schiavoni, 2016). The importance of food origin is another difference between these two approaches, where while food security works with “food from nowhere”, food sovereignty demands “food from somewhere” (McMichael, 2009, p. 147).

The food sovereignty proposal is considered the most appropriate within the framework of this thesis due to the way it is connected with the ethics of care and (feminist) political ecology and for the way it addresses events such as crises. Food sovereignty principles—such as the importance of putting people at the centre of decisions, considering relationships and responsibilities between humans and non-humans, and valuing local knowledge—coincide with the central points that the ethics of care and (feminist) political ecology insist on. More relevant is that food sovereignty demonstrates, in practice and with diverse communities and environments, how these principles of care and relationship between the human and the non-human occur and how life is sustained thanks to and from relationships.

However, despite the discussions that food sovereignty fosters and its 'utility' to demonstrate care and relationship value, this proposal is not free from criticism, and its implementation may seem complex. According to Hannah Wittman, the food sovereignty discussion and purpose of building a more just and dignified food system could benefit from and must include a gender and feminist approach. This is because food sovereignty is still mainly focused on food producers' roles, ignoring other food systems actors that are as important, such
as consumers (Wittman, 2011), and also failing to consider the
different and diverse types of farmers that create food systems (van
der Ploeg, 2008). Regarding the last point, Rachel Soper (2020)
stated that food sovereignty must represent peasant realities rather
than idealised types, an argument that could also be translated to
other groups like indigenous people and must avoid romanticising
about how communities' food systems should look, ignoring their
processes, desires, decisions, and continuous transformation.

Food sovereignty is also criticised for its lack of clarity about
translating this approach into practice\textsuperscript{14}. Concerning this, the food
scholar Marc Edelman (2014) claimed that implementing food
sovereignty requires understanding sovereignty in three spheres:
territory, economy, and power\textsuperscript{15}. He also suggested that land access
is crucial for food sovereignty construction, especially for women and
people vulnerable to dispossession, such as indigenous people, briefly
mentioning the need for a gender perspective in food sovereignty
construction. In Raj Patel's paper \textit{What does food sovereignty looks
like?} (2009), the author mentioned that food sovereignty has and
must have diverse definitions and interpretations and ways to be
translated into practice but share the need to dismantle structural
power inequalities. However, recognising the multiple meanings that
food sovereignty holds cannot be interpreted as a cohesion failure but

\textsuperscript{14} Ecuador, Bolivia and Venezuela have included food sovereignty
arguments in their constitutions (Kirby, 2010), but it is still unclear in which
ways this can lead to significant food systems transformations and power
redistribution or if it acts as a facade to State and political purposes (B.
McKay et al., 2014)

\textsuperscript{15} Authors as Alberto Alonso-Fradejas (2015), Bina Agarwal (2014) and
Rachel Bezner (2019b), have claimed that to understand the power in the
food system is needed first to recognise the physical and emotional
intensity of food-related duties (such as plant, harvest, clean, cook,
distribute food), then addressing power dynamics within and beyond
households, arguing that feminist concepts of intersectionality and
participatory praxis could be central to mobilise agroecology to build food
sovereignty and work to transform social relations. The need to include a
feminist perspective for the food sovereignty achievement was previously
recognised by Raj Patel, when he indicated that food sovereignty needs to
embrace a feminist approach as this is the better way to engage everyone
in the food system truly and challenge power structures, considering that
"\textit{inequality in power is based on that food sovereignty seeks to address}" (R.
as a coherent result of the definition of food sovereignty, as this approach highlights that people have the right to define their own food system, which unsurprisingly generates multiple meanings and interpretations of the same concept: the sense of food sovereignty for an indigenous group such as the Wayúu people is not, and probably cannot be, the same as that for a family in Grangetown neighbourhood in Cardiff.

Christina Schiavoni (2016), a food scholar, also recognised this argument about the multiple definitions of food sovereignty and, consequently, ways to translate it into practice. She stated that translating food sovereignty to practice means embracing a historical, relational, and interactive (HRI) approach to food sovereignty research, where the State's role must be considered and discussed. This is particularly relevant in the case of food crises, as the one explored in this research, in which the State has an important power position, and its actions have effects on large scales.

According to Schiavoni, a historical lens serves to understand the social structures and institutions that condition food politics over time, particularly the State's role in the processes that build and break food systems. A relational lens to "capture the process-oriented nature of food sovereignty - how the very meanings and attempted practices of food sovereignty are being dynamically and contentiously shaped and reshaped over time" (2016, p. 1), and an interactive lens to analyse actors and dialectical processes between society and the State, and how this interaction moulds food sovereignty.

The role of the State in implementing food sovereignty and translating it to practice remains one of the main questions for food sovereignty scholars, exhibiting multiple responses but no clarity (B. M. McKay, 2019). While some authors claim to build food sovereignty without the State, others propose challenging it, and others ‘simply’ use State resources and structure. For example, for Koen Dekeyser and colleagues (2018), food sovereignty principles and aims can be embraced gradually and partially, as this is subject to people’s interpretation of food sovereignty, their past and current situations and possibilities, and their need or not, to involve the State in their construction of food sovereignty. Eric Holt-Giménez and Schiavoni share that the State needs to translate its power to communities to achieve food sovereignty (Holt-Giménez, 2008; Schiavoni, 2016).
Thomas Paul Henderson (2017) claimed that the State is like a resource supplier, then food sovereignty could be used to access State resources, neither challenging nor transforming the neoliberal production model. For Antonio Roman-Alcalá (2018), food sovereignty should be constructed without the State because “as many anti-capitalist theorists proposing that because of the historical dedication of states to maintaining unequal and unsustainable capitalist relations, change must be pursued outside and against the state rather than through it” (2018, p. 619), arguing that for food systems to become fairer and just, “the State cannot be trusted to make (these) progressive changes” (2018, p. 620).

However, Roman-Alcalá highlights that as food sovereignty is constructed through internal and external relationships and conditions, processes could also involve communities and the State. Hence, a more relevant question is not about the State’s role in food sovereignty but how processes inside and outside the State are interrelated (Roman-Alcalá, 2018), permitting or not achieving food sovereignty. Similarly, Rowan Lubbock (2020) indicated that, as power is frequently fragmented in a territory, the focus does not need to be on the State but on how communities can ‘join’ these fragments of power by developing cooperative alliances, creating the terrain for the system transformation and rights possession. Wendy Godek (2021) argued that while devolving power to local communities is essential for food sovereignty construction, it is insufficient for the deepened democratic processes needed to transform the food system. She suggests that the State role could support citizens’ autonomy (which allows mobilisation) and create participatory spaces, to perceive and understand the different forms of power that exist in a place (especially regarding gender and the multiple food system roles), both visible and hidden (Claeys & Duncan, 2019).

For some authors, a form to understand power relations and actors’ roles in the food system (such as in the communities-State relationship) and food sovereignty implementation is to investigate how power and food systems currently run in the day-to-day. Annie Shattuck and colleagues (2015) stated the need to move beyond binaries, such as local/global, rural/urban, and global north/south, to understand how food sovereignty is articulated through daily practices (this paper is one of the first ones to recognise that everyday life is a starting point of analysis). Authors such as Shiavoni (2016), Alastair Iles and Maywa Montenegro (2013, 2015), Rachel
Bezner (2019a), and Rachel Soper (2020) pointed out the great value that day-to-day practices have in the construction of food sovereignty and how from everyday life actions, it is possible to challenge power structures that sustain so many forms of oppression, including hunger.

It is essential to highlight that the daily actions that allow or seek food sovereignty (and the creation of more just, dignified, and careful food systems) are not limited to actions carried out by those who produce food; the consumers’ role is equally crucial for this goal. For example, Alberto Alonso-Fradejas and colleagues (2015) stated that urban and peri-urban regions’ citizens (especially in the Global North\(^\text{16}\)) are presenting a greater interest in the food systems that sustain cities, creating urban discussions to explore their role as urban consumers, their effects on food systems at other scales and how this consumption can be socially conscious, frequently referring to principles of social justice and supporting the need to transform food systems from their position as urban food consumers.

In this line, Sarah R. Sippel and Nicolette Larder (2021) explored the Australian food sovereignty alliance (based on an urban context), looking to understand their motivations and tensions, concluding that it is needed “to overcome the dominant role of producers in constructing food sovereignty to open up spaces of action for the non-producing population” (2021, p. 368), as consumers. They argued that it is crucial to understand the role of those who do not produce food and depend on others that do it, which leads to reconceptualising food sovereignty as something that is not solely materialised by productive resources but more relevant, it means new relationships and power structures building among people. Under this approach, the focus moves from producers’ dominant discourse to one that highlights the power of creating solidarity and alliances as an essential component for food sovereignty construction and practice.

\(^{16}\) In this sense, one of the main differences between the food sovereignty movement in the global south and the global north is that while in the south, the discussions involve food producers, peasants, indigenous communities, and territorial and environmental issues, the global north has focused its discussions on the role of consumers and cities in building food sovereignty. However, both approaches share the need for fairer food systems free from all oppression forms at all scales and regions.
Multiple forms exist to create solidarity and cooperation and participate in the transformation of food systems, from knowledge exchange processes, food production, and consumption ethics to social mobilisation. For example, Elvis Parraguez-Vergara and colleagues (2018), working with indigenous and campesinos communities in Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Guatemala, and Mexico, identified that traditional knowledge and cultural and ecological management practices are relevant to the construction of food sovereignty, highlighting that it is needed to recognise the gender roles in these practices for maintaining relationships and knowledge sharing practices.

In this line, Devon Mihesuah points out the need to recognise agricultural and hunting techniques and lessons for indigenous people and, more importantly, learn about their resistance stories against colonialism and capitalism. In this sense, this author suggests that it is crucial to understand those “policies and external projects that impede indigenous peoples’ efforts to protect their cultures, resources, and independence” (2017, p. 17). Timothy MacNeill, in his work with the Garifuna in Honduras, argued that food sovereignty could coordinate different discourses for power contestation, where “food sovereignty, more than being a technical policy set, is a discursive and material node through dispossessed and especially indigenous populations which can enhance decolonial power in the contestation of entrenched hegemonic and institutionalised power in a corrupt, unequal and colonised political economy” (2020, p. 1537).

As argued by Adwoa Yeboah Gyapong (2021), the construction of food sovereignty must go together with general improvements in the socioeconomic conditions of people, and then it is coherent to mix and combine rights discourses to create and maintain people's well-being. About this, Nicholas Copeland mentioned that LVC discourse recently has “learned to think in terms of territory [...] rather than just land” (2019, p. 23), then wondering how territorial rights and food sovereignty converge and coexist. Copeland explores this in a study with peasant and indigenous communities in Guatemala, concluding that territory and food sovereignty is fundamental for indigenous people's existence, and their characteristics permit joining forces and creating alliances for territorial and food sovereignty rights.

Benno Fladvad and Johannes Glöckler explored how to join food sovereignty and territory to protect both rights. They explored the
political practices of the Brazilian and Bolivian Landless Movements guided by food sovereignty arguments, finding that these movements share practices, such as road blockages and manifestations, “expressing their claims quite subtly, in surprising but yet very powerful ways through multifarious, spatially effective and meaningfully interconnected social practices” (2019, p. 197). This result indicates the power of creativity to challenge power structures and how material and immaterial territories are joined to support and feed this battle17.

Construction of food sovereignty requires different roles, such as producer, consumer, social movement activists, or people that transmit knowledge about food systems and forms of food production. This opens spaces inside the food sovereignty for diverse individual and collective concerns about human and more-than-human-world needs (Beacham, 2018). People’s diversity generates multiple care forms that are often transmitted through food, nutrition, and the relationships created thanks to this relationship between food-human-nature. Urban consumers, for example, express their care for food systems by worrying about the conditions in which food is produced in rural areas (Alonso-Fradejas et al., 2015), both in terms of the environment (type of production and seeds or water used or if biodiversity was considered when planting food) as well as the conditions of those who produce food (fair pay, decent working conditions, reduction in the number of intermediaries between producer and consumer).

Lucy Jarosz studied urban gardens in the United States and women who worked in them and found that these women considered the work in these gardens as a practice of the ethics of care that allowed them to feed themselves and others, where ‘others’ means both their relatives and the garden (Jarosz, 2011), which can be seen as a form of self-care and care with others that exist thanks to the relationship established with more than human worlds. Other people use their position of power to promote fairer food systems on a large scale, as is the case of Olivier De Schutter, United Nations rapporteur on the

17Respect to the capacity that food sovereignty could have to join different rights causes, Arnel M. Borras and Faisal Ali Mohamed (2020) indicate that food sovereignty offers an alternative for relating food issues with health inequalities and tackling both simultaneously because it could develop interactive dialogues involving research and social action to associate food with health issues.
Human Rights to Food until 2014\textsuperscript{18}. He used his position and visibility in the organisation to promote food sovereignty and promote agro-food policies that seek to achieve the right to food (Jarosz, 2014b). He used his political visibility and influence to care for others by supporting the creation of food policies with effects on an international scale.

Michael Carolan points out that these ways of participating in the construction of fairer and more dignified food systems involve theory, activism, and policymaking on different scales and from different positions but warns that this diversity of responses makes it challenging to find common ground between the agendas and motivations. These different ways can also become a conflictive situation when it involves common interests. To avoid or resolve confrontations and find common points of connection between the multiple ways of building food sovereignty, Jarosz proposes guiding agendas and responses by the feminist care ethics:

“Receiving and giving care to others, human and non-human, is a part of everyday life. Caring for others is a deep aspect of social relationships that moves us beyond locality and family to imagine and enact caring relationships with strangers near and distant. Ethics provides grounding for policy, practice, and politics by centring other places and people in relation of giving and receiving care. Giving and receiving food is one of the most important aspects of caregiving in the human and non-human world. Integrating caregiving into politics and everyday life as a core value can guide us to support, transform, and critique the processes of food politics and food policy across scale and place” (2014b, p. 232).

This thesis agrees with Jarosz that the ethics of care is an excellent guide to creating fair and dignified food systems. However, I propose that if the objective is that besides being fair, food systems also become careful, diverse, participatory, fluid, critical, and allow the coexistence of the pluriverse, then it is equally important to involve the warnings and recommendations of feminist political ecology and,

\textsuperscript{18}De Schutter played a central role in disseminating the concept of food sovereignty in international organisations such as IPES-Food (International Panel of Experts on sustainable food systems), where he sought for this concept to be interpreted as a democratic path that allowed people to create alternative food systems different from the mainstream, for which transdisciplinarity, according to him, would be a critical approach.
above all, to strengthen certain practices or elements of food sovereignty.

On the one hand, political ecology is a useful theoretical and practical framework because it warns that social changes have environmental consequences and vice versa. That socio-environmental changes are a product of power inequalities, highlighting the importance of paying attention to the context, the ecological history, the location of power, and identifying forms of resistance and resilience. Farhana Sultana points out that emotions, affections, and what happens in private spaces, such as the home or the community, could be tremendously informative. In this way, political ecology becomes an excellent tool to trace environmental changes and their effects (material and intangible) on society over time and how power is mobilised in these transformations.

On the other hand, and what this thesis particularly intends to contribute, I point out those specific arguments of food sovereignty that, due to their characteristics and practices, strengthen the care built around food in a particular way. At the same time, food sovereignty arguments manage to support and reaffirm social struggles for other rights. The link to other human rights struggles points out that food sovereignty acts as an umbrella approach that simultaneously manages to achieve and support care and other rights claims.

Food sovereignty also questioned, like feminist political ecology, the power imbalances and the differentiated social and environmental consequences that end up affecting food systems, nature, and people's nutrition; and, at the same time, by putting food as a shield, it manages to support a broader demand for rights, including the right to water, health, education, autonomy, and territory.

As mentioned in chapter one, the Wayúu people have experienced the effects of territorial transformations in a differentiated way, especially those that have resulted from the large-scale extractivist projects that were implemented and will be implemented in La Guajira (as I show in chapter five). The Wayúu are one of Colombia’s indigenous communities most affected by extractivist projects. The Cerrejón coal mine, for example, intervened in the Wayúu territory by affecting their rivers, polluting the air, cutting off territories with tracks and trains, and mobilising the workforce from the communities
to the mining company, transforming in radical ways the daily lives and relationships of the Wayúu with and in their territories.

However, in response, the Wayúu is also one of the most active communities regarding political participation and opposition to extractive megaprojects in the country. Several social leaders from this community are facing threats for reporting the effects of extractivism. As I show in chapter seven, members of Wayúu community organisations are receiving threats to their lives for demonstrating against extractivism in their territories. For example, the organisation *Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu* (FMW), to which I refer in more detail in chapters five and seven of this thesis, fights for the recognition and defence of their territories, including the *water territories' rights*, which according to this community, are “sacred places in which the spirits of water inhabit” (Ulloa, 2020, p. 2).

Territorial defence proposals from indigenous groups and their social movements are a call to incorporate new perspectives and concepts into the analysis and search for solutions to the current crises that account for cultural differences. In the case of the Wayúu, when they demand *water territories' rights*, they also indicate that the territory is the result of a process of cultural and political relations, where the territory has its own agency (de Sousa Santos, 2010). This proposal resonates with ethics of care by highlighting the importance of relationships and how these are a constant process. However, it also has some geographical connotations by highlighting other dimensions and properties of space that occur at different scales and times. With this, indigenous groups could propose “a cultural and territorial politics based upon notions and practices of autonomy and territorial self-determination” (Ulloa, 2018b, p. 227).

Regarding the *water territories rights* proposal, the academic Astrid Ulloa highlights that this lawsuit is fascinating because it forces the Colombian State to recognise and dialogue with “Wayúu people's cultural perspectives, concepts of ways of living, and their ontology, in which humans and non-humans (as living beings in their own rights and as political agents) are in permanent interrelation and reciprocity” (Ulloa, 2020, p. 2). Through this demand, the Wayúu communities seek the recognition of territorial and ethnic rights, where water is a political agent with its own territorial dynamics. It is also a denunciation of how extractivist projects in La Guajira generate epistemic violence against the Wayúu by ignoring the relationships that exist between the Wayúu and more-than-human beings and by
denying that the identity of this community is mediated by their territories' relationship, such as the water territories (Ulloa, 2020). It is also a protest that violence resulting from denial of the relationships that the Wayúu have with their territories ends up allowing the appropriation and dispossession of indigenous territories.

The concept of indigeneity helps recognise other perspectives and views regarding territorial relationships and values. For Sara A. Radcliff, indigeneity is a “cross-disciplinary concept that refers to its broadest to the quality of being Indigenous. Indigeneity can be defined as the socio-spatial processes and practices whereby Indigenous people and places are determined as distinct (ontologically, epistemologically, culturally, in sovereignty, etc.) to dominant universals” (2017, p. 221). Similarly, as stated by Marisol de la Cadena and Orin Stran, indigeneity becomes “a relational field of governance, subjectivities and knowledge that involves us all — indigenous and non-indigenous— in the construction and reconstruction of their structures of power and imagination” (2009, p. 195). For Zárate-Hernández, this is a concept that is being used by some indigenous communities as a "strategy to present and negotiate, defend or resist" (2019, p. 77), especially to confront the appropriation of their territories, forcing the State, and society in general, to recognise the indigenous subjects based on their own interpretations, definitions and proposals, such as those that the Wayúu are weaving with respect to the water territories, or to the territory-body concept (see chapter seven).

For some academics, such as Zárate-Hernández (2019), Marisol de la Cadena (2018; 2009), and Sara A Radcliffe (2014, 2017, 2020), indigeneity is a way of representing and rejecting that the world is or should be a homogeneous and standardised place, highlighting that instead, the world is diverse, changing, and occurs in rhythms and different ways. It is a concept that warns that various society members, such as the indigenous, may not necessarily agree on the same demands, ways of negotiating, concerns, problems, or ontologies. In contrast, while indigenous peoples such as the Wayúu propose agendas claiming water territories' rights as something vital, for other groups, this claim could be a secondary issue since it may not be a daily concern or a territory under threat.

Authors such as Marina Eugenia Merino et al. (2020), studying Mapuche identities in urban contexts in Chile, propose that indigeneity is generated in micro-geographies through actions that
attribute to specific landscapes, such as bodies of water, certain properties, and meanings, but at the same time denounce that power relations limit the recognition or not of their proposals or views. In this regard, Radcliffe highlights that indigeneity is a concept that can support the denunciation of how certain groups markedly experience power asymmetries and that, in turn, helps in recognition of public policies that emphasise new agendas (Anthias, 2014; Radcliffe, 2014), understanding that this ‘new’ does not mean ‘advance’, but movement in other different direction (Zárate Hernández, 2019). For Radcliffe, indigeneity is moving in another direction because “worldly Indigenous ontologies are theorising the world precisely because they are forcing to apprehend, appraise and then rethink 'universals'” (2017, p. 220).

As I present in the next chapter, in the case of the Wayúu, their indigeneity is forcing the State and other agents to rethink extractivist projects and policies. The Wayúu are using concepts of relationality and care, which, as previously mentioned, echo and support what food sovereignty, the ethics of care, and (feminist) political ecology have been highlighting as critical concepts and practices for their fields of action and proposals. Indigeneity also invites the academy to, without falling into essentialisms, recognise the paradoxes, recommendations, and limitations, the value of indigenous experiences, as well as their role in the search for social justice (de la Cadena & Starn, 2009; Radcliffe, 2020). This concept also invites us to become aware of and continuously question the hegemony of specific epistemologies, opening paths for new definitions and interpretations of reality and rethinking priorities as a society. This thesis accepts this invitation by acknowledging and listening to those voices indicating that it is possible to create other worlds that are more careful, fair, and, why not, tastier.

### 2.5. Chapter summary

In this chapter, care was the protagonist. I sought to present how care arguments around particularities and practices could be helpful to design proposals or paths towards overcoming a crisis such as La Guajira or the transformation of systems, such as the food system. One of the main contributions of the ethics of care is its vision of vulnerability, which proposes to understand it not as a failure or a
problem but as a natural condition. Based on this idea, the ethics of care puts pressure on societies and systems to organise themselves differently, putting relationships and care at the centre. However, transferring care from the private to the public sphere (politicising care) and demonstrating that we all care and are cared for -by humans and non-humans- in different proportions throughout life is an objective that requires allies.

Political ecology, especially feminist political ecology, is one of the disciplines that can contribute most to this task. On the one hand, it points out how relationships between humans and non-humans are constructed and how this relationship between nature-society is mediated and regulated by power. Political ecology has been emphatic in pointing out that power imbalances affect care relationships and networks, mainly affecting those who care or receive more care, such as women, children and the adult population, points with which this thesis entirely agrees. Likewise, political ecology highlights, like the ethics of care, the value of emotions and feelings, which for feminist political ecology, are entirely valid and relevant testimonies of relationships and also help to decentralise care of purely human relationships, indicating that affective emotions are also created with other more-than-human worlds.

Another significant contribution of political ecology to the ethics of care is its relevance to intersectionality. For political ecology, intersectionality is a crucial perspective to enrich the debate on the importance of particularities and context to propose more dignified, sustainable and efficient solutions in events such as crises, issues on which the ethics of care has insisted. In this regard, as I present in chapter six, the management of the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira did not have an intersectional approach, nor was it guided by elements of the ethics of care.

As I present throughout this thesis, and especially in chapter seven, although food sovereignty was another major absentee from institutional policies in the face of the crisis- partly because these policies have been created under the food security model- the Wayúu people do include food sovereignty ideas and practices in their strategies and forms of resistance and re-existence. Food sovereignty supports from its action and positionality crucial elements of the ethics of care, as well as political ecology, by being emphatic in including diverse voices in the creation and maintenance of food systems when reinforcing the need for fair and participatory food
systems and for celebrating particularities such as the ideal way to diversify food systems. Likewise, food sovereignty agrees and puts into practice arguments from the ethics of care, such as the fact that we are interdependent beings, that care occurs at all scales and in distant ways, such as when from our role as consumers, we care about and demand decent working conditions for food producers in places remote from ours, or we choose to consume sustainable fishing; and that life is sustained by relationships: growing food or cooking for others are excellent examples of caring and how it sustains life.

Within the framework of this thesis, one of the main contributions made by the perspective of food sovereignty is the discussion that it promotes around the role of the State in food systems. As I present in chapters five and seven, the Wayúu communities sustain and recover their food systems and food sovereignty almost without the State or using some of their tools (such as programs, funds or specific legislation) to establish food systems in the ways that their community determines, while at the same time, the Wayúu make progress in the recovery and autonomy of other rights in addition to food, such as the right to access water and territorial autonomy.

In the next chapter, I present in a more detailed way the Wayúu community and some particularities of its context and recent history relevant to this thesis.
3. Context

3.1. Introduction

Presenting the Wayúu, the group with which I built this thesis, implies giving space not only to the description of this indigenous group, such as its location, social and political characteristics, and cultural traits but also to show the group's connections with diverse stories and elements as the Spanish colonisation process in Colombia, the cannabis production and exportation boom, the arrival of extractivism in the country, the socio-political crisis in Venezuela, climate change, a humanitarian crisis, the peace process with a guerrilla group (FARC) and the entrance of the first progressive Government in Colombia led by a former guerrilla as president and a black woman, single mother and social leader as vice-president. It is then, in short, a story of transformations, injustices, changes, and resistance with La Guajira as the stage.

In this section, I will present how these issues relate to the Wayúu and are essential components of the framework of this thesis. For this, I divide this chapter into four main segments: in the first and second parts, I present some social, political, and cultural characteristics of the Wayúu relevant to this research. Then, in the third section, I describe some events, actors, and processes that occurred in La Guajira and the country as the Spaniard colonisation and the beginning of large-scale extractivism activities in the region. Finally, in the fourth part of this chapter, I explain how the social, political, and environmental events that occurred in Colombia in the last 20 years are reflected in the Wayúu history, dynamics, and community transformation and how future political setups are crucial for historically marginalised populations in Colombia, such as the Wayúu people.
3.2. The Wayúu people and La Guajira’s biophysical characteristics

Wayúu people are the main indigenous population of Colombia. It is a group formed by 21 resguardos19 belonging to different clans, distributed in the mountains in some areas of Santa Marta Sierra Nevada and Perijá Serranía (Colombia) to desert areas along La Guajira peninsula (Colombia) and even Venezuela, where they inhabit the Maracaibo district (Venezuela) (DANE, 2005).

In Colombia, this group is located in La Guajira, a region commonly divided into areas with high water availability, which are mountain areas with several water bodies in the south of the county (known as Baja Guajira), to desert areas in front of the Caribbean Sea facing extreme water problems in the north (Alta Guajira) (see Figure 3-1). Due to spiritual issues20 and displacement of Wayúu from Venezuela to Colombia and vice versa (the border with Venezuela is in the northern region of La Guajira), Wayúu people mostly occupy the Alta Guajira (270000 people approx.) (Dirección de Poblaciones, 2010).

Environmental conditions, such as freshwater accessibility, plant coverage, temperature, and evapotranspiration taxes are more drastic. The Wayúu is an indigenous group that has been able to adapt to this type of environmental conditions, which also makes them more susceptible to the consequences of climate crises.

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19 Resguardos are a collective property title of the land, as a legal form that protects both the territory as their cultural and political autonomy (van der Hammen, 2003)
20 For the Wayúus, deceased community members must be taken to Jepira, a place that they locate in the north of La Guajira, where they will meet other Wayúu relatives and their animals. Alta Guajira is also considered the place where this community began, and the Wayúu believe that life should end in the same place where originated.
Wind patterns play a critical role in this indigenous community's adaptation strategies to extreme environmental conditions, such as living in a desert. Winds are a central element for La Guajira weather and Wayúu culture, as winds change the landscape continuously and bring humidity from one place to another. Likewise, some Wayúu families used to move through their vast territory guided by the wind and rain patterns. However, because of environmental impacts, tropical Pacific winds- which contribute to regulating global temperature by hot and cold air transportation- have been altered (Walther et al., 2002), generating an unpredictable scenario of flood and drought periods with direct effects on freshwater availability, land fertility and, consequently, plantation and harvest season. This negatively impacts Wayúu food systems and, therefore, their food sovereignty.

Regarding La Guajira food system impacts, it is important to stress that even though nutritional problems and poverty exist in the whole Wayúu territory, the population inhabiting the north Guajira region shows the highest undernutrition and poverty values compared to the middle and southern regions, as well as the worst values when
compared to the whole country (Naciones Unidas para el desarrollo PNUD, 2015). In this context, Wayúu women are being more impacted, as reported in the 2005 census, which showed that more than half of the total number of Wayúu people who claimed to have had fasting days in the week before the census were women (Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, 2006; Ministerio de Cultura República de Colombia, 2015).

Wayúu economic activities include fishing, livestock raising (largely goats), farming (mostly cassava, pumpkin, watermelon, beans, and corn), and handicraft, where the food items are produced together with fishes and goats also constitute the main elements of the Wayúu diet. Handicraft production (particularly hammocks and bags) is also an essential component of the Wayúu economy that women mainly execute. It is frequently performed together with other community women, where weaving becomes a way to create and sustain interaction between women in the community and is a space for exchanging knowledge, experiences and collective care. Other recent economic activities for Wayúu people are salt extraction, workforce for the Cerrejón mining company, and tourism-related duties.

Figure 3-2. Wayúu women weaving a hammock in Maicao, La Guajira. September 2019. Photo: Daniela De Fex Wolf
This indigenous group has a matrilineal structure, with 30 clans dividing their territory in small villages called rancherías. The maintenance of the rancherías requires all the community members' participation, from the children to the elder members. For example, Wayúu children generally take charge of pasturage activities, fetch water, and care for their younger siblings or relatives. Young and adult men are also in charge of grazing, fishing, and maintaining the structures of the rancherías, including the water well, the mill, and the fences that isolate the lagoons (jaguey in Wayúunaiki) from animals. The women oversee tasks more related to the private sphere, such as the preparation and conservation of food, the maintenance of community gardens, the home cleaning and care of their families, and weaving traditional Wayúu backpacks and hammocks for their own family or commerce. Also, women frequently market the community's products (fishing, livestock, handicrafts, and some foods such as cassava or watermelon) to other indigenous communities and the region's urban centres. The older population has a crucial role in transmitting community traditions and culture, representing a local authority, some are intermediaries between worlds, and others are conflict mediators. Some of these older men are palabreros (a kind of lawyer), and some women are Ouutsü (a mediator between the earthly and dream worlds).

There are three leading figures for decision-making processes and conflict resolution for Wayúu communities: inside the familiar nucleus, the brother of the mother (maternal uncle) has more authority than the biological father (Guerra Curvelo, 2015), being the person responsible for family decisions that could include land and livestock administration. For conflict resolution among families from the same clan or between clans, they do not use Colombian legislation nor law enforcement agencies; instead, conflict resolution within and between clans is carried out through a particular justice system and jurisdiction imparted by one central figure of Wayúu culture, the palabrero21 (Ministerio de Cultura República de Colombia, 2012).

This person (who must be a man) is an impartial mediating figure who knows traditional cultural systems - including medicine - oversees applying the law and supporting social and cultural ties of

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21 Wayúu normative system, applied by the Pütchipü’üi (palabrero), was inscribed in 2010 on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO (UNESCO-ICH, 2010).
their people through a restitutive justice, which seeks to recover order, harmony, and balance. When a conflict or offence occurs, even a single blood drop (for Wayúu people, blood is sacred), the families involved in the argument request the *palabrero* intervention, where he will listen to both sides and support the offence payment negotiation. Any transgression type, including murder, have a symbolic value, which is generally translated into goats, necklaces (made with Santa Marta Sierra Nevada stones), or money. For the Wayúus, justice (sometimes achieved through *palabrero* mediation) and word value are essential, so conflicts are solved through dialogue and verbal agreements (Polo Figueroa, 2017).

A third important figure in the conflict resolution process is the Wayúu women, especially the elder ones. These women oversee clan organisation, and the ancestral traditions are usually carried and transmitted by them, especially by women recognised as *Ouutsü* or spiritual authorities. *Ouutsü* functions, complementary to the *palabrero* ones, focus on observation actions and mediate between the spiritual/oneiric and the terrestrial worlds. They are protectors, caretakers, and creators of their people; the *Ouutsü* guide other members in ceremonies that mark critical stages of life such as puberty or death, and they communicate with ancestral or other non-human entities through dreams searching for community welfare.

The existence of roles exclusively intended for conflict resolution within the Wayúu culture, such as the *palabrero* or the *Ouutsü*, can reflect the severity and frequency of conflicts and disputes within this community. As I present in the following sections and chapters, many of the conflicts and disputes of the Wayúu occurred with external actors—such as the Spanish colonisation, Capuchin missions, and, more recently, extractivist companies, illegal actors, and conflictive relations with the Colombian State—although there are also significant disagreements, conflicts of interest and forms of violence within the Wayúu community.

Throughout the following sections, I will present examples of conflicts that arise from within the community and lead to questioning the

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22 Despite Wayúu normative justice system is respected and valid by Wayúu people, young people have some criticism about it. As one of the participants of this research noticed “if for example, someone kill my brother, it will be very annoying, and I will be very angry to receive goats as payment, even knowing that it is a symbolic price... I think that the "common" system (refereeing to the Colombian justice system) is fairer”. 
essentialist and romantic idea of indigenous communities as ideal, harmonious, and peaceful societies. To this end, it is worth raising the arguments of Latin American community feminists such as the indigenous Xinca Lorena Cabnal (2010) regarding the relations of violence that are lived and reproduced within indigenous communities. According to Cabnal, violence within indigenous communities was not something ‘learned’ from the colonisers and other agents outside the communities but already occurring within the indigenous peoples, what the author defined as original ancestral patriarchy (patriarcado originario ancestral).

To understand this concept, Cabnal relates that one must start by questioning the sacred, the immovable, asking about the ways of relating to other beings within a community (humans and non-humans), which could reveal "how all oppressions are interconnected with the root system of all oppressions: patriarchy. From there, our construction of community feminist epistemology also begins by affirming that there is an original ancestral patriarchy, which is a millenary structural system of oppression against original or indigenous women. This system establishes its base of oppression from its philosophy that regulates cosmogonic heteroreality as a mandate, both for the lives of women and men and of these in their relationship with the cosmos" (2010, p. 15).

It is possible to affirm that the original ancestral patriarchy is also present in the Wayúu communities and constitutes a source of conflict and resistance. This system of oppression configured and continues to support historically assigned roles of the Wayúu members, allocating to the Wayúu women the private, the emotional, and the care, while the men were in charge of, for example, fighting battles and getting weapons. Regarding war, Cabnal suggests a reflection that also applies to the context of this thesis: in moments of war of the Wayúu against other indigenous communities or the State, "where were the women, what was their role?" (2010, p. 15). In other words, what did Wayúu women do while the Wayúu men were solving or creating conflicts? This question also suggests thinking about how the violent resolution of wars and conflicts within Wayúu communities has left evidence of oppression in these communities: the victorious/the vanquished, the strong/the weak, the respected/undervalued families, the abusers/the abused.
Different feminist currents have affirmed that this original patriarchy was fundamental in creating the conditions for other forms of oppression and violence that are experienced by indigenous communities, such as racism, classism, the commodification of nature, and capitalism (Federici, 2004; Paredes, 2008; Segato, 2013). The reflection of community feminists points out that it should be critically questioned that this original patriarchy is sustained thanks to the roles that indigenous women have traditionally been given as caregivers, guardians of culture, and reproducers of life through mandatory motherhood.

Cabnal proposes that the original patriarchy could cease to be supported by indigenous women if they appropriate their role as political subjects, activists, as subjects with "the epistemic right to create their own thought and thereby establish new paradigms that allow us to transcend oppression and involve the others in this responsibility of deep transformation that is co-responsibility of all, to
promote justice, equity, peace, and life to the full” (2010, p. 22). In chapter seven, I illustrate some ways in which Wayúu women are responding to violence and creating their paths and strategies to respond to oppressions and inequalities, such as hunger or the absence of the State, and in this way, some of them are ceasing to support this original ancestral patriarchy.

In the following sections, I will focus on presenting some social, political, and historical elements that I consider essential for the framework of this research due to the territorial transformations, conflicts, and crises in La Guajira and the Wayúu forms of resistance.

3.3. Colonisation, evangelisation, and resource extraction

Besides internal forms of violence and conflict, the arrival of new actors in La Guajira has also been a critical source of change, adaptation, and above all, resistance. Different actors began arriving in La Guajira in the 16th, and 17th centuries, some seduced by commercial issues and later by colonisation. About the former, during these centuries, La Guajira was recognised as a region for pearls exploitation23, drawing the attention of the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands, who established a commercial relationship with La Guajira, especially with the Wayúu people, owing to their proximity to the sea and dive skills.

Eventually, the pearls trade declined, and livestock and divi-divi tree exploitation (plant extracts used to stain fabrics and leather) took place in the region, especially during the XVIII century. These commercial activities encouraged a strong trafficking era in La Guajira. From 1770 to 1800, livestock24 smuggling between La Guajira and Jamaica—mainly promoted by British and Dutch people—was one of the principal economic activities of the region, where British and Dutch traders exchanged livestock for fabrics, oil, and

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23 The need for a workforce for pearls exploitation led to establishment of a slavery trade, mainly supported by Spain.
24 Livestock was a target of theft by Wayúu people, not just because began to constitute an interesting commodity for them by their economic value and source of food, but also because these domestic animals became valuable as a Wayúu prestige symbol, where clan’s wealth began to be measured in animals’ amount.
wine with *riohacheros* (as people from Riohacha, Guajira capital, is known), besides guns and alcohol beverages when Wayúu people were involved.

At the same time, the Spanish crown (1500 to 1810) was also present in La Guajira during these centuries. As I present in chapter five in more detail, in those years, the Spanish colonised what we know today as Colombia, where La Guajira was considered by the settlers a strategic point due to its geographical location (easy access to the sea and proximity to other points of interest for the crown such as the Antilles islands). However, colonisation techniques that had worked in different places or indigenous communities, such as attacks or domination, seemed useless against the Wayúu.

The Wayúu was a community that had built robust trade relations with different countries and had close contact with other indigenous communities in the region thanks to transactions and barter (mainly food); this group was also distributed over their large territory, knew how to live in adverse conditions of drought and heat, and the Wayúu were also armed.

For example, the Spanish crown tried to hinder the commercial relations of the Wayúu with other countries by attacking this community, whom they considered smugglers. For the Wayúu people, murder is regarded as the most severe offence; when the first Wayúu person was killed, the governor of La Guajira informed the Spanish crown that the incident would have "catastrophic consequences", as "I am going to be forced to satisfied whatever indigenous people ask for, otherwise, war will take place" (de la Pedraja, 1981, p. 338). The governor implored the viceroy to give strict orders not to attack the Wayúu people or disturb them to avoid any further confrontation, especially considering that, as a result of the British and Dutch exchange processes, Wayúu people were powerfully armed\(^\text{25}\) (de la Pedraja, 1981).

As I better explain in chapter five, the Spanish crown continued to insist on the domination of this group during the following years through groups of Capuchin missionaries, who achieved the objective of subjugating the Wayúu years later, aided by an inopportune

\(^{25}\) During the XVIII century, Spaniard crown decided to send around 1000 soldiers under Benito Encio coronel orders to conquer La Guajira region. However, the mission failed as 6000 indigenous people strongly armed were waiting for them.
extreme drought crisis that made the Wayúu perceive the Capuchin institutions as a place of protection against hunger and thirst for their children. Once the Wayúu children were separated from their parents, the communities reorganised themselves differently around these institutions (to be closer to their children), and asymmetric power relations were created between the Capuchins/Spanish crown and the Wayúu, who ended up losing control and autonomy over their territories.

However, it is pertinent to say that this process of evangelisation did not happen only from external sources, nor it is only a process of the past. The Wayúu anthropologist Weildler Guerra reports that there is currently a process of evangelisation of Wayúu communities carried out by members of this community who belong to the evangelical church, which is creating internal tensions (Guerra-Curvelo, 2019), especially concerning the divergent understanding that evangelical missionaries and the Wayúu cosmology have regarding death, dreams, and menstruation. The evangelicals perceive the community’s relationship with the world of dreams as diabolical and criticise traditional rituals executed during menarche, proposing to change them for fasting and prayer. This conflict between Wayúu and evangelic churches was reported by one of the people interviewed during the fieldwork, who recounted how the rituals around death are a point of disagreement among the Wayúu since the evangelical Wayúu members refuse to carry out two burials and also oppose the preparation of the bodies that prevents their accelerated decomposition, since they consider these procedures as desecration of the body, generating fights between family members.
3.4. **Extractivism, bonanza marimbera and armed conflict**

In the centuries following the establishment of the Capuchin missions in La Guajira (which started around 1701), the Wayúu began to experience the arrival, and conflictive effects, of new actors and their activities in their territories (see chapter five for further details about the entrance of new actors in Wayúu territories). The Wayúu got involved with these new activities and actors in diverse ways. In some cases, they were crucial actors and got deeply involved in new activities implemented in La Guajira (such as growing cannabis, named the *bonanza marimbera*, which took place from 1974 to 1985). In other instances, Wayúu people were direct opponents, as in the case of Cerrejón mining activities.

In general, the national Government and allied large extractivist companies are mainly interested in Wayúu territories for their natural resource. The relationships with the Wayúu are frequently conflictive, where the participation of the Wayúu in these large-extractivist activities has been historically limited to serving as a cheap labour force. One of the first defeats occurred during Lleras-Restrepo liberal
government (1966 to 1970), encouraged by a severe winter season affecting the United States and Canada, which resulted in a high salt demand (de la Pedraja, 1981). In front of this, and without consultation or studies, the Government decided to expand the saline pans located in Manaure, a Guajira municipality, destroying the estuaries and radically affecting fish reproduction sites. As a result of the fish capture decrease, the Wayúu diet and household economy were impacted, and this community demanded the national Government pay for environmental, social, and nutritional costs due to salt exploitation.

Another extreme socio-environmental transformation example occurred during the 80s when gas and coal extraction companies (Texas Petroleum Company and Carbocol-Intercor in charge of Cerrejón coal mining operation) arrived in La Guajira, changing the landscape when crossing Wayúu territories with their projects and activities and severely affecting freshwater bodies (Guerra-Curvelo & Egurrola Hinojosa, 2015). As presented in chapter five, these companies, particularly Cerrejón, demanded a workforce for infrastructure build and coal extraction, hiring Wayúu people, especially men, for these functions, affecting community dynamics around responsibilities division, care networks, and aggravating effects over their natural resources.

In other cases, the Wayúu established relationships with the new actors more horizontally, where these new relations represented benefits for the community. For example, from 1970 to 1990, La Guajira went through a monetary wealth era thanks to Venezuelan social policies and subsidies and illegal substances production and trade. On the one hand, Venezuela promoted a subsidy scheme addressed to the Wayúu people, providing food vouchers, energy and water access, and cash, which allowed the Wayúu community to stave off hunger and improve their quality of life (especially those who were in Venezuela or lived closer to this country). These subsidies also increased migration and commercial activities between the two countries. As related by the Wayúu people during the thesis fieldwork, a large part of the food bought by the Wayúu and Guajiros came from Venezuela until the beginning of the country’s social crisis (from 2010 until now).

On the other hand, from 1975 to 1985, a cannabis bonanza period took place in Colombia, especially in La Guajira, Cesar, and
Magdalena states (Kapkin, 2016). During the *bonanza marimbera*, as this period is called in Colombia, 250000 kilos of cannabis were exported from Colombia to the United States each week, generating 2200 million dollars annually. Thousands of people, mainly *campesinos* and indigenous people from Magdalena and La Guajira, decided to plant cannabis in their lands and be the workforce that sustains a business of this magnitude, bringing to their households and communities large amounts of money (Revista Semana, 1982). The Wayúu people were one of the main actors in this era because they participated in all the scenarios and activities related to this business: from lands and workforce for cannabis plantation and harvest, to their role in terrestrial and marine transportation, vigilance, and control, as the product should be moved through Wayúu territories and exported from their coastal regions.

The Wayúu participation during the *marimbera bonanza* and the community effects of this cannot be romanticised. As related by some Wayúu participants, this was a good epoch for the community because it reduced poverty, there was no hunger, and many families could raise funds to send their children to study outside La Guajira. However, it is necessary to highlight that this period also generated violence and dispossession for the Wayúu people. On the one hand, land use changes, the entrance of new authorities, and massive money circulation inside Wayúu territories transformed social dynamics and role division in the communities, impacting, for example, the Wayúu food system and sovereignty (see chapter five). More importantly, the illegal groups that were taking the country to one of the most violent and cruel periods in its history were the same groups that coordinated the cannabis exportation from La Guajira, consolidating this region as an important port for illicit traffic of drugs to other countries, especially to the United States and European countries. In this way, the Wayúu ended up participating in and supporting a conflict led by illegal armed forces- as FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and ELN (National Liberation Army) guerrillas, paramilitary groups such as AUC (United Self-Defences of Colombia), and drug traffickers (and even the

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9 The movie “Birds of Passage” (*Pájaros de Verano*) by Colombian director Ciro Guerra is a good representation of how the *marimbera bonanza* was lived by the Wayúu communities. This link is to the trailer for that movie: [https://bit.ly/2UcBL2m](https://bit.ly/2UcBL2m)
national Government and some politicians), who have turned the country into a battlefield for power and territorial control.

Unfortunately, the large-extractivism arrival and the armed conflict would not be the only issues that the Wayúu faced. Besides this, Wayúu people must confront climate change impacts (more severe in desert regions such as La Guajira (Contreras et al., 2018)), a political crisis in Venezuela, and a humanitarian crisis that, as I present in chapter six of this thesis, is the sum of the radical territorial and social transformations that the Wayúu have experienced and reproduced through centuries. In the following section, I present how the armed conflict in Colombia and the socio-political situation in Venezuela were crucial ingredients in the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira (more on this crisis in chapter six of the thesis). I conclude by showing how implementing the peace agreement signed with the FARC, one of the most important illegal groups in the country and Latin America, and the arrival of a new government can give a glimmer of hope and support alternatives to the Wayúu people's realities.

3.5. Multiple crises

In the 2000s, while the country was experiencing a period of extreme violence resulting from the guerrillas and paramilitary groups' presence, Venezuela was going through one of its most prosperous moments in social and economic terms. The socialist president Hugo Chávez, who was the head of the Government from 1999 to 2013, implemented a series of reforms and social policies (which was called the socialist revolution), such as the nationalisation of specific industries and the creation of programs focused on increasing access to food, housing, education and health, all them financed by the extra income generated from the record high price for petroleum at the beginning of the 21st century. Thanks to these measures—criticised by many for their populist tinge and the still unclear links to corruption—the country's poverty, illiteracy, and hunger rates improved but also ended up benefiting other countries, especially border areas, such as the departments of La Guajira and Santander in Colombia.

In La Guajira, the Chávez government policies were reflected in the day-to-day life of the region since most to all of the industrialised
foods consumed in La Guajira came from Venezuela and were subsidised, costing less than half the price compared with the same products in Colombia. In addition, part of these policies also contemplated subsidising gasoline, which in border areas creates an illegal business of buying and selling gasoline; people in La Guajira, for example, travel to Venezuela to buy large quantities of gas and return to La Guajira to sell it (this trade still exists although it is not as strong as during Chavez government). However, in 2010, the petroleum price decreased, and inflation increased. With this, a crisis began to take shape in this country, consolidating in 2013 and still in force at the time of writing.

This crisis led almost four million Venezuelans to migrate to other countries (such as Colombia), and poverty and hunger rates skyrocketed. Regarding the latter, for example, a study reported that until 2017, 75% of the Venezuelan population had lost an average of eight kilos in seven years due to lack of access to (physical and economic) (Pestano, 2017). La Guajira, for its close relationship with Venezuela and how the social policies of this country affected the Guajiros and Wayúu, was also affected by the Venezuelan political crisis, to the point that some investigations indicate that the Venezuela crisis played an essential role in the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira (Puerta Silva, 2020).

![Figure 3-5. ‘Illegal’ neighbourhoods built by Venezuelan migrants on the outskirts of Uribia, La Guajira. Source: https://bit.ly/3TSLFpg](https://bit.ly/3TSLFpg)
Some members of the Wayúu group interviewed also stated that they require institutional support for incorporating Venezuelan Wayúus into communities in Colombia since, although they recognise themselves as members of the same indigenous group, there are conflicts and differences between the Wayúu of each country.

Others mentioned that the State and extractivist companies are unaware of the social dynamics of the Wayúu and the roles of the members of the community. For example, some Wayúu reported that those in charge of negotiations with the Wayúu communities for the implementation of an energy project arbitrarily designate who represents the leaders of the Wayúu community, and it is with them that companies reach agreements that affect the whole community. This disrespects the community’s traditional authorities and leads to corrupt actions.

Moreover, faced with extractivism, a form of territorial dispossession, the Wayúu report two main concerns: on the one hand, some Wayúus reported that tourism was generating pressure on their territories and the availability of fresh water, displacing the Wayúu from their lands, limiting their movement through their territory (there are private hotels on beaches in Wayúu lands) and reducing their access to water. On the other hand, the planned closure of the Cerrejón mine (in 2034) also worries the Wayúu, especially those individuals or communities that depend on this company for food and water supply and those who work at Cerrejón. This company has proposed social projects and the creation of reserves, but it is not yet clear how it will carry out these plans or how it will specifically support the Wayúu communities that depend on them.

### 3.6. A complex peace agreement and the new Government

The situation in Colombia was not good either, which also affected the Wayúu from another front, increasing the seriousness of the regional humanitarian crisis. The country was going through one of the most violent and harrowing chapters in its history, where the guerrillas of the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and ELN (National Liberation Army), together with illegal groups such as the paramilitary group AUC (United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia) and BACRIM (Criminal Gangs), and even the national army itself with
its disastrous *false positives* (*falsos positivos*)\(^{27}\), made the country a theatre of war. The heinous activities of these groups included (or include) kidnapping civilians to finance the group's activities, threatening and displacing the population located in attractive or important areas for drug routes, forced recruitment of civilians to join the ranks of these illegal groups, sexual abuse, harassment, terrorist attacks, massacres, the assassination of social leaders, torture, disappearances.

These effects of the armed conflict in Colombia (forced displacement, dispossession of territories, State abandonment and violence) summarise the main problems and demands of the Wayúu communities. During the fieldwork of this investigation, the Wayúu reported their concern about the growing presence of illegal armed groups and churches in their territories, which established themselves in Wayúu territories taking advantage of the State vacuum, assuming functions such as the supply of water or food, or the creation of educational and health centres, in exchange for the community authorising their transit in the territory (in the case of illegal groups) or allowing them to build churches and attract faithful (in the case of evangelical churches).

Some Wayúu interviewed in 2019 indicated that they see the peace agreement with the FARC as a start to finding solutions to their main problems and concerns. According to them, the peace agreement would allow the violence and violations that have occurred for decades in indigenous communities to be heard, and their demands could take place in a State that has ignored them for centuries.

Colombian Indigenous communities, including the Wayúu, have been victims of this conflict. According to the Truth Commission report (*Comisión de la Verdad*), of the more than 9 million victims of the armed conflict in Colombia, almost 400,000 were indigenous people. From 2014 to 2016, these communities also reported 11,644 human rights violations. Understanding why the conflict was so cruel to the indigenous people is challenging. However, the Truth Commission

\(^{27}\) “This was the name given by the mothers to the young men killed by members of the Army, where everything was fake: the job offers to recruit them, the feigned combat, the guerrilla uniforms and boots, the weapons placed on their corpses, the Prosecutor’s report as “killed in armed action” and the action of the Military Criminal Justice System” (*Comisión de la Verdad*, 2022a, p. 22). According to the JEP (Special Jurisdiction for Peace), there were 6402 victims of this atrocity. “Who gave the order?”
report indicates that State abandonment, centuries of discrimination and racism, and being located in territories that are routes for drug trafficking and other criminal activities (such as mining or logging) were critical elements for the illegal armed groups to rage against these peoples and exercise all kinds of violence to eliminate them from their territories.

When in December 2016, the Government of Juan Manuel Santos signed the peace agreement with the FARC, a large part of the Colombian population celebrated the pact and took a deep breath. Although this agreement was made only with this guerrilla, this could open paths to reach peace with other armed groups and, above all, begin the processes of understanding this war, its figures, the victims, the perpetrators, and what it means to live in a country that has been at war for more than 50 years.

However, the implementation of the agreements is one of the most significant challenges of the peace process since both parties (Colombian State and the FARC) are having difficulties (and lack of political will) in complying with the agreed agreements (Ioris & Ioris, 2018). Unfortunately, the government of former President Iván Duque (2018-2022) did not encourage or promote the full and committed implementation of the peace agreement during his government, wasting crucial time to initiate the deal and taking State control of the territories that the guerrilla occupied. Consequently, the inefficient implementation of the peace agreement left control of these territories in the hands of criminal groups (especially paramilitaries), generating conflicts and a painful increase in attacks against communities and social leaders who opposed these new powers in their territories (Osorio, 2020; Verdad Abierta, 2020b). The Truth Commission plays a crucial role in signalling these failures and insisting on implementing the peace agreement.

The Truth Commission was formed within the peace agreement framework, chaired by the Jesuit Father Francisco de Roux, who, together with a vast group of researchers, academics, communities, and of course, victims, set out to form a group that, during six years (from 2016 to 2022) sought the **Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition**. The Historical Memory Centre was also formed, a State institution that investigates and collects this war's stories in

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28 The ELN sent a letter to President-elect Gustavo Petro one day after his election, stating its intention to begin talks leading to peace.
museums in various parts of the country. According to this centre, between 1958 and 2012, more than nine million people were victims of the Colombian conflict, 27,023 were kidnapped between 1970 and 2010, occurred 95 terrorist attacks, 1982 massacres, there are 25,007 disappeared persons, and 1754 cases of sexual violence occurred between 1985 and 2012. These painful ‘numbers’ and the magnitude and seriousness of the Colombian armed conflict could be summed up in one of the saddest results highlighted by the Truth Commission during the report's public presentation in 2022: "If we observed a minute of silence for each victim of the armed conflict in Colombia, we would have to be in silence for 17 years".

On June 28th 2022, the Truth Commission publicly presented this extensive, complex, emotional investigation's final report at the Jorge Eliecer Gaitán theatre in Bogotá, the same place where the peace agreement was signed six years ago. In the expected absence of the ex-President, Iván Duque (who was never interested in implementing the peace agreement) and the welcome presence of the President-elect Gustavo Petro and his Vice President Francia Márquez, the Jesuit father Francisco de Roux gave a powerful and appealing speech about what this conflict meant and means. After listening to more than

Figure 3-6. The armed conflict in Colombia has left 384,886 indigenous victims. Source: [https://bit.ly/3QwVICO](https://bit.ly/3QwVICO)
30,000 testimonies from victims throughout the country, in addition to politicians, former presidents, armed forces members, peasants, *raizal*, indigenous, black, LGBTIQ+ communities, human rights defenders, children, and young people, it seems that there are more questions than answers about the Colombian conflict, and above all, a *worthy rage, a claim of outrage*, for having allowed this war to happen:

"We had no reason to have accepted barbarism as natural and inevitable, nor to have continued with business, academic activity, religious worship, fairs, and soccer as if nothing was happening. We did not have to get used to the disgrace of so much violence as if it did not concern us when our own dignity was being shredded in our hands. There was no reason for presidents and congressmen to govern and legislate calmly over the flood of blood that drowned the country in the hardest decades of the conflict. Why did the country not stop to demand the guerrillas and the State to stop the political war early on and negotiate a comprehensive peace? Which were the State and the institutions that did not prevent and rather promoted the armed conflict? Where was the Congress, where were the political parties? To what extent did those who took up arms against the State calculate the brutal and gruesome consequences of their decision? Did they never understand that the armed order they imposed on the peoples and communities they claimed to protect destroyed them, and then abandoned them in the hands of paramilitary executioners? What did religious leaders do in the face of this crisis of the spirit? And, apart from those who even laid down their lives to accompany and expose, what did the majority of bishops, priests and religious communities do? What did the teachers do? What do the judges and prosecutors who let impunity accumulate say? What role did the opinion leaders and the media play? How did we dare to let it happen and let it continue?" (Comisión de la Verdad, 2022b)

The Commission recommends, to achieve the desired *great peace*, "to implement the Final Peace Agreement in a comprehensive manner and to advance towards consensus on the transformations necessary to overcome the factors that have facilitated the reproduction of the cycles of violence" (2022a). Newly elected President Gustavo Petro and Vice President Francia Márquez must respond to demands to
implement the peace agreement. They have not only been great
defenders of the peace process and have demanded the
implementation of the peace agreement from the Government
(particularly to the ex-president Duque) but have also been highly
affected by this war. Petro is an ex-guerrilla member of the former
revolutionary group M19 (which demobilised more than 30 years ago)
and has been the victim of attacks and persecution that led him to
exile in the early 2000s (part of his family also had to go into exile).
Francia Márquez is a black social leader who has been threatened and
has suffered attempts on her life for opposing mining in her
municipality in the department of Cauca. Márquez played a central
role in Petro’s victory, the first progressive president of the country,
as she managed to bring to the polls indigenous and black
communities, women, and the young population who saw in her the
possibility of filling the Government with the nobodies (los nadie)\(^{29}\),
to finally have a government that includes and recognised them, that
looks at and like them. This new government is thanks to the
peripheries, traditionally marginalised populations, and those who
have suffered disproportionately from the conflict.

\(^{29}\) The nobodies (los nadie): The invisible people of society, the
marginalised, whom the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano (2006)
describes in this way:

The Nobodies

Fleas dream of buying themselves a dog, and nobodies dream of escaping
poverty: that one magical day good luck will suddenly rain down on them–
will rain down in buckets. But good luck doesn’t rain down yesterday, today,
tomorrow, or ever. Good luck doesn’t even fall in a fine drizzle, no matter
how hard the nobodies summon it, even if their left hand is tickling, or if
they begin the new day with their right foot or start the new year with a
change of brooms.
The nobodies: nobody’s children, owners of nothing. The nobodies: the no
ones, the nobodies, running like rabbits, dying through life, screwed every
which way.

Who are not, but could be. / Who don’t speak languages, but dialects./ Who
don’t have religions but superstitions. / Who don’t create art, but
handicrafts. / Who doesn’t have culture but folklore. / Who are not human
beings, but human resources. / Who do not have faces but arms.

Who do not have names but numbers./ Who do not appear in the history of
the world but in the police blotter of the local paper./ The nobodies who are
not worth the bullet that kills them
It is for this marginalised population that Petro and Márquez have proposed to govern, setting as central objectives of their Government the peace agreement implementation, hunger eradication (where food sovereignty plays a key role (Roa-Clavijo, 2022)) and the recognition of care as the activity that sustains life. These are objectives that, when united, could allow tracing more dignified and lasting paths to replace war for *vidas sabrosas* and turn Colombia into a *world power of life*, as Petro and Marquéz are proposing\(^\text{30}\).

\(^{30}\) To achieve these goals, one of the new government's first actions is to build peace agreements with other illegal armed groups. This process begins with implementing the peace agreement with the FARC and initiating processes with other groups such as the ELN guerrillas and paramilitary groups such as the *Clan del Golfo*, which has been called by this government the project for total peace, in where the agrarian reform component plays a crucial role.

(At the time of writing this document, the agrarian reform had not yet been officially filed in the Colombian congress, so I do not know the specific actions and proposals regarding agrarian issues of the new government).
As I present in chapter seven, processes around food sovereignty and hunger eradication that seek to make dignity customary (hasta que la dignidad se haga costumbre is one of the powerful slogans and purposes of Vice President Francia Márquez) have already been taking place within the communities for several decades. However, the importance of the current Government lies in the fact that it seems to be genuinely backing, listening and supporting these community processes and claims for collective well-being and social transformation.

Fully resonating with historically marginalised communities and the new Government purposes, and from this unusual momentum of hope and change, is where this thesis is written.

### 3.7. Chapter summary

In this chapter, I presented relevant elements of the historical, social, environmental and political context of La Guajira and Colombia in the last two centuries that help explain how the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira was formed, which, as I will present in the following chapters, is a care crisis.

I briefly describe the Wayúu community and the biophysical characteristics that help to understand its location and mobility in the territory. I also describe some commercial relationships this community forged with other indigenous peoples and countries. Likewise, I relate how the Capuchin missions were crucial for colonisation and that this process of evangelisation/colonisation was largely possible due to extreme drought. This event was critical for the domination relationship created between the church/colonisation Spanish and the Wayúu communities. As I present in the chapter, this relationship began to restructure the social and territorial dynamics of the Wayúu and significantly impacted this community's right to care (to care and be cared for).

In this chapter, I also describe the arrival of large-scale extractivism in La Guajira and how these activities directly impacted the relations of the Wayúu with other communities and the more-than-human world. Likewise, I describe the role of this community in the bonanza marimbera and the violent consequences (still existing) of the Wayúu's involvement with illegal activities linked to drug trafficking.
I conclude with a more current contextualisation of La Guajira and the country, narrating the importance of the peace process between the Colombian government and the FARC and the significant challenges to implementing the agreements, pointing out how these processes (the agreement and the implementation) are essential for historically marginalised communities that have disproportionately experienced the war effects, as is the case of indigenous communities, including the Wayúu.

The new Petro-Márquez government promises the full implementation of the peace agreement and makes *dignity becomes customary*. This thesis joins and celebrates this particular and unusual moment of change and hopes to propose care as a social priority.
4. Methodology

4.1. Introduction

This thesis is an exploration of socio-environmental processes that led to the loss of care networks and food sovereignty of the Wayúu people, as well as seeks to identify the community and quotidian practices, strategies, and dynamics that are leading to the recovery and transformation of their food systems and the care networks.

For this purpose, the everyday sphere becomes a crucial place of analysis, not only because that is where impacts of nearby socio-environmental processes are first perceived but also because it is on a day-to-day basis that strategies and proposals aim to transform Wayúu realities are created and executed. Exploring daily life and understanding the socio-environmental processes that affect the Wayúu requires different tools and methodological approaches, which will be presented in this chapter and divided into two sections. In the first section, I introduce the research philosophy and some ethical considerations that guided this research. In the second section, I describe the research design, strategies, techniques, tools, and data analysis.

4.2. Research philosophy

Any research is framed by a paradigm or philosophical worldview, whose choice implies a set of interconnected beliefs and assumptions that guide the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known, shaping the researcher's view, actions and decisions during the study. It would be said that what we assume about things, facts, or situations comes from three sources: from the way we see reality (ontology); what we consider as valid, legitimate, and acceptable knowledge (epistemology); and our values and ethics (axiology) (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Creswell, 2013; P. Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). These assumptions, in turn, are reflected in the research process when we assume that our ontology will be reflected in our studies when noticing that our epistemology determines what kind of data and information will be collected and how the results will be communicated, and in how our axiology will determine to what extent we will be personally involved in the research process.
Pragmatism is the research paradigm that best encompasses the ontology, epistemology, and axiology that guided this study and guided the choice of appropriate and diverse tools to solve the research questions of this thesis. This approach was initially developed by a group formed by John Dewey, Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and Arthur Bentley, as well as other academics and non-academics (Maxcy, 2003), who collectively reject the idea that social sciences research must limit their choices between a positivist or a constructivist approach. Instead, they proposed a pragmatic paradigm that builds a bridge between the positivist paradigm (objective, which answers questions by quantitative and standardised methods) and the constructivist or interpretivist (subjective, carried out by qualitative methods, that agree that reality has multiple interpretations).

The sociologist David Morgan (2014) proposed that the main difference between the pragmatic approach and other research paradigms is the emphasis on experience. Morgan suggested that the three main characteristics of this approach are i) "actions cannot be separated from the situations and contexts in which they occur" (Morgan 2014 cited in Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 3), suggesting that the actions make sense in the place where these are carried out; ii) "actions are linked to consequences in ways that are open to change" (Morgan 2014 cited in Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 3) indicating that in the face of a change in a situation, the actions and their consequences also change, so our beliefs about how to act in a situation are provisional (a new situation could lead us to a new set of beliefs) (Morgan 2014 cited in Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 3) and iii) "actions depends on worldviews that are socially shared sets of beliefs" (Morgan 2014 cited in Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 3), which for Morgan means that although our experiences are unique -and consequently our vision of the world could not be the same as that of another person- there are specific shared experiences that unite us with others people, and this confluence of experiences can lead to a group of people acting in a similar way in a situation (although their worldviews are not the same), so “worldviews can be both individually unique and social shared” (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019, p. 3).

Methodologically, pragmatism is an approach that affirms that answering research questions requires collective, diverse, and community views. Therefore, combining quantitative and qualitative methods is necessary and welcome, as the objective is to find
information and proposals that lead to the solution of a problem. The methods will be diverse and may change when the knowledge provided is considered sufficient or ceases to be beneficial, allowing other methods. For pragmatism, there is a reality with multiple interpretations (so the results cannot be generalised) (Brierley, 2017). This reality is not static, changing according to the events we are exposed to. For this approach, experiences shape and determine human actions that, due to their changing nature, allow changes in society, so ‘actions have the role of an intermediary to change’.

Due to some pragmatism characteristics—such as the value of experience, acceptance of the existence of multiple interpretations of reality, and openness to various voices (with their methods) to answer research questions—the logical process of pragmatism is abductive, which means alternating between the logics of induction and deduction (and objective and subjective logic), seeking to understand a problem and propose a solution(s) (Revez & Borges, 2018). For pragmatism, the methods fit the research question, not the other way around, where the answer to a problem is not limited to what specific methods can say about it; instead, methods will be as broad and diverse as the research problem demands, so it is valid to use different methods and even combine quantitative and qualitative methodologies, making this flexibility one of the main strengths of the pragmatic approach (Brierley, 2017).

Considering that pragmatism is concerned with socially situating a problem and detecting the actions that, if appropriate, can solve it, a possible next question would be the best way to identify a problem and the steps to resolve it. Pragmatism initially proposes to seek solutions guided by an ethical basis of ‘the greatest good for the greatest number’ (Maxcy, 2003), seeking that the solutions include as many experiences as possible to nurture the creation of better worlds for all, where the voices that relate a problem, and the experiences linked to this, are considered as experts.

When considering that communities and individuals are, without a doubt, capable of identifying the problems that most concern them, defining and looking for solutions that make sense to their communities or social groups, researchers must be guided by an approach aimed to formulate investigations that take care, recognise and respect people’s experiences and "search for a tolerant and non-discriminatory culture that best regards their people with equal concern and respect" (Dieleman et al., 2017, p. 2).
In this context, pragmatism represents this possibility as seeking community participation and dialogue to create democratic communities (P. H. Collins, 2017). With this, as Vibha Kaushik and Christine Walsh affirmed, pragmatism's concern for democracy “establishes a natural connection between pragmatism and social justice research on issues such as equity, fairness, and freedom from oppression” (2019, p. 11).

The importance that pragmatism gives to the context and its interest in pointing out and transforming discriminatory and oppressive systems (to live in a better world) overlap with feminism. When feminism is combined with pragmatism, they bring a relevant and sensitive perspective to the research. In the case of this study - which explores the socio-environmental transformation in La Guajira and its effects on care networks and food sovereignty of the Wayuúu- the feminist perspective within pragmatism\(^\text{31}\) has been central to guiding the methodology and ethics of this research, mainly because of how it relates to the ethics of care, one of the major theoretical frameworks of this thesis\(^\text{32}\).

Feminism proposes views and tools that allow pragmatism to be put into practice, such as introducing methodological considerations that account for the multiple interpretations of reality, highlighting the importance of the researcher's positionality, ethical considerations around care in research (for participants and the researcher), by

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\(^{1}\)The book Pragmatism and Feminism (1996) by the philosopher Charlene Haddock Seigfried was central in bringing women's voices to the discussion of this philosophical approach and, above all, bringing feminist perspectives to pragmatism.

\(^{32}\)Important authors of pragmatism and feminist pragmatism such as John Dewey and Jane Addams*, respectively, criticized the ideals of individualism and autonomy and instead propose, especially feminist pragmatism, to pay attention to the reciprocal and interdependent relationships that are created in social environments and natural resources, prioritizing community processes through cooperation. The importance of relationships and defending the fact that we are interdependent beings are two of the maxims of the ethics of care (see the literature review chapter where this concept is expanded)

* In the book Democracy and Social Ethics (2002), Addams affirmed that democracy is built through dialogue, where empathy would be of great relevance, and pointed out important issues of class and race related to justice (Sullivan, 2006).
supporting and exemplifying ways in which dichotomies impair the research experience, and by showing how the boundaries that divide academia from the community, philosophy from other areas, or activism and research are blurred. Among these issues, this research considers especially important the contributions that a feminist methodology brings to the value of experiences and context in fluid realities, researcher positionality, and the need to position ethics and care as an omnipresent element in all stages of the study.

4.3. About the context (or with whom I construct this research)

I consider the research participants as co-constructors of the research and not as informants since their views, reflections, and ways of relating me their realities shaped this study and the findings. In this sense, an essential part of this research was built with the Wayúu, whose realities and experiences locate and inspire this research, and who likewise suggested a research design that includes their ontology and epistemology, or in other words, that it dialogues with an indigenous research paradigm. The research design recognises that there is more than one reality, incorporating research methods such as storytelling and personal narratives and recognising these methodological tools as legitimate ways of sharing and building knowledge.

Incorporating aspects of an indigenous research paradigm in this research implies paying particular attention to three central elements: indigenous knowledge foundation, relationality, and collectivity. The first one, the indigenous knowledge foundation, involves collectivity, reciprocity, and respect, assuming knowledge construction is a fluid process where cosmology, oral tradition, dreams, interpretations, emotions, and sensations are valid and reliable ways of knowing. I recognise aspects such as verbal tradition, dream representations, and emotions and feelings as validated ways to relate the Wayúu experiences and channels to transform realities. I consider these forms of knowledge as relevant as any other format (i.e., scientific papers, conversations with ‘experts’).

The relational element is a central axis for indigenous people, where the way that indigenous people create relationships with their territory, their community, and nature is relevant to understanding
their reality. Likewise, the relationality element is also central to the ethics of care, one of the main theoretical bases of this research, representing a link between the indigenous research paradigm and this moral theory. Recognising the relationships value and the respect that a relationship deserves, I invested time and energy into visits and conversations with people from the community (even if they were not research participants) and sought to create relations with them, which could result in flexible and even messy research, but one that prioritises people over information.

The collective sense in indigenous groups is reflected in their division of roles and social structure, the collective discussion of issues affecting this group, and the communal search for solutions. In this sense, I tried to create spaces and opportunities where questions, actions, and research design were generated collectively, guided by the construction of respectful and honest relationships, where knowledge and ideas building is perceived as a collective process.

These elements (indigenous knowledge, collectivity and relationality) guided the research design and were incorporated during the surveys, interviews or focus groups, and dream journaling. For Wayúu people, dreams are a life guide, a channel to receive advice from the immaterial world that helps them define future decisions such as migrations, conflict resolution, or even food consumption or evasion.

However, in the design and execution of this study, not only pragmatism, some feminist perspectives, and the previously described elements of the indigenous research paradigm guided and defined the design of this research, but my positionality also exerted a strong influence in this process. I assume that in an investigation, especially a qualitative one as is the case, it is not possible to reach independent and objective knowledge because, as Franz Breuer and Wolff-Michael Roth affirm, all knowledge is "carrier of characteristics of the knowing subject, and therefore irrevocably and intrinsically subjective" (2003, p. 2). Positionality is a feminist critique of the positivism view that affirms that knowledge must or can be objective, neutral, and value-free. It proposes instead that all research (its process, interpretation and dissemination) is crossed by the (power) position that the researcher occupies, issues that must be declared by the researcher so that the politics and power framing of a study and the standpoint of the researcher is known, enabling those engaging
with the research to be able to evaluate its merits better (Coulson, 2016).

A relevant work about positionality was executed by the feminist scholar Donna Haraway, who proposes the term situated knowledge (Haraway, 1995) to refer to a (feminist) research perspective that argues that knowledge is partial and ‘positioned’, that is, that knowledge does not emerge from a vacuum, but is always linked to the researcher positions, their knowledge, and therefore is in constant transformation. Likewise, Haraway points out that since knowledge is situated, it is susceptible to change its meaning depending on the context and who articulates it, so knowledge makes sense when a corporal and historical background is incorporated\(^{33}\), in which knowledge and practices are articulated with artefacts, spaces, and traditions that are part of a way of life. Understanding the importance of raising my positionality and recognising that this influenced the interactions I made during the fieldwork, I introduce myself in this way:

I am a cis, straight, Colombian, non-white woman from a middle-class family and have had access to college and graduate programs. I grew up in Medellín, an important industrial city in Colombia, and I am aware that I am sustained by a series of privileges and a strong care network that kept me away from experiences of violence, poverty, and hunger.

In 2019, when I arrived in La Guajira to officially start the first fieldwork campaign, I could tell that it was difficult, and even uncomfortable, for me to explain my position as a researcher. To begin with, I am neither Guajira nor Wayúu, and I have not lived in Colombia for almost ten years. During fieldwork, when someone asked where I came from and where I was before arriving there, I did not have any other option but to point on a map to a remote place across the sea called Cardiff, a city with no link or meaning to the people I was talking to. It was also challenging to explain what it meant to do a doctorate and why I was dedicating years to that ‘instead of working’. I felt (and still feel) uncomfortable ‘investigating’ hunger from the position of a person who has never experienced this situation. Still, at the same time, I feel immensely privileged to be

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\(^{33}\) The historical and socio-environmental background of this research will be presented in the context chapter and in some spaces of the three empirical chapters of this thesis.
able to say that I have never experienced hunger, especially considering that I come from a country where, according to the latest figures published by the national government, 23% of Colombians have access to two or fewer meals per day (DANE, 2022).

Once I explained to the participants and colleagues who I was and why I was there, or they introduced me to others, I felt more comfortable being in that place. I think that the fact of being a woman and working with issues related to food facilitated this process of meeting people and helped me establish relationships with some ease (I think we all have something to say about food), mainly with women, among whom I felt exceptionally well cared for. However, although I often felt welcomed by the community or of that group with which I related more, there were other moments in which I felt like a stranger, so I quickly understood that during the investigation, I would be jumping between an insider and an outsider position. Insider corresponds to a position in which the person has natural access to or is an active member of a culture, place, or institution or shares ethnic, racial, language, or gender similarities (Breen, 2007; Bruskin, 2019), and an outsider would be those who do not share any of these characteristics with the other (Bilgen et al., 2021). During the research, having an insider position brings advantages regarding familiarity with the place, the people, a better understanding of the culture and the context, and much more fluid and interactive communication with others (Breen, 2007), while being an outsider is a position that is frequently related to, or finds equivalents to, a form of extractivism (Drew, 2006), in which a person with no ties or connections to a place or a group of people, and despite their good intentions, manages to extract information in a kind of helicopter that goes down, picks up what it needs, and disappear (Breen, 2007).

However, I agree with Signe Bruskin (Bruskin, 2019) that these positions are fluid and changing and that there are even situations in which they merge, creating a quasi-insider status. I also believe that being able to ‘jump’ from one position to another is important as a self-care strategy during fieldwork and that there are contexts in which the position of an outsider is not necessarily wrong or rejected. I will relate three situations that exemplify how I move between an insider, an outsider, and a quasi-insider position during this research.

I felt like an insider when I was with Wayúu women, and the conversation flowed as it does in a group of friends, in which questions come and go in different directions, and I felt that both
they and I were enjoying that moment. With Rosario, whom I will introduce later, these moments were more frequent, and I think there were conversations in which our differences by origin, ethnicity, and class were not so significant. I also felt like an insider when I went to Mercedes's house, a Wayúu woman who had one of the few televisions in the community, to watch the soap opera of the night together with her extended family or when I watched a soccer match of the Colombian national team together with the Wayúu fishermen and their children. On the other hand, I felt like a complete outsider when I arrived at a meeting where people were talking in Wayúunaiki, the Wayúu language, and anyone changed their language to Spanish to let me participate in it. However, I did not take this as an offensive action, nor did I feel banned; I know from my own experience how stimulating and rich it is to discuss a topic in the mother tongue and the difficulties that arise when expressing opinions and feelings in non-native languages, and more important, because I always tried to respect the limits of what the Wayúu wanted to tell me, so I interpreted these situations (which were only two or three) as conversations that I had to respect. Lastly, I played a quasi-insider role, or alternate between being insider/outsider, on one occasion when I was invited to the exhumation of a relative of Rosario.

This event involved spending several days in a Wayúu cemetery, sleeping in enramadas, wooden structures without walls but a roof on which hammocks can be hung. These structures are built months before the exhumation by the deceased relative's family and friends. The family also receives and feeds various guests for at least four days, but there can be ceremonies that even take months. For the Wayúu, exhumation is a kind of celebration and remembrance of the life of those who are no longer on this earthly plane, collectively done and an important event for an extended family reunion so that those who are related in some way to the defunct will do everything possible to get to that ‘celebration’. Rosario and her brothers invited me to the exhumation of one of their uncles, which took place in a Wayúu cemetery near Uribia, one of the main cities of La Guajira. I

34For the Wayúu, death is a celebration that has several steps, or stages, where years after the death of a Wayúu, his body must be removed from the cemetery (there are cemeteries only for Wayúus) and taken to the extreme north of the peninsula of La Guajira, which according to this group, is the destination of the Wayúu and the meeting point with other members.
accepted the invitation with great joy because it came from a family with whom I had forged ties. I knew this was an important moment for them, and the feeling that they wanted me to be with them was very pleasing; and I was also moved to learn another way of seeing death so different from mine. I decided to go with them not as a researcher but as one more guest, knowing beforehand that I would most likely be the only non-Wayúu person in the place, and so it was.

On the first two days of this celebration, alcohol consumption was prohibited. However, once the body is exhumed, people, specifically Wayúu men, begin to drink alcohol in large quantities, changing the environment and making it more susceptible to violent situations and conflict. On the third day in the cemetery, I saw how disputes began to arise between those attending the party and how women began to suffer harassment, which made me feel very uncomfortable and insecure. In this context, I chose to use my position (or identity) as an outsider/researcher to ask Rosario and her brothers to take me back to Cabo de la Vela, justifying that I should continue with my fieldwork, although the real reason was that I was uncomfortable in that place and I felt I had to take care of myself. They accepted, and Rosario even said that she also wanted to return because “the atmosphere was heavy”, that is, she was uncomfortable with how the environment had changed since drinking alcohol was allowed. This experience is an example of how being an insider/outsider allowed me to find solutions to fieldwork situations in which I felt insecure, thus prioritising self-care.35

In the next section, I will present how pragmatism, feminism, elements of the indigenous research paradigm, and my positionality served as a guide for the design of this research, including the strategies used to collect information, the methodological techniques, or tools, and how I analysed the data. Comments related to ethical issues and my reflections on the research processes will be presented in the different sections of this second part.

35The researcher's self-care is a practice and a recommendation that arises from feminist approaches (Fois, 2017).
4.4. Research design

For Nancy McHugh (2015), one of the central goals of feminist pragmatism is to engage along and across borders. For this, the author argues that connecting problems experienced on different scales and from various spheres is necessary, starting by recognising the complexities of the everyday world and finding ways to communicate with those whose realities are more complex. Following this recommendation, for this research, I opted for ethnography as the strategy that would enable me to examine the different positions and experiences of the Wayúu in the face of changes in their territories, their relationships with agents and actors present in La Guajira, which activities are related to socio-environmental transformations or the responses to this, and the Wayúu daily practices to respond to the changes and resist/re-exist (see chapter three for an explanation of this concept).

Ethnography is a research method that describes and interprets a social or cultural group or system (Creswell, 2013) based on the participants' perspectives about themselves or a problem or phenomenon they are experiencing. This approach proposes using different ways of generating data that help describe and understand the participants' realities and seek to connect and integrate them. It makes use of multiple methods, which according to Jennifer Mason, are "generally meant to imply more than a practical technique or procedure [...]. It also implies a data generation process involving activities that are intellectual, analytical, and interpretive" (2002, p. 52). Observations in the field, interviews, participant observation, and secondary literature review were employed in this study.

The presentation of the research design will be divided into three parts: In the first one, I will present an overview of the interviews, field notes, observations, participant observation, and secondary data review. In the second section, I will describe the different stages and locations of the fieldwork; and finally, I will present how I explored the data collected during the field stages. Ethical considerations at various stages of the research process will be mentioned in the sections.
4.4.1. Data collection methods

This section will present the main methods used in this study: semi-structured interviews, observation and participant observation, field notes, and secondary data review. It is important to note that the Cardiff University ethical committee authorised this research (see Appendix A).

Map 4-1. Fieldwork locations. Author: Alejandra De Fex Wolf

Interviews

In 2019, I carried out interviews on three separate field journeys in La Guajira, visited some people in Bogotá and Barranquilla, and did an interview via Zoom at the end of that year. I ran a pilot study for two weeks between January and February 2019, the first fieldwork from mid-June to mid-July 2019 and a second field trip from mid-
August to mid-September 2019 (I will explain these journeys better in the fieldwork section).

After my pilot visit to La Guajira and before my first field campaign in Cabo de la Vela, I designed a series of questions for the Wayúu participants. In the Wayúu communities that I visited in those months, I prioritised interviewing those whom the community pointed out as community leaders and authorities, positions that are the result of the type of role they have in the community (for example, the most expert fisherman or community schoolteacher) or by their age (the oldest people in the community are authorities).

The focus of these questions was to find out their vision of the regional humanitarian crisis, identify the roles and care networks within the communities and understand the community's food systems. Then, questions were about what the participants identified as the first signs of the crisis, who were the central figures in it, the role of the State and other institutions in solving the crisis, and their vision of the future. Likewise, I asked them to describe their current food system as precisely as possible and whether it had changed. In the case of those participants who reported that their diets, habits and food systems have changed over time, I asked them questions about which components (ingredients, recipes, ways of preparing food) changed and their possible explanations for this. Also, the participants pointed out the most critical networks and forms of care in their communities and the people in charge of carrying out this care work.

The answers to these first interviews were essential for the focus and structure of the thesis. For example, the Wayúu participants highlighted the construction of roads and the degradation of estuaries that occurred from the 1950s (see chapter five) as the origins of the humanitarian crisis in the region, points on which I elaborate in chapter five. Similarly, they mentioned that the crisis got worse due to the State abandonment and negligence, together with an unusually long and severe El Niño event, points that I explain in chapters five and six. This response also led me to interview experts in climatic events to find out their opinion on the relationship between the humanitarian crisis and extreme climatic events.

First field campaign interviews were essential for the design and formulation of the questions that I performed in the second field campaign. On the one hand, the Wayúu participants pointed out to
me the leading institutions or organisations at the forefront of the crisis throughout the interviews and shared time in Cabo de la Vela, so I tried to establish contact mainly with those institutions that Wayúu indicated or suggested to me. On the other hand, some questions to these institutional officials stemmed from the Wayúu responses, which pointed to their weak relationship with the State and other institutions and organisations present in the region and dealing with the crisis.

Questions for institutions focused on understanding the institutions' relationships with the Wayúu and the relationships between institutions, what institutions considered the origin of the crisis and their vision of the future. I also asked them about the plans they proposed for the communities and whether they were involved in the projects designed for them (for the Wayúu people). In the second campaign, I paid particular attention to the relationship between institutions and Wayúu communities and with other institutions and the degree of community participation in the plans and projects of the institutions for them.

In both cases (Wayúu people and food institutions), the interviews were conducted in Spanish (my mother tongue). They were semi-structured and open-ended, seeking to capture the connections, experiences, and explanations of the contexts of the interviewees (Mason, 2002). The interviews were always individual in the case of interviews with people outside the community and related to State, national or international organisations or institutions.

In the communities, some interviews were carried out individually, but most were at least with two people. This is because many of the Wayúu people interviewed have care responsibilities with children and the elderly population, so frequently, the interviewee was accompanied by their children or elder relatives.

Regarding the informed consent, this was given and explained to the participants that work in food or humanitarian assistance organisations before the interview. I asked for their authorisation to use the information from the interview in this thesis, emphasising that their identities, but not their affiliations, would be protected, issues that this entire group of participants accepted.

In the communities, informed consent was explained in detail, and they were asked to confirm their understanding before starting the interview (this explanation and participant response were recorded). I
opted for verbal consent instead a written one because some of the Wayúus interviewed were illiterate. I also told them that their identities would be changed for their protection, to which, interestingly, some of them, such as Jonas, Rosario, and Silvio, indicated that they did not want their identities to be anonymous. They asked me to keep their names in this document, a request that I accepted.

Although I recognise that giving participants another name is a way to protect them, there are cases like this where people openly express that they are proud of their experiences and are not feeling unsafe or unprotected by putting their real names on a document like this. Rosario, for example, when I told her at the beginning of the interview about changing her identity, she said, "why, Dani? if this is my story" (Cabo de la Vela, June 2019). I think that nothing can be more violent than silencing her voice and the relationship of her experiences when she is explicitly asking me to name her.

In total, I interviewed 14 Wayúu people and eight people who work in national, State, or international institutions whose actions are related to the Wayúu. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 3 hours (see Table 4-1).

Table 4-1. Participants' identity, filiation, and location. *Real names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant name</th>
<th>Identity / Affiliation</th>
<th>Interview Location</th>
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<td>Maria</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Cabo de la Vela</td>
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<td>Wayúu authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jaime</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Cabo de la Vela</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jonas*</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Cabo de la Vela</td>
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<td>Francisco</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Cabo de la Vela</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosario*</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Cabo de la Vela</td>
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<td>Juan</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
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<td>José</td>
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<td>Maico</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silvio*</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Maico and Riohacha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pepe</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Montañita ranchería (Maicao)</td>
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<td>Zaida*</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Guaymaral ranchería (Riohacha)</td>
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<td>Lucia</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Guaymaral ranchería (Riohacha)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>Wayúu</td>
<td>Ranchería close by Maicao</td>
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<td>Catholic foundation officer</td>
<td>Catholic Foundation</td>
<td>Cape of the sail</td>
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As stated earlier, I conducted both passive and participant observations in the fieldwork. I used passive observations at two events in Riohacha that I attended as a participant. The first of which, in August 2019, was the II Broad Meeting on Human Rights, organised by the UN and crucial to meet Silvio and his relatives, one of the members of the social movement *Fuerza Mujeres Wayúu* (FMW) (in chapter seven I explain this movement in detail), a representative of the Ombudsman’s Office and a representative of the CODEPAZ institution. A second event took place in mid-September 2019, also in this city, whose theme was Water quality, sectoral risk management, and adaptation to climate change in La Guajira, organised by the Environment and Sustainable Development, Housing and Health ministries.

The interaction with some key people occurred during the breaks in both events. I introduced myself and asked for an appointment to talk at another time about specific topics they had mentioned in their public interventions at these events. I also made observations about places I visited or conversations with different Wayúu and non-Wayúu people about their food systems, the humanitarian crisis, and social
and political issues in Colombia and Venezuela, observations and reflections I recorded daily in detail in my field notebooks. Regarding the participant observation, this was explicitly used in the fieldwork that I carried out in the Cabo de la Vela municipality from June to July 2019, where I arrived as a volunteer of a Catholic foundation that has its headquarters inside a Wayúu ranchería of this municipality (in the Fieldwork section I will better explain the decision of volunteering for this research).

**Fieldnotes**

During the months I spent in the field, I daily recorded in a notebook what had happened that day, along with reflections and observations of the investigation. When possible, I took photographs with my cell phone, which also helped me document what I was experiencing in the field and the participants' stories and contexts. I also wrote down the date, time, and weather characteristics, along with quotidian and random things that would help me better remember a situation or day when I need to review the field notes at another time. As a result, my notes also have *non-technical* elements that would serve me as a reminder, such as what happened that day in the soap opera, the scoreboard of the soccer match of the Colombia team, the day that Jonas gave me a lobster and taught me how to cook it, or the day that I took care of a child who was sick while her mother worked at the school.

When living in the Wayúu community of Cabo de la Vela, I made the writing record when I was alone, particularly at night, avoiding writing in front of the community members. At the times when I was conducting interviews, whether with community members or with food organisations and institutions representatives, I informed the interviewees that I would take notes during our conversation, as writing down the minute of the interview in which was mentioned something relevant or particular and other reminders or highlighting references to important theoretical frameworks or concepts. These notes were not shared with the participants, as they also contained personal opinions and reactions.

Subsequently, reflections briefly noted in the field notebook were expanded upon, and I also searched for literature related to those first impressions and comments. In Cabo de la Vela, access to papers
was challenging since I did not have internet access during that time. However, on the second fieldwork that occurred in the cities where I did have internet, I could begin to connect these reflections in situ with material and literature published about it.

All these field notes were later transcribed to my personal computer to create a copy of the field annotations and facilitate the search for keywords in these notes.

**Review of Secondary Data**

During 2018, before the fieldwork campaigns, I reviewed Colombian government documents coming mainly from the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF), Ministry of Health, Environment, and Colombian nutritional status surveys, together with reports about Colombia (and La Guajira) from United Nations (UN) agencies, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Program (WFP), or United Nations Organisation (ONU). I also explored Colombian magazines and newspapers (traditional and independent) with special reports about La Guajira. This primary analysis assisted me in attaining a perspective of La Guajira’s current situation and specifically the humanitarian crisis, and served to identify some of the leading regional problems, such as lack of freshwater, climate change impacts, Venezuela’s political crises and their influence in La Guajira, illegal armed groups in La Guajira and conflicts associated with large-scale extractivist activities (mainly coal mines, wind power, and gas exploitation).

In 2019, while doing a doctoral stay at the National University and Javeriana University/ Los Andes University in Bogotá, I did a second extensive review of information. On this occasion, I visited the historical archive of the ICANH (Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History) for almost two months (October and November 2019). There I reviewed documents that allowed me to trace the history of the Wayúu and La Guajira around hunger, droughts, the transformations of the territory, and the response of this indigenous community to those changes. This historical review also helped me find points of connection between the current situation of the Wayúu and situations that occurred centuries ago (this historical framework is further developed in chapters three and five).
It is relevant to mention that although the major revisions of secondary data were made during these two periods (before the fieldwork and at ICANH), throughout the doctoral process, I followed national and international media and reports of the Colombian government and international organisations in La Guajira, especially regarding the humanitarian crisis. Likewise, I tracked the publications on social networks of the social movement *Fuerza Mujeres Wayúu* to learn about its activities and the publications of the national government about La Guajira and national programs and projects implemented there, such as the *Guajira Azul* program, which I better present in chapter five.

### 4.4.2. Fieldwork Overview

As previously mentioned, in 2019, I carried out pilot fieldwork for two weeks between January and February, then between June and July, I spent four weeks in the field, and a last four-week journey took place between August and September of that year, a total of 10 weeks on site. During that time, and as I will further explain in the following sections, I travelled around La Guajira, making observations in the field, participating in events, and conducting interviews. I chose Cabo de la Vela, Riohacha, Maicao, and Uribia as a base for these activities (see map 1). I chose these places due to various criteria: on the one hand, they were the places recommended by the anthropologist Weildler Guerra and the nutritionist Válerin Saurith, whom I met in the pilot field. According to them, these were places of easy access, safer (less crime), and where they knew Wayúu communities to whom they could introduce me. It was thanks to them, for example, that I met Zaida, who was a central collaborator in this research.

On the other hand, some of my family members and friends connected me with people from La Guajira whom they knew and who could help me connect with Wayúu communities or with food organisations or institutions in the region. For example, Juan, a personal acquaintance, is from La Guajira, and his family lives in Maicao. It was thanks to that connection that I was able to contact some Wayúu communities in Maicao. Likewise, the same happened with another couple of acquaintances, who put me in contact with Silvio, also a central figure in this investigation. Furthermore, luck or destiny also played a role in choosing the sites for this investigation.
As I will present later, thanks to an unpretentious walk along a beach in La Guajira, I reached the Wayúu community in Cabo de la Vela that received me so warmly and kindly for a month and where I met such important people to this research as Rosario and Jonas.

**Pilot study**

The first stage of this research was pilot fieldwork, which lasted two weeks in January and February of 2019. It was performed in five localities: Medellín, Bogotá, Barranquilla, Riohacha and Cabo de La Vela. In Bogotá, I talked with experienced academics on nutrition in Colombia, specifically in the Caribbean region, such as Válerin Saurith, and Latin American political ecology and gender theory academics, such as Diana Ojeda, Alejandro Camargo, and Astrid Ulloa, and met the anthropologist Weidler Guerra in a virtual encounter. During this phase in Riohacha, I sought to establish contacts with people working with Wayúu nutrition and health, with national and international food agencies and visited the Guaymaral ranchería thanks to one of my contacts who helped me to arrange a visit. Then, I travelled to Cabo de la Vela looking for a community that agree to receive me to spend some time with them. Coincidentally, one day I was walking along the beach in Cabo de la Vela and arrived in a community with a seawater desalination plant. I asked someone about that plant and why it was there, and that person told me that it was a project of a Catholic foundation based in Bucaramanga, which also had a volunteer program that received people who, in exchange for their stay, the person could work in activities related to the children's education program and school lunch that this foundation carried out in the area. I decided to contact this foundation, explain to them that I was interested in spending time in Wayúu communities to develop my research work and point out that volunteering could be a way to do so. The foundation accepted my request to volunteer for a month, which turned into my first field trip.
During four weeks- from June to July of 2019- I lived in a Wayúu community in Cabo de la Vela, a municipality in the northeast of La Guajira. A desalination plant of the catholic foundation Mujer y Hogar, which also has a preschool for Wayúu children from two to six years old, is located in this community. The foundation offers the opportunity to volunteer in exchange for community work, an option that I chose because it was a way to establish a relationship with the community, and it gave me the space and time to take daily observations of community dynamics as I was living in the community. Volunteering also was a way to give back to this community for all the information they kindly and openly gave me.

My days there went as follows: from Monday to Friday, from six in the morning until two in the afternoon, I worked as a volunteer at the children's school. I used to accompany Coco, the car driver responsible for taking the Wayúu children from their houses to the
foundation and back again. I also supported Rosario, the teacher in charge, in her educational activities and helped the Wayúu women, mothers of some of these children, in the food preparation as the foundation provides breakfast and lunch for the kids (there were approximately 20 children between two and six years old). In the afternoon, I talked with different community members, waited for the fishermen's arrival with the daily catch, went to Mercedes's house to watch television with her and her family, or played on the beach with the children. I used to finish the day by recording in the field notebook the day's activities, observations, and reflections. During the weekends, I did the same things but without the responsibilities associated with school, and I used this time to have more extended conversations with certain people in the community.

Figure 4-2. Rosario and the community children during a school day. Cabo de la Vela. July 2019. Photo: Daniela De Fex-Wolf
During this time, I conducted six extensive interviews with Wayúu members and one with a foundation officer, and Wayúu people’s daily activities were observed and described through detailed field notes registered daily, and I made some visits to families in remote rancherías. Also, luck made its appearance again, and I had valuable opportunities to be a guest and observe important Wayúu events such as a birth, a three-day funeral in a Wayúu cemetery, a menarche ritual, and a couple of conflict resolution through a palabrero mediation.

The main objective of this first fieldwork was to record the social dynamics of the community around food: to identify who was in charge of what, who was taking care of others, how they did that, and how the obligations were distributed among the different community members. Likewise, I was interested in recording the personal stories of those who had experienced famine or drought events in the region, of those who had witnessed changes in the territory (such as roads construction or large extractivism companies’ arrival), and of those who wanted to explain the humanitarian crisis from their perspectives (its origins, symptoms, responses).

I have constant conversations with different members of the community; some were recorded, others were related in a fragmented way (one day told a part of their story, and days later continued their relate), and some were told by multiple voices, such as on one occasion when Olga, an 80-year-old Wayúu, together with her son, the community authority, shared with me their climate change vision.

In the case of the recorded interviews, it is necessary to notice two issues, one about how I perceived that I could go from informal conversations to recorded conversations and another about some considerations that I took before and during the interviews. Regarding the first point, one of my main concerns was knowing how to recognise that the community was comfortable with my presence and for me to record the interviews on a tape recorder. The answer to this came in a very unexpected way that needs to share a little fieldwork story:

When I arrived in the community, I went through all the houses introducing myself and telling them that I would be there for a month doing a volunteer job and research. After this introduction, some of the members of the community called me Dani, others Seño (a
reduced and affectionate version of señora (that means miss), very common on the Colombian Caribbean coast, which is also used to name teachers, for example, seño Rosario), but there was a Wayúu boy of about five years old, that was in the school, that insisted on calling me not by my name neither seño, but ‘tourist’ (he said to me, for example, “tourist, can I have a paper?”). I was curious about this situation because although it was not a lie (during all the fieldwork, I was a mixture of insider/outsider/tourist), I felt that at that moment, and especially for him, with whom I mainly related at school, I was more than another tourist on the beach. I had spent almost two weeks in this community, and I had not yet started recording the interviews because I was still not sure how comfortable the community was with me to allow me to display my facet as a researcher when this kid, who had been calling me tourist for weeks, for the first time referred to me as Dani. I interpreted this, which occurred during an interaction at the school, as a sign that the community was comfortable with me and that I was no longer seen as a tourist. Then from that day onwards, I began to ask certain people in the community for a space for a formal interview.

Regarding considerations before and during the interviews, I tried to ensure that conversations took place in safe spaces, making it clear that their experiences and stories would be part of my research and that they could stop talking whenever they wanted or that they could withdraw consent for the interview and for its use in this thesis. When I interviewed people responsible for intense care work (such as mothers with babies or with many children), I let them decide the place and time of the interviews and whether they wanted to be alone or not since I understand that care work is unstoppable, that there are very few spaces where caregivers can be alone, and that many other external factors define their times. All these interviews took place at night, with their children present, and were relatively short (less than an hour).

**Riohacha, Maicao and Uribia, La Guajira**

The last fieldwork stage was executed over four weeks from August to September 2019 in the three main La Guajira cities: Riohacha, Maicao, and Uribia, although Riohacha was the main fieldwork base. The objective of this third fieldwork was to capture the experiences
and voices of representatives of organisations and institutions that had humanitarian assistance programs in the region, specifically those institutions that implemented food programs and projects in La Guajira or that focused on the Wayúu population. I was interested in learning about the programs they implemented, how they were designed and executed, their frequent problems, their relationship with the Wayúu, their opinion about this community, their understanding of the humanitarian crisis (its causes, the difficulties in solving it), the relationship they had with other institutions and organisations that carried out similar humanitarian assistance projects, and their relationship with the Colombian State.

Before starting this fieldwork period, I had established telephone contact with Silvio, who invited me to the human rights event that would take place the day after I arrived in Riohacha. Attendance at this event was crucial for developing this research because I met Silvio and Leonardo, both Wayúu and members of the Junta Mayor de Palabreros, an important Wayúu social organisation for the resolution of community problems. I also contacted and scheduled appointments with one of the principal officials of the Ombudsman for La Guajira, with a member of the social movement Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu, and with a member of CODEPAZ, a network of social leaders from La Guajira working on issues related to human rights.

Then, through the Ombudsman's Office representative, I connected with people working for FAO and WFP in La Guajira, whom I met and interviewed during those weeks. The contact with the representative of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute-ICBF, which is one of the central State institutions for nutritional assistance in La Guajira and had implemented food plans for the Wayúu population since the 1990s, was through the owner of the house I lived in that month in Riohacha (I rented a room in a house through Airbnb to stay during that month), who put me in contact with this official. During this time, I also visited the Action Against Hunger organisation headquarters in Riohacha and talked with some of its officials.

Besides interviewing officials from food and humanitarian crisis organisations and institutions in La Guajira, I also visited Wayúu communities near Riohacha and Maicao, from whom, like the Cabo de la Vela communities, I was interested in hearing stories about the humanitarian crisis, their relationship with food organisations and institutions, their daily activities in the rancherías, the division of the roles in the community, their experiences in front territorial changes.
and who were, for them, the main actors behind those changes. I was also interested in identifying community strategies to respond to this crisis and prevent future ones. With Silvio, I visited three communities and his family home in Maicao. I also returned to Zaida's community, and through personal contacts, I was able to visit two urban settlements in Maicao, one of them mainly formed by Venezuelan Wayúus who moved to Colombia to escape the Venezuelan political and economic crisis (see the Context chapter for an explanation of the effects of the social situation in Venezuela on the Wayúu).

Finally, one day before finishing this fieldwork campaign, one of the people sharing the house with me in Riohacha invited me to an event about water management in La Guajira. She was an official of the National Institute of Health, based in Bogotá, and was in Riohacha to participate in that event. Government representatives from the Ministry of Social Protection, Health, and Housing were there to mainly talk about the Guajira Azul project, a water access program.
for the department (see chapter five for more details about this project). This meeting was essential to get some official information about this project, to see which national ministries were involved, and to try to identify the degree of participation and involvement of the Wayúu people in this project. However, no Wayúu members were present in this meeting.

During this stage, I conducted 14 interviews with key actors and representatives from State institutions, NGOs, international human rights agencies, Wayúu social movement leaders, and Wayúu people from different communities around Riohacha and Maicao.

**Leaving the field and Retribution**

During the fieldwork planning, one of the issues that concerned me was how to leave the communities that had opened their doors to me for weeks in the most honest and respectful possible way. The people I interviewed during my different stays in La Guajira told me that they were ‘used’ to receiving researchers and not knowing anything more about them or about the results of the studies in which the Wayúu participated. Some Wayúu told me that what hurt them about this unilateral goodbye was that it left them feeling that the relationships that the Wayúu created with the researchers were not valuable enough to researchers to do something to keep them.

Even though maintaining long-distance relationships is difficult, especially considering that few participants had internet or telephone access, I have done everything in my power to sustain the relationships I established during the fieldwork phase (with Wayúu and non-Wayúu participants). I have maintained contact with the key participants in this investigation. I have frequently exchanged messages and calls about our personal lives, La Guajira and Colombia's socio-political issues, and the research results.

The time I shared with the participants of this research in La Guajira was fundamental in my academic and personal journey. I agree with Francesca Fois when she argues that the times of ethnographic research expand beyond the field phase (Fois, 2017): although I have not returned to La Guajira since 2019, I continue to be emotionally connected to that place and have continued to follow up on what is happening there.
Likewise, I wondered how I could give back to the communities for their valuable experience and timeshare, as well as support their struggles and demands from my position as a researcher (as I mentioned in the previous chapter, many of their concerns refer to the land use, the extractivism effects, and their fragile territorial authority). I probably could not do anything ‘tangible’ to improve their lives or solve their problems (because of the magnitude of these, the scale of the demands, and my limited resources to take more forceful action). But while in the field, I tried to support them in daily activities such as taking care of the children, explaining and discussing rights issues with them, and arguing with regional institutions to fix the water infrastructure in Wayúu communities.

At the end of 2019, when I arrived in Bogotá to start a doctoral stay at some Colombian universities, I tried to get involved with the indigenous social movements and supported them as best I could, which was relatively easy as, coincidentally, in 2019, the social mobilisation was going through one of the most active moments in Colombia in the last five decades (Archila et al., 2020). Also, I approached other researchers working in La Guajira and participated in forums, talks and meetings related to La Guajira and the Wayúu.

The pandemic that would arrive months later distanced me from the country and the social mobilisation in the streets. However, I continue to participate in virtual events and give some university classes presenting this research and some preliminary results.

4.4.3. Data Analysis

In general terms, the data analysis stage was not a linear process (nor was it intended to be); instead, it was a collaborative process, mixing moments of personal learning with data exploration. It was a stage open to other voices, perspectives, and suggestions about how to look at these data, where to start, and when to stop. It was also a stage guided by sensitivity and emotions, with moments of despair due to the amount of data and because I could not see the paths, to begin with, other moments where I needed to stop this research and the writing process due to deep sadness arising from personal issues, and other moments of great saudade and joy for listening again to the voices of those I interviewed. Some verbatim quotation extracts
are present throughout this text to illustrate the stories and analyses this thesis presents.

In October 2019, after completing the fieldwork stages, I travelled to Bogotá to begin a doctoral stay from October 2019 to April 2020. The research stay took place at the National University, under the supervision of the anthropologist Astrid Ulloa, and at the Pontifical Javeriana University, guided by Diana Ojeda. In January 2020, Professor Ojeda was hired by Los Andes University, also in Bogotá, so I moved with her to this other university.

This doctoral stay had two main objectives: to take some political ecology courses that both professors taught at their respective universities and to learn to process and analyse the data obtained during the fieldwork. Professor Ulloa suggested studying the information regarding the Wayúu and La Guajira territorial changes in the ICANH historical archive to contextualise and trace the origins of the conflicts and problems I had detected during the fieldwork around territorial disputes, famine, and drought events. Professor Ojeda guided me in the information organisation collected in the field. Following her recommendations, I transcribed all the field diaries and interviews I conducted during the eight weeks in the field and separated photos and videos I had taken in each place.

For the data analysis, I manually transcribed the field diaries as well as the 22 interviews that I carried out during the project. I transcribed in this way (manually) because some audios were not clear enough for automatic transcription through software, as in the interviews, there were always other sounds typical of the context, such as children playing, music, birds singing, the sea and the breeze, and also because I wanted to become more familiarised with the interviews, a decision that although it implies long transcription journeys, was very enriching.

Then, I identified the principal and secondary themes in each interview. For example, if an interview or story focused on water and the weak relationship with the State, and secondarily around food aid, the topics that represented that interview would be 'water', 'State' and 'food aid'.

After this process that I carried out with each interview, I created a list of the most relevant concepts or themes in the investigation, understanding as relevant those concepts that were repeated the most in the interviews. From this process, the interviewees
mentioned the concepts of 'food', 'water', 'institutions', 'culture' and 'roles' most and guided the topics explored in the literature review.

Subsequently, I grouped the fragments of the interviews in which the participants explicitly referred to a theme or concept, creating a kind of 'stories and experiences bank' for each concept. This grouping strategy allowed me to evaluate various participants' interpretations or experiences about a specific concept. For example, in the case of the theme 'water', some Wayúu reported how the search for water was a task carried out by the children in the community, others said the difficulties in accessing water, and institutional officials related how to provide water is not their obligations but from the ministry of environment or health.

Once I identified the main themes and the participants' reactions to a concept, I began to create connections with authors who work on this topic. Continuing with the theme 'water' example, this was initially related to academics such as Astrid Ulloa and Farhana Sultana. I must emphasise that this association with authors or similar concepts changed over time when I received recommendations from colleagues about authors or discovered them in my readings.

These encounters with authors and concepts guided my literature review. In the beginning, before carrying out the fieldwork, my literature review focused on exploring food sovereignty and territory. However, the fieldwork experience and results, the doctoral stays, and the formal and informal conversations with colleagues and professors led me to the three central themes of this thesis -food sovereignty, the ethics of care and political ecology- themes that, when combined, also led me to discoveries and connections that enriched the discussion, interpretation, and interrelationship between these topics.

For example, the (feminist) political ecology framework entered this thesis in stages post-fieldwork, whose perspective was crucial for further analysing the information collected in La Guajira. As I mentioned in the literature review chapter, political ecology proposes a transdisciplinary and multidimensional analysis of socio-environmental conflicts (Ojeda, 2017), as well as an exploration of the strategies and practices of communities for "making a living in a particular environment while also interrogating the socio-environmental conflicts, economic milieu and the dynamics of that environment" (Batterbury, 2015, p. 28). In the case of this research,
political ecology was fundamental in highlighting the importance of understanding how factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, or ethnicity shape individual and group access to social and natural resources and subsequent environmental changes (Jarosz, 2011).

In the case of La Guajira and of the Wayúu, political ecology helped me trace how social and territorial transformations resulting from large-extractivist generated impacts on the practices of care and food sovereignty of the Wayúu. Likewise, thanks to political ecology, I was able to create connections and dialogues with the works of feminist geographers such as Sultana Farhana (Sultana, 2007, 2021a; Sultana & Loftus, 2011), Sofía Zaragocín (2018) or Delmy Tania Cruz (2016), with research about water conflicts, such as those from Erik Swyngedouw (2016a) and Astrid Ulloa (2018b, 2020), and with food scholars as Lucy Jarosz (2014b). Likewise, political ecology was the gateway to concepts of well-being/ *Buen Vivir* (Acosta, 2015; Calderón-Contreras, 2013; Escobar, 2018) as well as the work of Natalia Quiceno Toro (2016), which relates to well-being/ *Buen Vivir* with the *Vivir Sabroso* proposal, original from the Colombian Pacific region. These topics and debates are developed in the following chapters.

4.5. Some ethical considerations

I submitted forms to request permission to do fieldwork to the School of Geography and Planning’s ethics committee and a risk assessment form (Appendix A: Ethical approval form). During the fieldwork, as previously mentioned, I consulted, negotiated, and provided a consent form (verbal or written) to all participants to protect them, guarantee their rights and achieve mutual understanding about the proposed research. Participants were informed about their right to withdraw from the study at any time and without the necessity to explain their reasons. The use of and access to research data and results were agreed upon with participants. I also requested permission to take photos during the fieldwork, and in those where children appeared, I sought their parent's approval.

I acknowledge and respect indigenous people as a community and as individuals, respecting their cultural property rights concerning knowledge, ideas, cultural expressions, and materials.
During fieldwork, communication with two participants was not possible in Spanish, then I sought the support of Wayúu translators. To avoid power asymmetries between the researcher and the translator, the latter was incorporated as a research partner during the research process, preferably from the earliest stages of planning, and their opinions, perspectives, and interpretations were considered in the project. We (the interpreter and I) formulated accurate questions, avoiding ambiguities and confusion.

Research data and files containing personal or identifiable data were encrypted or password protected and only accessed by me. Also, hard copies such as interview notes, prints of photographs, and video or audio tapes have been kept securely stored.

4.6. Chapter summary

In this chapter, I presented the qualitative research philosophy that I used for this study, indicating that this is research with a pragmatic approach nourished by contributions from feminism and the indigenous research paradigm. These elements especially guided the choice of ethnography as a research strategy and indicated critical ethical considerations. I described how tools and techniques, such as field notes, secondary literature review, interviews, and participant observation, allowed me to explore the territorial changes in La Guajira and their effects on the care networks and food systems of the Wayúu people. I described ethical considerations throughout the chapter related to positionality in the field (insider/outsider) and issues regarding the care and protection of information. I also detailed the data analysis process, recounting its stages and explaining how it was connected with debates and themes to arrive at the findings presented in this document. The following three chapters contain the analysis of the empirical data obtained during the fieldwork that seeks to answer the research questions presented in chapter one.
5. Large-scale extractivism in La Guajira: replacing care networks with (relationship) sacrifice zones

5.1. Introduction
In this first empirical chapter of this thesis, I describe the arrival of large-scale extractivism in La Guajira and the discourses that accompany and promote this type of project. I argue that narratives of progress, development, well-being, and, more recently, climate change mitigation (promises that the anthropologist Astrid Ulloa has called *imaginary realities* (2021)) support and stimulate the creation and maintenance of extractivist activities in La Guajira. These promises and projects have generated impacts on the relationships and care networks of the Wayúu communities with their territories, other communities (indigenous and non-indigenous), and more-than-human worlds, which directly affect the food systems and food sovereignty of the Wayúu. I also present how these *imaginary realities* have led the Wayúu communities to choose between the *project of things* and the *project of ties*, a proposal from the feminist Rita Segato (2021) that refers to having to choose between investing in material things or relationships and care networks.

In this chapter, I propose that extractivism, the *imaginary realities*, and the pressures to go towards the *project of things* have created *relationship sacrifice zones* in La Guajira, which have particularly affected the Wayúu people. This chapter concludes that it is urgent to undertake paths to overcome extractivism and lead to radical socio-environmental transformations, where arguments and practices of the ethics of care and food sovereignty would play a key role.
"At present, and for most of humanity, globalisation is basically fable and perversity" (Santos, 1996, p. 138)

5.2. Searching for imaginary realities

Once during my fieldwork in Cabo de la Vela, I talked with my friend Jonas, a young Wayúu man, about the places he has lived in the previous few years. He related that five years ago, during his twenties, he decided to leave his community for the first time in his life and go to Cali, a central Colombian city in the southwest of the country. Curious to understand Jonas’ reasons to move and change his (apparently to me) calm life in front of the Caribbean Sea, surrounded by his relatives for the loneliness and chaos of a big city like Cali, the following conversation took place:

- Jonas, why did you take that decision? How do you end up living in Cali?
- Well, you know that here (Cabo de la Vela) is a very touristic point. I used to see many cars coming every day, and I began to feel very interested in the cars I saw there. Then, one day, I decided that I would like to learn how to wash cars, and as someone I knew was living in Cali, I decided to move there and learn that. Once I moved there, I searched for a place where I could learn how to wash cars. There was a place nearby the room I rented, so I ended up working in this place. Once I learned how to wash cars, I looked for another job, and then I began to work in a hardware store making inter-municipalities deliveries. I travelled a lot in the Valle (referring to Valle del Cauca department) and made good friends in this job. But then I decided to come back to el Cabo
- It seems you are doing well in Cali; why did you move back to el Cabo?
- Look, one night, I was lying in my bed. Suddenly, I saw some papers were thrown under my door: the monthly bills. Then I thought, 'Why am I living here, paying for light, water, telephone, and a place to sleep if I have everything in my community for free? Why am I paying for food if in El Cabo I just need to ask some fish to Cacique (a community member
and fisherman), and he gives me that without charging me?’. Then, some days after, I returned to my community. (Cabo de la Vela, August 2019)

The imaginary realities prompted Jonas to go to Cali, including those ideas of progress, well-being, and, recently, energy transition or sustainable development. For the anthropologist Astrid Ulloa, these realities have been constructed by the narratives of extractivism discourses in exchange for exploiting natural resources, promising development, well-being, and progress. However, as Ulloa underlines, these are imaginary realities because “what we see is that there are irreversible environmental changes and territorial effects. In the same way, they are socio-ecological solutions that generate deterritorialisation and territorial affectations not only of spatial practices but of relations with the non-human and ignore the rights of indigenous peoples” (Ulloa, 2021, p. 31).

In this chapter, I focus on how imaginary realities have affected relationships and caring practices between humans and nonhumans, creating relationship sacrifice zones. I concentrate on La Guajira, and specifically on the Wayúu communities, to analyse how and by whom these imaginary realities have been built, their transformation in the last 50 years, and how these narratives have led to the sacrifice of relationships, networks, and care practices in this community, paying particular attention to how this has affected Wayúu food systems and food sovereignty. For this, I use the lenses of the ethics of care, food sovereignty, and the (feminist) political ecology to identify relationships, power, and socio-environmental transformations and how these reflect on different scales, mainly in everyday life of the Wayúus.

I argue that large-scale extractivist projects and their imaginary realities in La Guajira have created relationship sacrifice zones thanks to three main characteristics, logic, or practices: i) by affecting the relationships within the Wayúu communities with other human groups (indigenous or not), and with other non-humans; ii) by proposing that relationships can be ‘replaced’, proposing solutions that uselessly seek to substitute care relationships and networks, and iii) by the imaginary realities of adaptability capacity.

I propose that the ethics of care, together with food sovereignty, offers valuable tools to make visible other imaginary realities effects
that are less noticeable but equally drastic in terms of human and non-human relationships. I also suggest that the ethics of care and food sovereignty - by celebrating the importance and power of care and relationships - are valuable allies of the debates that insist on the need and urgency for radical alternatives to development (Acosta, 2015; Escobar, 2018; Esteva, 2011).

This chapter contributes to the ethics of care by pointing out, from a food sovereignty perspective, an understanding of processes that generate changes in relationships and care networks with others (humans and nature) at different spatial and temporal scales (Jarosz, 2011). Also, by showing how the arrival of new actors and territorial transformation reflect in food habits and systems, and above all, in the relationships that make it possible to sustain life. Likewise, this chapter contributes to the (feminist) political ecology, another of the theories that support this thesis, by showing through food sovereignty how political decisions impact the environment and communities, starting with community food systems, as well as how the costs of these impacts are distributed asymmetrically among the different members (Berman-Arévalo & Ojeda, 2020; Sundberg, 2015).

This chapter is divided as follows: in the first section, I present the connection of imaginary realities with extractivism and the effects in socio-environmental and territorial terms, such as the creation of sacrifice zones. In the second section, I illustrate some characteristics and logic of extractivism and their imaginary realities through the colonisation process and three extractivist projects in La Guajira (a salt extraction company, a coal mine, and a water project), focusing on the repercussions of these projects on the Wayúu relationships, networks and care practices, particularly their food systems and food sovereignty.

I begin by presenting how the colonisation and salt pans of Manaure exemplify how these extractive and dispossessing processes or activities break relations between the Wayúu, the indigenous communities of the region, and between the Wayúu and the non-human. Then, I show through the Cerrejón mine how extractivism despises the relationships it breaks or harms and tries to ‘replace’ them with programs and projects with ‘social responsibility’ plans. Finally, through the Guajira Azul project, I present how extractivism was sustained (and will continue) through the creation of imaginary realities of progress, well-being, or sustainability that, although look
harmless or even positive, continue to be promoted by the same extractivist logic that led to expropriation, dispossession, and accumulation.

In the last section of this chapter, I highlight how the ethics of care and food sovereignty make visible large-extractivism effects on more intimate scales and suggest that these perspectives can support the debate that discusses the urgency of radical social transformations confronting large-scale extractivism and their imaginary realities.

5.3. Imaginary realities, extractivism and (relationship) sacrifice zones

Ideas of progress, well-being, development, or even sustainability are examples of what the Colombian anthropologist and feminist Astrid Ulloa have defined as imagined realities, which have their origins and are driven by development discourses that, at least in Latin America, are strongly linked to large extractivist projects. The development discourse began to circulate with greater force at the beginning of the 1950s, carrying a series of ideas of what development meant, in addition to suggesting some practices and concrete actions carried out by particular institutions (mainly located in the global north) and in specific ways to reach to a roughly universal notion of what development meant.

This idea of development was conceived, or is still conceived, as something universal, linear, and progressive that, through economic growth (ideally unlimited), manages to generate individual and social welfare and political, economic, and cultural ‘advances’. However, as stated by the Uruguayan academic Eduardo Gudynas, “development is both an imposition of specific knowledge and sensibilities and the exclusion of others” (2021, p. 50). As the Colombian anthropologist Arturo Escobar pointed out, under this ‘homogenised’ development notion, different forms of knowledge are excluded and rejected, as well as other ways of defining, reaching, or sustaining well-being and creating other relationships (Escobar, 2000, 2014).

Parallelly, Gudynas (2011) has pointed out that development could be considered a myth, “and likewise a fantasy that unleashes even all kinds of passions, ideologies, and violence” (Elizalde 1996 cited in Múnera López, 2007, p. 25), which relies on money cults, the immediate satisfaction of material needs and efficiency, besides
promoting violence and the exclusion of those who do not follow development pace, including nature (Múnera López, 2007). Likewise, (feminist) political ecology and ecofeminist authors have argued that development discourse has allowed various forms of violence and oppression against marginalised communities, such as women, peasant, afro, and indigenous communities, without recognising who and in what ways development will be charged (Bolados García et al., 2017; Calderón-Contreras, 2013; Escobar, 2012; Mies & Shiva, 2001).

Development, well-being, and progress are imaginary realities that make development discourse's drastic and cruel impacts on humans and more-than-humans go unnoticed or remain as ‘simple secondary effects’ of development. Extractivism is one of the forms in which the development discourse reached Latin America, where in exchange for the commercialisation of natural resources, the countries would grow their economies and reach a promised state of development and well-being.

Separation is a crucial element for extractivism to function. Marx36 (2002 (1894)) affirmed that separation is the actual process of generating capital, which according to Horacio Machado-Aráoz (2015), does not refer only to the separation between the producers and the means of production, it also refers to the separation of the countryside and the city, from the spaces of life to the spaces of production, and I could add that the separation between the global north and south are also crucial for the functioning of extractivism. For Marx, the growth of the economic system, for example, depends on these separations being sustained.

For current extractivism, these separations (nature/society, producers/means of production, global north/south) are necessary conditions for accumulation on a worldwide scale, as well as the...
dimensions in which these extractivist activities are carried out (the quantity of resources that can be extracted).

Gudynas highlights that the magnitude of the extractivist activity is one of the main characteristics that define extractivism, which the author describes as the “appropriation of natural resources in large volumes or high intensity, where half or more are exported as raw materials, without industrial processing or with limited processing” (2018, p. 62).

For the sociologist Maristella Svampa, some of the most relevant characteristics of this form of exploitation are “an accumulation based on the overexploitation of generally non-renewable natural resources, as well as the expansion of capital's frontiers toward territories previously considered non-productive” (2015, p. 66). Some large-scale extractivist practices are mining and oil exploration and exploitation, industrial fishing, extensive cattle ranching, agro-extractivism (including wood extraction, soybean production, bananas, or wheat), and other recent forms of extractivism such as wind energy or tourism.

The dimension and magnitude in which extractivism is executed are directly proportional to its environmental and social impacts. Environmentally, the exploitation of raw materials and natural resources on a large-scale leads, among other things, to overuse, depletion, and degradation of bodies of water and land, loss of biodiversity and extinction, contributes to climate change, and increases deforestation. Extractivist activities have substantial impacts at the social level, particularly in the populations that live or are in close contact with those places where extractivist activities are developed, such as La Guajira, because in addition to exposing people to contaminated environments and causing illness, extractivism generates, or even requires, inequalities, dispossession, forced migration, violence at various levels and in different forms and, as I show in more detail throughout this chapter, the breaking of the relationships that sustain life.

The appropriation of natural resources for extractivism occurs through a "complex ensemble of self-reinforcing practices, mentalities, and power differentials underwriting and rationalising socio-ecologically destructive modes of organising life through subjugation, violence, depletion, and non-reciprocity” (Chagnon et al., 2022, p. 760), that allow or lead to accumulation by
Dispossession processes (Harvey, 2003). Coined by the geographer David Harvey expanding the Marxist concept of primitive or original accumulation, Harvey argues that accumulation by dispossession is not something that occurs once but that is a repetitive process where profits are over-accumulated and centralised in a few hands by dispospossing people from their resources and territories, creating environmental, cultural, and social impacts and degradation. Colombian researchers such as Juana Camacho, Diana Ojeda, and Ulloa have argued that the accumulation by dispossession in Colombia has been a silence and quotidian process through violent practices and dynamics that have contaminated the environment and threatened people’s livelihood and their options for better futures (Berman-Arévalo & Ojeda, 2020; Camacho, 2017; Ojeda, 2012b; Ulloa, 2016c).

Although extractivist processes occur in several places, certain areas are purposely ‘sacrificed’ or amputated (in Gudynas’ terms), so these extractivist processes happen in a defined magnitude, creating sacrifice zones. This term was initially used by Steve Lerner (2010) to describe communities at risk due to their proximity to nuclear and radioactive weapons, such as those exposed to military bases. Eventually, the term was also associated with regions highly degraded by extractivist activities such as mining or energy production. Currently, the use of this concept is much broader, describing a “process of marginalising particular communities that tend to be geographically remote, economically marginal, politically powerless, culturally defensive, or environmentally degraded. In essence, peripheralisation suggests that noxious industries and unwanted energy infrastructure will invariably migrate to communities that lack the political, social, and economic strength to oppose them, especially indigenous peoples and communities of colour, often at the extreme social and geographical periphery of society and often reinforcing environmental injustices and degrees of environmental racism” (Brock et al., 2021, p. 1762).

The communities in these zones and others have warned about the difficulty and even impossibility of reproducing life in these extractivist contexts, pointing out that development ideas about modernisation, ‘progress’, exploitation (of resources and people), the centrality of markets, or (ideally infinite) economic growth, are contrary to communities’ ways of life. Likewise, research in Colombian mining enclaves (Ulloa, 2020), African oil palm extraction
and tourism in Colombia (Ojeda, 2012b, 2021), hydroelectric and mining projects in Chile (Bolados García et al., 2017; Ulloa & Romero-Toledo, 2018), and soy production and their impacts in Argentina (Svampa, 2015), agree that sacrifice zones effects territories health, both the human bodies and the environment, as I present in chapter seven.

I agree with this group of academics when they point out that extractive practices affect the territories' health. However, I would indicate that relationships are the first element or sphere—perhaps the most key—that is lost in these sacrifice zones, for which I would like to propose that extractivism generates relationship sacrifice zones. This idea is built in dialogue with Rita Segato’s work, anthropologist and feminist, who suggests that nowadays, we (as a society) must continually decide between sacrificing things or sacrificing ties:

“We have two great historical projects on the face of the planet. One is the historical project of things. And the other is the historical project of ties. When we live in societies with a communal structure, we often see how they spend resources on parties, maintaining ties, keeping them alive (the ties), and practising them. And we also see in our world, in the modern, cosmopolitan city, how many of us spend ties, lose ties, to acquire things. These are conflicting projects, these are projects in tension, and all of us, men and women, live with one foot in each other, in the historical project of acquisition and consumption and the historical journey of bonding. They are in conflict, we live them in conflict and walk both ways, although a day comes when a decision must be made: where will I spend? Will I spend things on ties or spend ties on things?” (Segato, 2021)

When returning to the story of Jonas that I recounted at the beginning of this chapter, now considering Segato’s proposal, it is possible to point out that Jonas was circulating between the project of things and ties. By going to Cali, Jonas sacrificed his ties (with his family, friends, and his relations with the non-human world) in exchange for the project of things like money. However, later, when he returns to Cabo de la Vela, he takes the other path and decides to sacrifice things, material goods, to follow the project of the ties,
which led him to recover or sustain the links previously disregarded, or he sacrificed, during his time in Cali. As Jonas mentioned during the fieldwork, the relationships he had in his community, with humans and non-humans, were more valuable than the things he could acquire through his paid work, so staying in the ties project continues to be a good path for him.

In the following sections, I illustrate how extractivism and its imaginary realities have challenged communities, individuals, and governments to choose the project of things over that of ties, generating what I coin as relationship sacrifice zones.

5.4. Creating sacrifice zones in La Guajira

In this section, I present the relationship effects of the main extractivist projects in La Guajira from Spanish colonisation to today, showing how these have created relationship sacrifice zones. For this, together with the analysis of the principal territorial transformations in the department, I took the food systems and the food sovereignty of the Wayúu as the catalyst for these territorial impacts on daily life since I consider that all social, environmental, economic, and political change is mirrored in the daily food plate. Likewise, I used food systems and food sovereignty because I consider them to be a dimension that allows us to trace transformations in every day relationships and care practices between humans and non-humans that often go unnoticed in other types of analysis.

As a result of this analysis, I combined territorial transformations, food systems and food sovereignty to explore the relationship transformation in La Guajira. I propose that there are at least three characteristics or logics of extractivist projects and their imagined realities that lead to the creation and maintenance of relationship sacrifice zones, which i) produce the breakdown of relationships between humans and non-humans (including the relations with ecosystems) ii) suggest and try to ‘replace’ the broken relationships with welfare solutions or projects, also creating dependency relationships, and iii) sustain sacrificial zones and extractivist practices thanks to the adaptability and emergence of new proposals of imaginary realities.

This last point echoes the idea of development scholars such as Svampa (2015) and Alberto Acosta (2012), who argue that,
regardless of their versions, development discourses are very similar in their purposes and ideals, as well as in their social, political and environmental effects. Although the three characteristics or logics are present in all the extractivist projects analysed in this study, each of these projects exemplifies some of these characteristics in a more precise or more evident way, so each extractivist project was particularly associated with one of these three characteristics.

I begin by presenting the Spanish colonisation process faced by the Wayúu people in the 18th century because although colonisation does not fit into the definition of extractivism that I adopt in this thesis (one linked to natural resources exploration on a large scale), I would like to highlight that colonisation was a relevant process that broke relations within the community and between the community and its environment. Then I present the Salinas de Manaure, Cerrejón, and Guajira Azul projects to exemplify the characteristics and logic that enable extractivist projects to create relationship sacrifice zones. Likewise, I present how the imaginary realities are linked to the development discourses in La Guajira, going from an extractivist discourse associated with development as imaginary reality, represented by Salinas de Manaure, to a neo-extractivist version related to a social welfare idea, such as Cerrejón mining case, to a green-grabbing discourse, this one guided by a ‘green and sustainable’ development narrative that has support, among others, water supply projects as Guajira Azul.

5.4.1. Spanish colonisation: the beginning of relationship breakdown between and among Wayúus and their environment

The development discourse installation in La Guajira would not have been possible without the participation of the Capuchin Catholic missions. These missions, sent by the Spanish crown in the 16th century, constituted one of the Spanish strategies to colonise a land that until then had been inaccessible to them. Since the arrival of the first colonisers to what we know today as Colombia, the Wayúu have had a reputation for being a rebellious, brave, and strong community. This reputation echoed in the way in which the colonisers referred to the Wayúu to the Spanish crown. For example, in 1728, Governor Soto de Herrera said that the Wayúu indigenous people were

This idea of the Wayúu as brave people represented during the colonisation was confirmed by Leonardo, a Wayúu artist and one of the leading members of the Junta Mayor de Palabreros, who, during one of our conversations at his house in Maicao, told me how the Wayúu differed from the other indigenous peoples by their response to colonisation and how this response meant that the colonisers could not carry out its plan to settle first in La Guajira:

We appropriate the firearms and horses from the Spanish, which is a great historical antecedent of the Wayúu people, unlike other peoples. For a long time, people respected the Wayúu territory. We have a history of great rebellions. We prevented what was planned here from the first contact with Western culture, (here it was planning to) construct which was built in Cartagena, which is all that protection structure, the walls, to implement the inquisition, the process of evangelisation, domination, imposition of western criteria on the native population. We prevented that through rebellions in this area, which is why these structures (castles and fortresses) are not built here, even considering that the territory (Wayúu) was the most strategic place for that. (Maicao, September 2019).

Elements such as guns, donkeys, and horses present in the Wayúu culture give an account of the bravery with which the Wayúu faced the Spaniards and their victory over them. The Wayúu stole these artefacts and animals from the Spanish colonisers, who had no choice but to surrender in the face of this indigenous group’s attack (Figure 5-1). These ‘victories’ of the Wayúu against the colonisers differentiated them from other indigenous groups, such as those in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta or the savannahs of Cesar (both departments bordering La Guajira).

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1 The palabreros represent one of the primary and most unique forms of authority of the Wayúu people. They are in charge of mediating the conflicts that occur in the Wayúu communities and achieving conciliations, functions similar to those exercised by lawyers. They are also considered an intangible cultural heritage according to UNESCO (UNESCO-ICH, 2010). Junta Mayor de Palabreros is a Wayúu group that brings together the most respected babblers in the region.
In a conversation with Silvio, Guillermo’s nephew and a very politically active young man, I asked him about where the courage with which the Wayúu faced the Spanish came from, to which Silvio replied that the rebellion of this people allowed them to respond to the colonisation:

*(Being strong) is part of the Wayúu genetics. We were the most rebellious children. We were expelled from the Sierra, and we were expelled behind the black line* ³⁸ *because we were rebels. Note that we took away the horses, the weapons from the Spanish.* (Maicao, August 2019).

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³⁸ Silvio is talking about the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, a complex of mountains located between the department of Magdalena and La Guajira, from where, according to the indigenous people, the main indigenous peoples of that region were born: the Koguis, the Arhuacos, the Wiwa, Kankuamos and the Wayúu. According to indigenous accounts, the five peoples lived in the Sierra, who considered themselves the older brothers of the other civilizations. However, the Wayúu, who call themselves the younger brothers, were so rebellious that the older brothers decided to expel them after the *black line*, as they refer to the river that divides the Magdalena from La Guajira. This is how the Wayúu ended up living in what today corresponds to La Guajira and their older brothers in the Sierra.
However, the colony used strategies, precisely one actor, against which the Wayúu people could not resist for long: the church. Evangelising missions joined and supported colonisation invasions hidden behind a purpose to ‘correct’ the ignorance and rebellion of the indigenous people through teaching principles and values from the Catholic religion, such as obedience, order, and sacrifice (Barrera Monroy, 2000). In La Guajira, this catholic purpose motivated the Capuchin missions, which supported the Spaniard colonisers conquering and submission of the Wayúu people. However, as presented below, the evangelisation process would be neither straightforward nor peaceful for the Spaniards and the catholic church and far less for the Wayúu.

Some documents mention that the Capuchin missions began their actions in 1727, with so little success that, in 1890 and after almost 150 years of failed attempts, the Crown suspended the missions for lack of resources to sustain them. Nevertheless, in 1913, after nearly two centuries of resistance, the first Capuchin orphanages were installed in the region, which functioned as boarding schools for Wayúu children. According to Leonardo:

250 years ago, there were violent actions by the Wayúu population against the Capuchins and the evangelisation process; hence the mule is part of the symbolic value of compensation in the Wayúu culture; these were the vehicles that Capuchins used to travel through the territory looking to incorporate Wayúu boys and girls to the orphanage. Today we know three strategic boarding schools: the Aremasain boarding school, the Uribia boarding school, and Nazareth. In 2014, these schools completed 100 years, which means that only 100 years ago they were installed in the territory Wayúu, and as they arrived here 250 years ago, this means 150 years of resistance. (Maicao, September 2019).

The accumulated wear and tear of the Wayúu after almost three centuries of resistance and struggle against the settlers, and the Catholic missions left a community exhausted from sustaining their long struggle. The arrival of the Spanish invasion in La Guajira produced a process of miscegenation between Wayúus and non-indigenous people, with effects on the use of the land, which needed
to respond to different forms and interests of managing the ground, new food cultures, and new food habits, a product of the mixture of cultures and traditions. For example, as mentioned by one of the Wayúu participants of this research, rice is evidence of this miscegenation process, as the Wayúu people did not consume this item until the Spanish invasion.

In addition, an extended and unusual drought period in La Guajira occurred in this context of fatigue and cultural mixture. According to accounts from the late nineteenth century, La Guajira faced a series of droughts that affected Wayúu food systems and weakened them, forcing them to migrate to other places, have conflicts with the people in those places, and, mainly, give up resisting the evangelising mission and give their children to these catholic groups (Vasquéz C & Correa C, 1986).

In this scenario of hunger and drought, and to save the Wayúu children from hunger, some parents decided to leave their children in the Capuchin boarding schools, where they received food, but in exchange for a process of acculturation and loss of the right to parental care. Concerning the acculturation process, Zaida, a Wayúu woman and leader of the Guaymaral community, told me in one of our conversations that the Capuchins prohibited children from following certain Wayúu rituals and speaking in Wayúunaiki and that it was through the songs, prayers and other Catholic rituals that children in these boarding schools replaced their language with Spanish (Guaymaral, September 2019). The Colombian historian Vladimir Daza-Villar mentioned the acculturation process and recounts how the Capuchin religious system's task was to erase the cultural memory39 of the Wayúu children to "discredit the entire social and cultural universe of the Wayúu people" (Daza Villar, 2001, p. n.d).

The parents of these children did not stand powerless and tried to approach them somehow, resulting in two effects. When the Wayúu families settled in the vicinity of the institute, they promoted a trade network around food and services between the Wayúu and the Capuchin missionaries that did not exist before, creating commercial relationships between Wayúu families and the missionaries. With this, these educational centres become important regional administrative

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39Similarly, in the s. XVIII Antonio de Arévalo ordered the capture of the Wayúu elders because they had the task of keeping the Wayúu memory.
points. This rapprochement between indigenous and Catholic groups also allowed these churches to become part of Wayúu communities. As mentioned in a study carried out on Laurita missionaries in Antioquia (a Colombian department in the centre of the country), this process of mixing allowed "the elimination of all kinds of differences between missionaries and indigenous people" (Upegui, 2015, p. 120).

With the rapprochement between indigenous and missionaries, children and their families lost the right and the possibility of caring for and being cared for. Schools separated children from their parents and prevented any contact for long periods, creating physical barriers between children and their parents. Also, the pedagogical and catechesis processes carried out in the boarding schools were accompanied by new norms, laws, rules, and punishments that began to shape the Wayúu identities and ended up alienating children culturally from their families.

The relationships the Wayúu children woven with their environment and the non-human world were also interrupted or prevented. Their relationship between the Wayúu children with the animals or community garden ceased to be possible. Experiences and relationships that Wayúu children created with their lagoons, the sea, the paths and the forests of their territory ceased to exist. This break in the relationship of these children with the non-human world could be considered a violation of the right to care that Wayúu children also possessed.

Likewise, the Capuchins began physically altering the Wayúu territories by stimulating and promoting the construction of roads that cut and penetrated the Wayúu territory (Daza Villar, 2001), where some of them are mainly used by current extractivist companies, as those connecting coastal cities. Something that caught my attention during the interviews is that when I asked the Wayúu about the main changes in their territories, many of them from different communities and ages, told me that roads are the main territorial change. I expected them to say that the most significant change in their territory had been Cerrejón or the growth of cities like Riohacha or Maicao. However, the interviews pointed out to me that, for some Wayúus, the roads were the most remarkable change in the territory because those who had decided to open these roads were actors from outside the communities who were motivated by objectives that did not benefit or consider the Wayúu (Figure 5-2).
Silvio, who is less than 30 years old and has lived mainly in Maicao, replied that the road that was opened in 1930 and later paved in 1997 was "the biggest change that the territory had" (Maicao, August 2019). Similarly, Zaida, an 80-year-old Wayúu, said the road built during the 1930s marked the beginning of changes in their territory (Guaymaral, October 2019). For Jaime, a 40-year-old Wayúu who lives in Cabo de la Vela, the roads constructed in the 80s, particularly those built by the *Morrison-Knudsen Company*, represent the main changes in the region (Cabo de la Vela, June 2019).

Figure 5-2. La Guajira in 1769. Map created to Guirior viceroy in 1772. Source: Banco de la República

The construction of the roads in the indigenous territories represents much more than the union between points. Studies in the tropics about roads’ environmental and social effects have shown that roads can dramatically alter indigenous livelihoods once a road is built near them (Clements et al., 2018). For Alamgir et al., “road projects in frontier areas commonly lead to adverse impacts on local inhabitants, such as prostitution and black-market products, an increase in sexually transmitted infections and an erosion of traditional social structures” (2017, p. R1134). In La Guajira, it is thanks to these roads that the region's natural resources are extracted. These roads have been the channels through which the Wayúu territories are drained, and their installation was possible thanks to dispossession, violence, and forced migration of various communities.
These roads represented the Wayúu's loss of power and control over the territories and the threat to their care networks, ways of life, and relationships. These routes represent the relationship rupture between rancherías and other indigenous and non-indigenous communities when the Wayúu territory could be free transit without physical barriers. Likewise, these roads crossing La Guajira also symbolise the loss of connection between humans and the non-human world. Access to Wayúu common sites (such as gardens, the sea, or lakes) is blocked and sometimes regulated by the roads and their dynamics.

Also, these roads opened by Capuchin missionaries represent the materialisation of the forced openness of the Wayúu territory and a fundamental basis for the development discourse that would begin to be successfully implemented in the region. As I am going to present in the next section, these roads installed by the Capuchin missions would be beneficial for the extractive companies that would arrive in the department, who would also use this same strategy of opening roads to impose new forms of organisation of the territory and its communities, and to direct the settlement of the Wayúu, for example, by promoting that they move closer to specific companies in exchange for services such as water, food or employment options.

5.5. Imaginary realities: Three characteristics and their logic

5.5.1. Disrupt relationships and care networks: *Concesión Salinas de Manaure* (large-scale salt extraction company)
Environmental conditions of La Guajira, such as high temperatures, permanent sun, constant wind, and scarce rain periods, are favourable for salt extraction by evaporation, an activity performed since pre-colonial times by communities established between Cesar and La Guajira departments (both in the north of Colombia), who used to extract salt, process, and commercialise it.

However, in 1824, the State declared all salt pans as national property to put the salt price under their control and receive the salt sale profit (Aguilera Díaz, 2004). One century later, in 1920, the State granted concessions to exploit salt on an industrial scale (Figure 5-3). To allow the new scale of salt extraction, the national government began the construction of roads aiming to connect La Guajira’s main cities (Riohacha, Maica, Uribe, and Manaure) with national ports and other departments (Map 5-1). As previously mentioned, these roads were implemented by Capuchin missionaries that were eventually enlarged and reinforced by the Colombian government, marking, according to Zaida, a frequent and continuous arijunas\(^40\) circulation in Wayúu territory, and with this, ‘everything changed’.

Map 5-1. Salinas de Manaure location in La Guajira, Colombia. Author: Alejandra De Fex Wolf

\(^{40}\) Arijuna is a Wayúu word to refer to everything that is foreign or does not belong to the culture.
Then, in 1941, the Republic Bank took charge of the numerous salt pans in Manaure, a La Guajira municipality, installing technical improvements and infrastructure adequate for salt exploitation and transport, such as roads and sea pumping equipment instalment and the expansion of crystallisation areas. In exchange for the rights over Wayúu land use, the Republic Bank built houses, schools, health centres, and churches that, according to the Bank, were ‘social and cultural goods for improving workers’ living conditions’, most of them indigenous. From 1955 to 1979, Concesión de Salinas- a company administrated by the Republic Bank- began some State projects aiming to supply water in La Guajira while modernising and expanding the Manaure salt pans for production increase.

Noticeably, the Wayúu people were not passive spectators of the Concesión de Salinas's actions over their territory. On the one hand, the Wayúu people confronted the salt company and national government for their property rights and the ancestral recognition of the land where the Manaure salt pans were located, in addition to claiming ecological and environmental compensation. Regarding this, it is essential to clarify that this claim was possible because, interestingly, while the Colombian State was preparing and laying the groundwork for the development model, it was also rethinking and modifying the national constitution to make it more in line with the reality and the multiple diversities that exist in the country. In 1990, the Colombian government proudly opened the national economy to global markets, adhering to neoliberal policies and pursuing an imaginary reality of development directly related to economic growth (Alimonda, 2011). At the same time, the State was promoting a new national constitution in which traditionally marginalised communities, such as black and indigenous populations, were given special conditions and protected cultural and territorial rights.

This government's contradiction to open the markets and give more strength and support to extractivist processes in the country while giving more rights to black and indigenous communities resulted in significant confrontations and violence against communities claiming their rights over the market conditions and processes. For the communities, this represented and continues to represent the great challenge of continuing and sustaining life amid contradictions (the discussion around maintaining life in challenging scenarios takes place in chapter seven).
In this regard, in 1991, the Colombian government met Wayúu demands and recognised the Wayúu rights over this territory, rearranging production and work conditions and creating a mixed economy society – Sociedad Salinas de Manaure- where the Wayúu became partners of the company with 25% of the stocks. However, according to the national government, agreements have not been fulfilled due to ‘legal obstacles’.

On the other hand, the Wayúu members that used to perform artisanal salt extraction in Manaure incorporated some technologies and types of equipment, such as soil preparation machinery and water pump systems, to fill the ponds where the drying process takes place. In addition, they adopted the poly-residential system, one of the particularities of this group, as a way to perform salt extraction in multiple places around La Guajira (Figure 5-4). This Wayúu salt extraction approach competed with the industrial one, breaking the salt monopoly and forcing salt companies and the government to incorporate Wayúu people in this project and negotiate with them. As part of the deal, the State and Salinas de Manaure compensated the Wayúu people for environmental and socio-cultural impacts (Correa C., 1995).

Figure 5-4. Salinas de Manaure workers, La Guajira. January 2019. Source: Daniela De Fex Wolf
However, these compensations were insufficient to compensate for the effects of the salt pans expansion on the ecosystems and especially on Wayúu life. The salt pan expansion directly impacted the connection between the sea and estuarine areas, affecting the ecological patterns, especially fish reproduction areas, which affected fisheries’ dynamics, a main Wayúu subsistence activity. Moreover, by affecting fishing dynamics, it decreased the consumption of fish, one of the primary sources of protein for coastal Wayúu diets.

Reduced fish and other organisms’ availability altered the connections, social relations, and cultural fluxes mediated by food exchange with other Wayúu communities, indigenous and non-indigenous people that increased their diet diversity thanks to a regular food exchange.

The salt flats' expansion effect on the organisms inhabiting the estuaries, such as fish and crustaceans, also affected the relationships between the Wayúu and this ecosystem. The Wayúu living in coastal, riverine or estuarine areas frequently synchronise their life rhythms with those of the ecosystems surrounding them, as when they define fishing periods by the cycles of the moon or species to be fished by the fish reproductive or migratory seasons. These decisions, mediated or guided by the rhythms of the non-human world, are reflected in the daily life of the Wayúu when defining the ingredients on the plate, the times to go fishing or the daily activities roles.

Another way industrial salt extraction impacted Wayúu life and their food system and sovereignty were by interrupting Wayúu and Manaure citizens’ horticultural practices. The implementation of this project also affected their cosmologies and lifestyles since it affected their sacred places (such as when the company demolished Wayúu cemeteries), contaminated their habitats, and generated migrations to other areas. Because of degraded estuaries, Wayúu fishermen have to seek other subsistence activities in different regions or become the labour force for salt extraction and move closer to the company to facilitate their daily commute.

Also, the urbanisation process executed by Salinas, including road construction crossing traditional communities and habitats, contaminated water bodies, and increasing Wayúu vulnerability to health issues, such as dermatological issues (Correa C., 1995), was followed by worsening health conditions like intestinal and respiratory
disease and malnutrition. Similarly, another critical result of this extractivist project was that Wayúu people came to depend on external income, affecting their well-being and autonomy capacities, an effect that prevails until nowadays.

*Salinas de Manaure* project is an example of how development is an imaginary reality that interrupts care networks, logic, and responsibilities that sustain Wayúu livelihoods. In biophysical terms, the loss of important areas for conservation, reproduction, and fishing, such as the salt flats, mangroves, and other ecosystems created in the river-sea interface, were reflected in protein deficiencies for Wayúu coastal communities, and a decrease in food items for exchange and sales, activities that enrich their diets. Simultaneously, in socio-cultural terms, some communities were forced to move to other areas, cutting ties with their territories and adjacent communities, and some Wayúu men had to turn in labour for the industrial salt extraction company. With the entry of Wayúu men into the salt extraction industry, the tasks performed by the community members that largely sustain the Wayúu food systems were altered, creating a situation of overload of functions for some members, such as women, and household dependence on men's wages for access to food.

### 5.5.2. ‘Replacing’ relationships with assistance programs: Cerrejón Mining Company (coal mining)

At the same time that *Salinas de Manaure* was established in La Guajira, so was *Cerrejón*, a coal mining company that quickly became the country's largest extractive project in La Guajira and the largest open-cast coal mine in Latin America (Figure 5-5).
The infrastructure supporting this massive extractivist project (roads, railways, and ports) began to be built in the 1960s and is widely distributed through La Guajira (Map 5-2). This extractive activity began with greater vigour in the mid-1970s, stimulated by the Alfonso López Michelsen government (1974-1978), which supported the start of large-scale open-pit coal mining as a way to boost the national economy and respond to the global demand due to the world oil crisis (Cinep/PPP, 2017a). Some examined reports indicate that Cerrejón requires 10,000 people for its functioning and operation, of whom more than 70% are from La Guajira and covers 69,000 hectares (Fuentes et al., 2018). According to reports, ‘thanks to’ industrial mining machinery (such as diggers, trucks, and loaders), Cerrejón went from extracting nine tons per year in 1985 to around 30 tons since 2005 (Martínez Ortiz, 2019); these figures are expected to be maintained or surpassed until 2034 when the mine is due to be terminated.
The proportions of the adverse effects of coal extraction are as immense and overwhelming as the magnitude of the coal extraction, both in terms of impact on water bodies (Ulloa, 2020; Ulloa & Romero-Toledo, 2018) and social effects on Wayúu lives. Coal extraction of this magnitude requires approximately 45 million litres of water per day (in 2015 figures). This is water that comes from the rivers and streams near the mining project, especially those that are part of the Ranchería River basin (Boersma, 2017; Cinep/PPP, 2017a; Fuentes et al., 2018; Ulloa, 2020) and those Cerrejón has taken either by diversion of the river (as happened with the Bruno stream) or by dam construction. The desert ecosystem exacerbates these effects.

The Wayúu communities and regional social movements such as Fuerza Mujeres Wayúu (FMW) insist that Cerrejón is responsible for environmental contamination, provoking demands and severe conflicts between the communities and the company (Ulloa, 2020) (more about this social movement in chapter seven). Likewise, the FMW movement has reported that Cerrejón activities are interrupting or eliminating the crucial connection that the Wayúu people have with their water bodies. This company directly affects a vital resource and
overlooks the significant cultural and social water bodies' role (such as rivers, lagoons and the ocean) in the Wayúu culture.

About the relationship between Cerrejón and Wayúu people, Zaida commented during one of our conversations that it is difficult to dialogue and reach a consensus with this company because "Cerrejón says that we are not affected by their activities because we are far from the coal transport routes and mine, so they are only aware of the communities that they have on their sides of the tracks" (Guaymaral, September 2019).

In negotiations with Wayúus, Cerrejón refuses to recognise that their activities have broader environmental impacts (Ulloa, 2020). The excessive use of water, the alterations to bodies of water, including their contamination, air pollution from coal dust, and noise pollution (Fuentes et al., 2018) are effects that transcend and defy the boundaries of what Cerrejón has demarcated as its area of influence. This set of ‘development secondary effects’ has created severe and permanent effects on the ecosystems regarding the overuse of resources and loss of biodiversity. It impacts the dynamics between species affecting the entire region, regardless of its proximity to the mine.

As relevant as water contamination has been, the changes caused by the company in the social and cultural spheres of Wayúu life could be perceived in the impacts on the Wayúu food systems and food sovereignty and the connection between Wayúu people and no-human worlds. In terms of impacts on quality of life, Cerrejón is indirectly responsible for many health problems experienced by Wayúu members. These include health impacts closely related to commerce dependence, a change in diet from local food to industrialised products, and a transition from an active to a sedentary lifestyle. About the latter, Silvio commented that “now it is frequent to find Wayúu people suffering from diabetes and high cholesterol” (Maicao, August 2019). On the other hand, Jose mentioned that since the 1980s, “Wayúu people began to depend on commerce to feed themselves, which is possible when we sell our animals, but there is a moment in that this is not enough to survive” (Maicao, August 2019).

This commerce dependence was also related to Silvio. He claimed that “all that we consume came from Maicao (commercial city). Before, we used to harvest cassava, pumpkin, beans, but now it is not possible to plant” (Maicao, August 2019). The introduction of
certain cereals to the Wayúu diet, such as rice and industrialised products, was partly stimulated by the new dynamics that Cerrejón established in La Guajira. As previously described, the exchange of labour for money meant that much, if not all, of the Wayúu families’ diet depended on the purchase of food, either because the land was no longer productive for agriculture due to the extractivist projects’ cumulative effects, or because there was insufficient labour in the communities to sustain the community food systems.

Extractivist projects in La Guajira are how rice, pasta, and sugar products became available and more prominent in the Wayúu diet, as mentioned by Zaida, “Guajira people did not use to eat rice” (Guaymaral, September 2019), and also by Silvio, who claimed that “during the 80s-90s we began to see new foodstuffs, like spaghetti and seasoning products, before that we just use salt to flavour” (Maicao, August 2019). Silvio also mentioned that these new food items became part of the Wayúu diet when non-Wayúu people (arijunas) married Wayúu women, creating a mixture between Wayúu and arijuna cuisine, where rice, fried food, and sugary items began to share the plate with goat meat and guajiro beans.

Likewise- and even more relevant- the environmental and social effects of this project disrupted care practices that were not just voluntary and involved enjoyment but were essential for life-sustaining and sharing traditional knowledge among generations. Without romanticising the complex, exhausting, unfairly distributed, and ongoing activities such as caring for others (humans and non-humans), looking for water and firewood, cooking and cleaning, all of these frequently under the responsibility of women and children, it is important to notice that, before extractivism arrived in La Guajira, the execution of these tasks, all this unpaid work, built and allowed collective spaces of enjoyment.

For Wayúu people, the maintenance and reproduction of life used to be an activity that was approached with responsibility and reliability, but also left the doors open so that recreation, play, and the pleasure of being together with other community members (humans and non-humans), and even leisure have a precious space in community life. For example, doing the household laundry was a job. However, it also allowed women to meet with other members (predominantly women and kids), where their children could accompany them. Children use
to do it joyfully because it was also a space to meet to play with other kids. While the children were playing (with other children, with water and their animals), their mothers and other women went to the rivers and lagoons (jagüeys in Wayúunaiki) to do laundry and took advantage of those ‘private spaces’ to talk, learn from the older ones, and educate the community kids. All this without worrying about time or how to make these activities more efficient or productive because those were not the parameters to measure life. Jaime, one of the Wayúu that inhabit Cabo de la Vela, told me something that sums this up: "When I go to Uribia (one of the important cities of the department), I get bored (...) there is no life there, everything is money, everything is bought” (Cabo de la Vela, June 2019). Moving from a lifestyle that allows enjoyment and care to a way of life that produces boredom and depends on money is perhaps one of the saddest effects of extractivism.

The social and cultural effects of Cerrejón were not limited to environmental issues since the Cerrejón installation was, and continues to be, an immensely violent process. As reported by the Observatory of Mining Conflicts in Latin America (OCMAL), "since 1981, the operation and constant expansion of the El Cerrejón mine have generated the forced displacement of indigenous Wayúu and Afro-Colombian communities in the region, the company does not recognise union organisations or the benefits to which its workers are entitled" (OCMAL, 2007, p. n.d).

Moreover, the OCMAL reports that Cerrejón has usurped Wayúu’s sacred territories, as in the case of the Media Luna Wayúu community, which in 1981 was forcibly displaced to build the coal shipping port. The OCMAL also highlights that in 2005, with the support of local authorities and Colombian State officials, Cerrejón forced 1,200 people from the Tabaquito community (an Afro-Colombian and indigenous community) to leave their territories. This abrupt rupture of the Wayúu relationship with those sacred or traditional territories is not only a very violent process but also breaks the ties that the community creates with its spiritual world. Likewise, this separation disables the possibility of continuing to create memories and stories in a place that makes sense for the community and that has managed to connect different generations which coincide in everyday scenarios (for example, a specific same lake can be the protagonist and witness of many Wayúu generations stories).
In the face of this dramatic and highly violent situation, the Wayúu people did not remain mere observers of what was taking place in their territories. Wayúu people deployed strategies to protect their territories from Cerrejón activities. However, in this case, and compared with the Salinas de Manaure process, they gained more national and international legal support to defend themselves. During the 1990s, Colombian indigenous groups’ rights and territories were protected by three different but interrelated schemes: The Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 169 (ILO C-169), the recently reformed Colombian national constitution, and the possibility of creating indigenous reserves (resguardos).

The ILO C-169, enacted by party countries in 1991, is the only international convention dedicated to indigenous people’s rights. This convention affirmed that “in many parts of the world, indigenous and tribal peoples are unable to enjoy their fundamental human rights to the same degree as the rest of the population of the States within which they live, and that their laws, values, customs, and perspectives have often been eroded”, indicating that these peoples should have the right “to exercise control over their own institutions, ways of life and economic development and to maintain and develop their identities, languages, and religions, within the framework of the States in which they live” (C169 - Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989). This convention emphatically highlights that indigenous communities have the right and the space to state their priorities and preserve their customs and that they also have rights over their lands, resources, and territories. Likewise, the convention points to other equally important issues such as education, health, language, cosmology, and cooperation between borders.

In 1991, Colombia adhered to ILO C-169, and from that moment on, the national government had one year to modify, reform, and create policies and State plans to make it possible to comply with the agreement. Thus, ILO Convention 169 influenced Colombian national legislation when it was included in its reformed constitution as law 21 of 1991 (Ley 21 de 1991: Convenio 169. Convenio Sobre Pueblos Indígenas y Tribales En Países Independientes, 1991). From that moment, the Colombian State committed itself to carry out coordinated actions to protect indigenous people's rights and their identity and integrity, eliminating all forms of discrimination against them, recognising their values and cultural practices, guaranteeing their lands, and protecting their natural resources. In the case of
megaprojects that make use of indigenous resources (as in the case of mining), governments should carry out and demand prior consultations for projects and infrastructure construction that affect ethnic communities, requiring the participation of indigenous peoples throughout megaprojects implementation processes, as well as requesting that people affected by projects activities (such as large extractivist ones) receive benefits and compensation for the impacts.

Partially guided by the ILO C-169, during the 90s, the national government created indigenous reserves, defined as indigenous communities’ collective properties that, according to the Colombian constitution, are inalienable, imprescriptible and unattachable. Indigenous resguardos are a special legal and socio-political institution, confirmed by one or more indigenous communities that- having collective property titles but with private properties guarantees- own a territory that is managed according to community ways of life under their autonomous organisation that is protected by the indigenous jurisdiction, and their regulatory system” (Article 21, decree 2164 of 1995).

Although resguardos seek to protect indigenous territorial rights, in La Guajira, it was used to employ legal tools to facilitate the negotiation process between the mining company and the Wayúu people.

Wayúu people resorted to all these schemes. They filed legal actions against the company and the State, claiming that the project’s environmental studies were wrong, incomplete, and unreliable and indicated that the company had failed to comply with its duty to carry out prior consultations. In addition, the Wayúu recounted the effects of Cerrejón on their lives, pointing out how this project was attacking their constitutional and human rights to water, health, and food security and that the environmental impacts of the mine were much more severe and widespread than the company declared.

Additionally, Wayúu people pointed out the various types of violence they experienced, all of them caused by the mine, including harassment, psychological violence, threats, discrimination (such as when Cerrejón denied jobs for Wayúu people), free movement blockades and prohibitions in their territories (such as access to fisheries and hunting places), public services suspension (mainly water) to those who did not accept agreements, and company disrespect for sacred sites such as cemeteries (for a complete review
of Cerrejón conflicts with indigenous people see (OCMAL, 2007). In this way, Cerrejón abruptly and directly affected the Wayúu’s relationship inside their communities, with neighbouring communities (including other indigenous groups), and with their surrounding ecosystems and non-human beings.

In the face of complaints and national and international pressure, Cerrejón implemented a series of forms of compensation with the Wayúu communities. These measures were guided by two approaches: those required by national legislation and ILO 169, which included reparation payments for damages caused, conciliation and land purchases from impacted communities. These forms of compensation promoted a ‘new’ version of the development discourse, the neo-extractivism, and their imaginary reality of social welfare.

5.5.2.1. Neo-Extractivism, State and Social Welfare

According to Gudynas, neo-extractivism is similar to classical extractivism in that governments assume an economic model based on natural resources exploitation, and the national economy keeps promoting their exploitation. Likewise, under this ‘new model’, the ‘developing’ countries retain their role in the global economy as raw materials providers. However, the State role played in this ‘new’ version is slightly different from the previous one.

Decisions by bordering governments guided by this new extractivism had repercussions for extractive projects throughout the continent, including Colombia. The neo-extractivism proposals have been followed by Latin American governments across the political spectrum, going from conservative governments, like Colombia or Peru, to ‘progressive’ ones, like Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. This latter group encouraged political alternatives allegedly opposed to extractivism and neo-liberal measures by promoting new models, national independence, and diversifying national production. However, ‘progressive countries’ actions and governmental plans pointed to the same previous extractivism direction (Gudynas, 2009), keeping extractivist projects as pillars of their respective national development strategies, although now promoting new resources and ways to extract them, like palm oil or avocado monocultures (Ojeda, 2012b, 2021; Serrano & Brooks, 2019).
Regarding the social novelties and the State's role in new discourse, some authors pointed out that a central neo-extractivism feature is a ‘humanistic policies’ style. According to Alberto Acosta and other development authors (Acosta, 2012; B. M. McKay, 2019), the State's role in this ‘new’ model differs from the previous one in that this is not passive nor limited to granting licenses to companies for resource exploitation. However, in this new version, the State placed itself as a territorial authority, dealing with extractivist initiatives under apparently clear rules and aiming to create strategies to ‘alleviate poverty, inequality and facilitate industrialisation’ by redistributing wealth resulting from extractivism surplus.

Figure 5-6. We rehabilitate the land (Cerrejón outdoor). Source: Global Justice Now/Richard Solly

In La Guajira, these humanist policies represented infrastructure construction made by companies together with a more active role from the State, which produced specific interventions related to water and energy supply and generated some pressure on extractive companies to extend their obligations with Wayúu communities affected, guidelines that also responded to the country's commitment to ILO C-169 and the new constitution. One of these measures was the redistribution of royalties\textsuperscript{41} obtained by carbon exploitation (and

\textsuperscript{41}Under a neo-extractive model, the State managed to capture more royalties from companies, either because it increased the tax burden, used
to a lesser extent by salt extraction) to Wayúu communities through State adjudication and vigilance. Additionally, they implemented some social projects for Wayúu people or gave them resources directly so they could carry out projects and upgrades in their communities to ‘improve their well-being’.

However, the social programs created under a neo-extractivist model were insufficient to improve or recover the Wayúu people's lifestyles for various reasons. First, this new version of extractivism continued to depend on the exploitation of limited natural resources, with all the environmental, social and cultural effects that this produced. In fact, since 2011, Cerrejón has been determined to increase its coal extraction to 40 tons or more per year until the end of the mining concession (in 2034), which implies increases in all the adverse effects, especially those related to water use (OCMAL, 2007). Also, because it continued to be an exclusionary process, as claimed by Colombian anthropologist Jonathan Echeverri Zuluaga, “mining company policies are founded in the Wayúu exclusion and have not been compensated with any kind of tie” (2003, p. 13). The power in this new version continues to be held by the large extractivist companies that continue to carry territorial control, blocking or hindering community processes that seek to return territorial rights and control to the Wayúu communities.

Finally, I would like to argue that this new version of extractivism is insufficient to improve the quality of life of the Wayúu because none of the actions intended to re-establish the care networks that sustain Wayúu communities or reconnect them with other communities and worlds. No form of compensation is capable of replacing the networks of care and the relationships that are woven between and among humans and non-humans. The inability to replace care networks can be expressly perceived when analysing the effects of this new development discourse on Wayúu food sovereignty, showing that the food systems in indigenous territories were poorly substituted by weekly food provision and a salary that allowed Wayúu people to buy new tools to raise resources, or even because it created State extractive companies, cutting mediators and growing profits to support social programs in extractive regions.

In Colombia, the coal royalties value depends of three variables: international coal price, abroad transport and Colombian peso - dollar exchange rate (Semana, 2017).
food in the main cities. Water provision, which used to be done by going to the rivers and lagoons, was inadequately replaced with tankers trucks that distributed the liquid to the communities at a frequency defined by the companies (sometimes, as related by Wayúu people and experienced during fieldwork, the tanker would arrive only once a month or sometimes not appear at all). Likewise, the connections and happy moments that were created with and in the water bodies cannot be replaced or exercised by a water truck.

The traditional knowledge transmission (carried out by the elderly Wayúu) did not find any space in the schools that Cerrejón built in the region. Household construction and infrastructure building, such as roads, aqueducts, or churches, were mainly designed to satisfy company requests rather than meet communities' needs and requirements. Actions that arose from the social responsibility programs of the companies- that sought to be equivalent to relationships and care practices- ended up creating dependency and paternalistic relationships that impeded Wayúu's agency over their ways of life.

5.5.2.2. The adaptability capacity of the imaginary realities: From development to social welfare and sustainability promises

As previously mentioned, aquatic environments suffered the main biophysical impact of extractivist projects in La Guajira. This vital resource was irreparably impacted, starting with Salinas de Manaure, where salt extraction affected critical ecological areas, and the Cerrejón case, where water sources were overused, diverted and contaminated. In response to Wayúu community and civil society accusations that blamed the national government and companies’ representatives for regional water problems, the state and private sector defended themselves, ensuring that, although their activities had indeed impacted aquatic ecosystems, climate change should be considered the principal cause of water scarcity and environmental changes.

On the contrary, according to some Wayúu people and academics, climate change is not the primary cause of La Guajira's water scarcity (Figure 5-5 and Figure 5-7). Silvio, for example, commented that
Cerrejón effects and damages are undeniable and have exacerbated climate impacts:

*Look at the mega-mining that we have here. Imagine, this is the biggest open-cast coal mining in the world. Can you imagine all the impact created by this? (Maicao, August 2019).*

Silvio’s opinion is shared by Leonardo, who told me:

*They (businesspeople, the national government, and some Wayúu leaders) are not interested in the Wayúu people know that climate change is also a human action result, corresponding to nature destruction and water sources interest and degradation. Wayúu leaders inside their communities do not discuss this issue, which is why many elders and members of the Wayúu ethnic group are unaware of where these effects are coming from (Maicao, August 2019).*

Figure 5-7. Cerrejón mining. Source: Wikimedia Commons
In the same way, Colombian academics such as the anthropologist Astrid Ulloa, who has spent years working with Wayúu communities, especially on water and territory issues, argued that mega-mining is the leading cause of the department's water problem. Ulloa's opinion is shared by the Colombian engineer German Poveda, one of the most important international experts in climate change (specifically in the ENSO / El Niño phenomenon), who, in one of our conversations, stated that "climate change explains part of what we see happening in La Guajira respect to droughts frequency and severity but, for me, the greatest effects come from recent territory changes, such as Cerrejón" (pers. comm., February 2020).

However, the Colombian government and allied companies to the State development plans have ignored these experts’ voices and claims from Wayúu people and academics, who, from their own experiences or different points of view and other methodologies, have reached the same conclusion regarding extractivism adverse effects on Wayúu life and territory. Contrary to recognising the role of extractivism in degrading nature and society, the national government and businesspeople keep reiterating the argument that climate change has caused the severe La Guajira drought. They have used this argument to support and justify the entry of a new form of extractivism, this time wearing green.

Especially since the end of the 20th century, climate change increasingly became a matter of global concern when the scientific community, environmental justice movements, and the civilian population began to warn about the harmful effects of temperature increase. They jointly highlight the imminent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to avoid widely distributed consequences, including habitats and diversity loss, political conflicts over natural resources (especially water), food price fluctuations, effects on economies and planning, forced human migrations and health problems. This challenging and overwhelming scenario brought together experts to find convenient solutions for the majority, allegedly inspired and guided by sustainability notions, ecological limits, and efficiency through technology. Thus, governments, guided by experts’ recommendations and international pressure, developed emission reduction goals that would be possible through transitions to green energy (coming from wind or solar sources), fossil fuels use reduction or elimination, or climate change mitigation projects that include proposals such as carbon credits market and payment for
ecosystem services, where natural resources were somehow quantified in economic terms and preserved to ‘pay’ for carbon emission excesses elsewhere.

Colombia joined climate change mitigation agreements, especially committing itself to the energy transition, promoting policies that support extensive African oil palm plantations (raw material for biofuels production), hydroelectric construction, and eco-tourism promotion (Berman-Arévalo & Ojeda, 2020; Ojeda, 2012b, 2021; Serrano & Brooks, 2019). These activities have two simultaneous motivations: to exhibit sustainable and environmental responsibility postures, especially to international commitments, and to generate more jobs, thus boosting the national economy.

However, these are not necessarily neutral or well-meaning alternatives. As mentioned by Astrid Ulloa (Ulloa, 2018b), it is necessary to carefully evaluate the scope and multiple interpretations that climate change ‘adaptation’ and ‘mitigation’ strategies may represent in public policies, institutional programs, and among the civil population. Likewise, it is crucial to consider who is included and excluded in climate change plans. Similarly, James Fairhead and collaborators ((Fairhead et al., 2012) warn that the use of this sustainable discourse has ended up justifying actions and decisions for climate change mitigation, ‘well-being’ improvement, and ecosystems conservation, that despite apparently well-meaning and even benevolent intentions, have become credentials or facades to justify new resources appropriation, a process that is known as green grabbing (Vidal, 2008; Vigil, 2018).

Under this ‘new’ form of appropriation- this time supported by climate change mitigation agendas- the search for (supposedly) sustainable development alternatives (another example of an imaginary reality) will allow countries (mainly in the global south) to become integrated into the world market and grow their economies, in exchange for non-renewable natural resources exploitation guided by market demands. Unsurprisingly, this is almost a replica of the same narrative, systems, and dynamics that supported previous extractivist models, although this time through new resources -or exploited in different ways- such as alternative energy sources, monocultures and eco-tourism (Franco & Borras, 2019; Núñez et al., 2020).

Unfortunately, La Guajira is a good place to explore the effects, novelties, and recurrences of this new form of resource appropriation,
again with impacts on Wayúu food sovereignty and care networks. Seeking to illustrate this new development narrative installed in La Guajira, I will take the Guajira Azul project as an example, which aims to ensure water supply to Wayúu communities supported by the national climate change mitigation agenda.

5.5.3. Adaptability capacity: Guajira Azul (water project)

Figure 5-8. We are bringing water to La Guajira! Source: Colombian Environment Ministry website

The Ministry of Housing City and Territory created the Guajira Azul project seeking to increase La Guajira (especially Wayúu communities) water supply from 4% to 70%, improve water continuity (from nine hours daily supply to 16 hours), and guarantee better drinking water quality and sanitation infrastructure (Viceministerio de Agua y Saneamiento Básico, 2018)(Map 5-3). Private companies, international cooperation agencies, and State institutions have supported and financed this project, which through 86 interventions distributed in La Guajira, seeks to meet the objectives of this project between 2018 and 2022 (Figure 5-8). These interventions include aqueduct construction and improvement, water treatment plants amelioration, deep wells excavation, and construction of public water distribution points (pilas públicas) which communities must approach to obtain water for free.
On the surface, this project seems to be different from *Salinas de Manaure* and *Cerrejón*, mainly because it focuses on the Wayúu community’s well-being. However, delving into their policies, actors involved, and interventions implementation criteria makes it possible to perceive that this project is quite familiar to traditional extractivist projects.

Up to the time of this investigation, only some of these *pilas públicas* had been built in Manaure, and priority has been given to Hatonuevo, Barrancas, Fonseca, Distracción, San Juan del Cesar, Villanueva, and El Molino municipalities for infrastructure and treatment plant improvements. However, the locations of the project's first interventions are striking. These primary interventions were introduced in cities in the south and middle Guajira, regions comparatively richer in water resources, rather than in the north of the department, where water resources are scarce. North La Guajira (or *Alta Guajira*) is mainly a desert ecosystem where Wayúu people have insistently reported their difficulties in accessing water. It is also the region that presents most malnutrition and diarrhoea cases,
health problems directly related to water scarcity and poor water quality\textsuperscript{42}.

It is also interesting to note that, according to the company, the \textit{pilas públicas} and aqueduct location criteria correspond to places with better subsoil water availability. However, the location of these initial interventions ‘coincides’ with the same municipalities where \textit{Salinas de Manaure} and \textit{Cerrejón} are located and in southern cities where extensive livestock activities are also located. As Map 5-4 illustrates, when mapping the three extractivist projects analysed in this chapter (\textit{Salinas}, \textit{Cerrejón}, and \textit{Guajira Azul}), it is possible to perceive that these entrepreneurship overlap in the same places, putting in doubt whether the implementation of \textit{Guajira Azul} corresponds to the Colombian State interest of promoting the Guajiros and Wayúu quality of life or if, contrarily, it is a way to ‘camouflage’ State support for extractivist activities.

\textbf{Map 5-4. Overlapping La Guajira extractivist projects location from 1930 until 2021. Author: Alejandra De Fex Wolf}

\textsuperscript{42} A study about diarrhoea incidence related to hydrological regime and water shortage in South-East Asia found that water shortages trigger diarrhoea peaks during the dry and hot seasons and that rainfall and subsequent aquifer refill end the epidemic during the wet season (Boithias \textit{et al.}, 2016).
The decision to locate these interventions in those municipalities suggests that even ‘green’ initiatives end up reinforcing and sustaining extractivist projects already implemented without bringing improvements to the Wayúus’ quality of life or their well-being. It is possible to appreciate the persistent disconnection between extractivist projects and the Guajiros and Wayúus desires and interests and the State’s ongoing prioritisation of other more economically attractive activities. Some Wayúu people voice this deceit; as Leonardo said, “we do not benefit directly from these water projects, but those southern farmers do” (Maicao, September 2019).

The locations of Guajira Azul’s interventions illustrate how the government and private companies appropriate these green discourses to continue their extractivist activities or release new ones while insisting on the unsustainable idea of economic growth at all costs (both social and environmentally).

As pronounced by the ex-president Iván Duque, the previous Minister of Energy, and the ENEL director (an electricity and gas multinational company), at the beginning of 2021 during the official delivery of some interventions of the project, “this will be the governmental period for the renewable energy revolution (...) we will leave the country transformed in this energy field (...), and we believe that water is what allows us to promote social and economic development for Wayúu people” (Ministerio de Vivienda, 2021). However, this ‘social and economic development’ idea that Guajira Azul intends to disseminate is the same that has degraded biodiversity, ecosystems and Wayúu ways of life, including their food sovereignty. As Jose mentioned, "La Guajira water problems are because the subsoil water reserves are destroyed" (Maicao, August 2019), matter in front neither the national government nor private companies are planning to carry out neither a single intervention.

Another concerning aspect of this project is how water promises are increasingly becoming a form of political and social manipulation. Especially during political campaigns for department governor or presidential elections, politicians and business owners are interested in votes or in gaining trust among specific communities- either because of the number of members (equivalent to potential voters) or because of economic interest in their territories (i.e., communities located in coastal areas eye-catching for the tourism sector)- have used water distribution (by water tank truck) as a way to approach those communities and exchange favours, as well as punish those
that have not been backing their political campaigns nor supporting specific project requirements (i.e., openly oppose to electricity pylon installation or secondary roads opening)\textsuperscript{43}.

According to Leonardo, once certain politicians are elected, “they have the power to provide water to those communities that support them during the political campaign and deny water supply for communities that did not stand up for them. Those who disagree with an administration are excluded from receiving water or are forced to create alliances with these politicians in exchange for votes for the next political period. This forces the community’s fragmentation and imposes a political commitment with the politicians on duty” (Maicao, September 2019).

Leonardo also mentioned that he fears and suspects that political manipulation through \textit{Guajira Azul} could occur. Even though the \textit{Guajira Azul} project is relatively recent (less than four years), some research interviews reported that some community members in certain rancherías have begun to control water access through a padlock that they open or close depending on a personal affinity with who requires water. Water supply had started to be used as a punishment strategy, where water provision is denied when a person committed an offence (such as a fight or a robbery) (\textit{pers. comm.}, Maicao, August 2019).

Regarding how this specific project impacted Wayúu food sovereignty, it is possible to indicate that although some Wayúus improved their nutritional situation thanks to a more regular and stable drinking water supply (mainly by reducing diseases acquired through water), the conditions in which this project operates end up affecting Wayúu food systems and sovereignty indirect but severely. The project policies, the interventions’ location, the omission of a large amount of Wayúu communities in the project design, the way \textit{Guajira Azul} has ended reorganised communities around \textit{pilas públicas} or aqueducts, and, above all, by continuing to support extractivist activities that create water and food problems for the Wayúu, professedly the central target population of this project.

\textsuperscript{43} In this regard, it is worth remembering that the exclusion of public services, especially water, is a strategy that actors outside the Wayúu (the \textit{arijuna} in Wayúu terms) have been employing since the 80s, as happened and is happening with \textit{Cerrejón}.
Concerning the effect of project installations on Wayúu lifestyles, *Guajira Azul* ordered the population according to the program’s interests and needs. According to Guillermo, “water mills, wells, and *pilas públicas* instalment have served to move some populations. We (he and his family) suspect that these constructions look to reallocate populations, (if) a population has been living in a specific settlement for a long time, they (the company) come and tell the community: ‘come on, you cannot get water here, and we can make a water well for you, but you have to move here’” (Maicao, September 2019) (Figure 5-9).

The intended reorganisation of the Wayúus around the public fonts ignores that communities have decided to live in places where they can care or be cared for. Companies and the State seem to ignore or underestimate that life is sustained through proximity to each other and ecosystems. For example, a Wayúu community organises itself around natural water sources (be it the sea or wells) to guarantee access to this liquid and to be able to sustain a food system, but also seek to live close to their families to be able to better divide the care responsibilities among members (i.e., elder people taking care of children while adults go to work). These ways of organising around care do not necessarily coincide, nor should they be forced to overlap, with the places where projects such as *Guajira Azul* are installed.

![Image of water distribution model for Wayúu communities](Figure 5-9. Infographic signalising drinking water distribution model for communities around *Guajira Azul* public fonts (pilas públicas). Source: Colombian Ministry of Housing website)
It is crucial to notice that the community’s reallocation has also occurred in the Salinas de Manaure and Cerrejón projects, where Wayúu communities were displaced due to salt flats expansion, roads, and railroad tracks implementation or because communities inhabit strategic coal extraction points. In these projects, the Wayúu community’s displacement can be described as forced, as circumstances and negotiation processes obliged them to move to other areas.

However, in the Guajira Azul case, the displacement generated by this project could not be strictly considered forced but even ‘voluntary’. As previously described, subsoil aquatic resource availability was the main Guajira Azul criteria for locating their public wells. In this sense, these structures were implemented in specific places that met this condition, but often these locations were far from communities’ settlements. Thus, some communities were indirectly forced to move near public wells for water searching convenience and to ensure their water access.

It is worth noting that, although this mobilisation was somehow deliberate, it is valid to question whether this could also be a form of body control, discipline, and population vigilance by the water supply company, a way of guaranteeing workforce and having aqueduct and public wells custodians near to this project infrastructure. This community mobilisation guided by State projects has been taking place in other places in Colombia. During a conversation with Dr Gilda Wolf, a National University professor who has been studying urban migrations boosted by governmental projects in Medellín for years, she mentioned that this ‘strategy’ was already used during the 1970s by EPM (departmental and national public services company provider) when the company indirectly established Medellín geographic growth limits and boundaries. According to her, the company determined that they would only supply water to homes located below a certain height (until 1850 meters above sea level), then mark the city legal limits and create a separation among those neighbourhoods or homes legally attached to the water system, and illegal places, represented by all these households located above 1850m, who accessed water in illegitimate ways, and which even today are considered ‘slums’ (*pers. comm.* Medellín, March 2021).

These stories from different Colombian regions (La Guajira and Medellín) about how companies and the State have exercised different mechanisms of control over people, as well as the examples
in which members of the Wayúu communities have begun to monitor each other, refer to the idea of discipline as a type of power proposed by Michel Foucault. According to Foucault, discipline is a way of exercising power over some subject or group through instruments, techniques and procedures that seek to monitor, control, and correct (Foucault, 2002, 2017). In the case of La Guajira, the process of disciplining through extractivist projects, especially water ones, created a marked hierarchy between the communities and the companies/State and is serving as a form of surveillance and control over the Wayúu communities, which to access water must follow the company's rules, these designed by technical concepts and ‘experts’ voices, instead of being raised under the guidance and experience of the Wayúu people.

Likewise, these stories illustrate how the imaginary realities—such as development, well-being, climate change mitigation, or sustainability—have an advanced capacity to transform themselves and appropriate other circulating narratives (such as climate change or gender equality) to continue sustaining business-as-usual. In La Guajira, these have been imaginary realities that, far from being enjoyed or celebrated as the means that allowed a better quality of life, have been ideas that have been suffered in the body and territory (see chapter seven). Version after version, these imaginary realities have mobilised populations, established geographical boundaries and barriers, created separations between communities, and labelled and generated discrimination against those who remain on the margins of development or resist it.

5.6. Moving from imaginary realities to caring realities

As presented in the last section, La Guajira has managed to attract different versions of the development discourse and their imaginary realities, starting with extractivism that promised development and progress represented by Salinas de Manaure, moving to Cerrejón, which represents neo-extractivism and social welfare imaginary, to a green version of development, the green-grabbing and their sustainable and climate change proposal, exemplified by Guajira Azul project. Each of these discourses comes with a set of particular characteristics that allow them to settle, such as the type of
narrative, practices, technologies, and equipment employed, the type of government and social context in which they occur, the types of resources exploited, and their specific alliances (as between companies and the State).

Despite the differences in the narratives, promises, alliances, and exploited resources of each of these versions, the imagined realities of these discourses share three characteristics or logics that allow development discourses to continue with such vigour even today and despite the already recognised effects of extractivism and its evident failure and inability to fulfil its welfare promises (Acosta, 2017; Camargo & Ojeda, 2017; Gudynas, 2009, 2020; Hope, 2021; Reinert, 2018; Segato, 2021; Svampa, 2015; Ulloa, 2021).

One of the characteristics of extractivism and imaginary realities is that it breaks bonds and relationships created between humans, between humans and non-humans, and between non-humans, as the Salinas de Manaure project exemplifies. For example, the pool's expansion to dry the salt without recognising the ecosystem relationships between the mangrove areas and the sea irreparably interrupted the breeding areas of fish species and other organisms, such as shrimp and bivalves, affecting the ecological and biological cycles of these species. With this break in the ecosystem’s relationship, fishing was affected, which was an essential source of protein for the Wayúu families who lived in these areas now appropriated by Salinas, affecting the diets of the communities.

Similarly, this damage to fishing affected the relationships that were woven with other Wayúus communities, other indigenous communities, and non-indigenous people or groups, such as the Guajiros or the samarios (people from Santa Marta city), since fishing was a food that was sold or exchanged for these communities, and by not being able to offer it, those links or points of connection with these people were broken. Food exchange was also a way for Wayúu and the peasants to diversify their diets and acquire other products needed in their households, such as cleaning items or clothing.

Another imagined realities feature is that it promotes an impression that relationships can be replaced or substituted by programs with ‘social responsibility’ and assistentialist programs, such as periodic deliveries of food and water, construction of schools (few of them with indigenous teaching methodologies), roads and even churches that represent how little these programs know about the Wayúu ways
of life, and even worse, how they assume that these programs and policies would be equivalent to the care networks woven in the communities, among people, and with nonhuman worlds that have sustained Wayúu life forms for centuries.

Similarly, these proposals for replacing relationships, which are masked under the figure of compensation or, more recently, *corporate social responsibility*, are good examples of practices and actions of *bad care*, which I will present in greater detail in chapter six since they ended up replacing care relationships by dependency relationships. This characteristic is evident in the *Cerrejón* project, which proposes to ‘compensate’ the community with payments, delivery of food and water, and jobs to community members in exchange for the contamination and diversion of bodies of water, pollution, construction of roads that crossed communities and taking Wayúus from their communities to become workforce in the coal mine (leaving the *rancherías* without enough hands to sustain community activities such as community gardens and overloading women and children).

The last characteristic of the imaginary realities that I was able to identify during this research is the capacity that these ideas have to renew, transform, and adapt to continue being attractive to the government and communities and thus be able to continue shielding extractivism in all of its forms.

Academics such as Svampa (2015), Acosta (2012), and Gudynas (2009, 2012, 2015) show how the development discourse has been skilful enough to continue in force despite its failure. Part of what explains the continuity of these discourses despite their failure is the allies that the development discourse manages to attract. The Colombian State (regardless of the political tendency of the government in power) has always supported extractivist processes, although its association with extractivism has presented transformations. In the case of *Salinas de Manaure*, the State was included in precise moments, mainly when granting licenses for extraction and later when the State had to deal with and mediate conflicts between the extractivist company and the communities. With *Cerrejón*, the presence of the State was more substantial. This is primarily since, at that time, the discourse of neo-extractivism ruled megaprojects, at least in Latin America. This corresponds to what Gudynas has identified as one of the *Ten urgent theses of the new extractivism* in which the “State has a more active role, with
clearer rules, with both direct and indirect interventions on the extractive sectors” (2009, p. 195), where governments begin to renegotiate contracts and raise royalties and taxes, as happened with Cerrejón.

In Guajira Azul's case, the State plays a central role, to the point that this is a government project. As mentioned above, climate change and malnutrition cases in La Guajira were compelling reasons for the government to start taking more specific actions around these issues for the department. However, the government's responses do not only respond to La Guajira's demands in terms of natural resources management and climate change mitigation projects but to a global trend that has given more space to sustainability and green discourses on their agendas without losing sight of economic growth (see (Blythe et al., 2018).

As Fairhead and colleagues point out, “things green have become big business and an integral part of the mainstream growth economy”(2012, p. 240), pointing out that this is nothing more than a new way of continuing to grow economically, although this time hand in hand with sustainable, renewable and sustainable discourses. Alliances and support from international or global organisations or initiatives have helped maintain the development discourse. Faced with growing concern about climate change and its irreversible effects, the international community has allocated large quantities of money to find alternative and effective ways to lower CO2 levels and limit global temperature rises. Climate mitigation projects are strengthened by international organisations’ support, as they are financing many projects that represent an alternative to reduce or mitigate climate change impacts.

Colombia’s government has taken advantage of this new market to plant wax palm at industrial scales to produce biodiesel (Berman-Arêvalo & Ojeda, 2020; Camargo & Ojeda, 2017), has committed to investing in energy from alternative sources (such as wind and solar) and has offered its forests and natural reserves to those countries that choose to continue generating the same environmental impacts in their territories and ‘exporting’ the ecological debt to other regions (Redford & Adams, 2009). According to Blythe et al., this ‘green or blue economy’ have transformed “institutions of environmental governance into vehicles that can be used in the interest of capital accumulation” (2018, p. 3). This green/blue economy allied with this new version of development has managed to continue accumulating
wealth through the commodification of nature, taking advantage of the urgency to contain climate change is not leaving enough room for rigorously questioning how current development discourse keeps feeding an economic growth purpose that remains to produce an environmental and social debt that the same ‘others’ are paying in unfair, inequitable, and unworthy ways.

Moreover, this new green or blue economy is taking on an increasing role, as shown in one of the latest reports by the Colombian NGO Indepaz (Institute for Development and Peace Studies), which affirms that just in La Guajira, more than 770 extractive projects are planned, including energy production by solar panels, wind energy, oil extraction in subsea platforms and plants for the production of hydrogen, in addition to the opening of another coal mine\(^44\) (González Posso, 2021).

The case of Guajira Azul exemplifies how the discourses and imagined realities remain valid and robust partly because they have appropriated popular and public interest issues and concerns (such as climate change) and have found allies in governments and international institutions to continue supporting extractivist projects. Guajira Azul is an initiative of the Colombian State to mitigate the impacts of climate change in La Guajira, and although it is not an extractivist project, the sites where it is located end up supporting extractivist activities in the department and thus end up supporting the breakup of the relationships that these extractivist companies have been carrying out. As I presented earlier, although it could be expected that the Guajira Azul facilities would be mainly and firstly located in the north of the department, where the rates of malnutrition and thirst are more severe compared to other department regions, it is noteworthy that the initial infrastructure of this project was located in the middle and lower Guajira, which are areas with easier or even stable water access, but which coincidentally are sites closer to Cerrejón headquarters, or as Leonardo related it, next to large livestock areas.

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\(^9\) It should be noted that this Indepaz report was published before the last presidential elections that took place in June 2022. Gustavo Petro and Francia Márquez, president and vice president respectively, are openly against many of these projects, so it is likely that some (or many) of them are not implemented.
The location of the *Guajira Azul* infrastructure cannot be considered a secondary or unimportant factor since this could motivate or guide the displacement of communities to the vicinity of the piles and wells. This migration forced by extractivism is a phenomenon that has been studied in greater detail in political ecology, from where attention has been drawn to the fact that decisions about human mobility will be increasingly guided by the search for resources or by biophysical effects on the environment due to, for example, climate change pressures (Vigil, 2018), where whoever has power over resources could guide the human displacement.

*Guajira Azul* has considerable power over La Guajira water resources and has justified actions of water privatisation and control to guarantee access for La Guajira population. However, these actions should not be seen as necessarily well-intentioned, not only because of the relationship of this project with the other extractive projects in the department but also because, as Jennifer Budds puts it, “water management should not be understood merely as the distribution of the resource between the different users, but as a response between the social actors who fight to control this resource to guarantee their interests” (2012, p. 169). In this line, the water control in La Guajira could be perceived as a powerful device to guarantee the interests and plans of the development discourse in all their versions.

Studies from the feminist political ecology perspective focused on water have pointed out that water issues impact people differently. The geographer Farhana Sultana, in her work on the socioeconomic implications of a water crisis in Bangladesh, explains how water issues (in this case related to water scarcity and contamination) have particularly affected women’s lives through their bodies and emotions, illustrating how a specific crisis is experienced differently by those facing it (Sultana, 2007, 2018).

*Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu* organisation have spoken out openly and directly against the extractivist processes in La Guajira, especially *Cerrejón* mining (Barón Romero & Romero Epiayú, 2013). This organisation has publicly reported the effects of mining on their bodies and community life, warning about the impact of mining on water (such as pollution and diversion) and highlighting that it is impossible to separate the relationship between Wayúu territories-water-bodies (Ulloa, 2020).
Both the work of Sultana and Ulloa, as well as that of Ojeda (Berman-Arévalo & Ojeda, 2020; Hawkins & Ojeda, 2011; Ojeda, 2012b, 2021) and Juanita Camacho (2017), have emphasised the different effects that development policies and plans have on the lives of the people who live in the places where resources are extracted, alerting that these impacts are also experienced in different ways according to gender, race, class, age, or origin (the differentiated crisis impacts is going to be addressed with greater attention in chapter six).

Together, these extractivism characteristics or logic and its imaginary realities proposals have created the breakdown or disappearance of relationships and bonds that sustain life, especially for the Wayúu people in La Guajira, and have made what I would like to denominate as relationship sacrifice zones. These could be defined as those regions, territories, or places in which, due to the destruction, appropriation, or contamination of the place, it is not possible or is difficult to sustain or create relationships within people, within the non-human (for example, ecosystems or ecological relationships between species non-humans and their environments), and among people and the non-human (for example, maintaining community gardens or supporting fishing).

In these relationship sacrifice zones, following Segato (2021), inter and intraspecies relationships (ties) are sacrificed in exchange for things (money, infrastructure), often without the consent of the beings that inhabit these places, who are forced to sacrifice their ties.

Forming relationship sacrifice zones is gradual and requires slow violence (Nixon, 2011). It is supported by different allies, such as the State or international organisations and even the communities that inhabit these zones, who are appealed to by imaginary realities promises, such as development, economic growth, progress, well-being and more recently, climate change mitigation.

However, some of these relationships sacrifice zones can be recovered, either by social mobilisation, as I present in chapter seven, or by opening up to what Ulloa has defined as radical socio-environmental transformations, and where ethics of care and food sovereignty perspectives and tools can be important allies.

According to Ulloa, the current environmental and social degradation contexts demand profound social and political changes possible through radical socio-environmental transformations (Ulloa, 2021). Similarly, Stirling claimed that “transformations entail more plural,
emergent, and unruly political re-alignments, involving social and technological innovations driven by diversely incommensurable knowledge, challenging incumbent structures and pursuing contending (even unknown) ends. Indeed, they may owe more to critical practice of other values, virtues or social qualities than to the utilitarian pursuit of ends at all (...) Ecological and social justice challenges arguably actually require instead is less singular controlled ‘transitions’ driven by whatever are the incumbent structures in any given area, and more vibrant agonistic political mobilisations towards more open-ended and pervasive ‘transformations’. Far from democratic struggle being an 'enemy of Nature' then, they are more likely each other’s deepest hopes” (2014, pp. 1–2).

Some examples of radical socio-environmental transformations are alternatives to development, such as Buen Vivir (Acosta, 2015) and Vivir Sabroso (Quiceno Toro, 2016)45, which seek to move from development to the pluriverse (Demaria & Kothari, 2017; Escobar, 2018), which is a proposal that fundamentally echoes one of the most potent and lucid slogans of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas: We want a world where many worlds fit (queremos un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos).

In common, Buen Vivir and Vivir Sabroso are alternatives that are characterised by proposing ideas of development not linked to economic growth, are proposals that have emphatically pointed out the flaws, violence, and destruction of the development discourse, and that propose in contrast to this discourse other paths that are diverse and that allow reaching well-being and social and ecological justice (Gudynas, 2018). As indicated by those who propose these alternatives to development, this is an exercise that implies imagining the unimaginable (as abandoning the obsession with economic growth), which "needs attitudes of disobedience to the experts" (Gudynas, 2020, p. 17), and implies considering other routes, giving way to creativity, ears to different voices and eyes to other lenses.

45 Vivir Sabroso is a proposal from Afro communities in Atrato, Colombia, that shares commonalities with the Buen Vivir proposal, which I further explain in chapter seven.
**Buen Vivir**, for example, is an alternative to development proposed by Andean indigenous communities that have been expanding into social and political movements (Acosta, 2008). It is a proposal that celebrates the relationships that allow existence and is guided by "certain ideas originating in traditional Andean knowledge, focused on the well-being of people and defenders of another type of relationship with the environment" (Gudynas & Acosta, 2011, p. 76). It proposes a welfare project that is disconnected or independent of economic growth, where there is room for the spiritual and affective, and where the enjoyment of the life of some beings (human or non-human)
should not imply or lead to the suffering of other beings. It is an alternative that is diverse and open, built with further knowledge and sensitivities that dialogue and are subject to continuous transformation. It could guide the achievement of different rights, such as health, education, or housing. For the sociologist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, the Buen Vivir is a rationality that is not exclusive to indigenous communities but to "all forms of organisation that seek to solve common problems through common efforts" (2015, p. 149). Likewise, Rivera Cusicanqui warns that Buen Vivir is a proposal that, when put into practice and translated to public policies, requires specific guidelines or certain indications so that the contents of the public policies indeed evoke and pursue Buen Vivir.

Rivera Cusicanqui's suggestion does not only apply to the Buen Vivir proposal, as any other alternative to development requires guides and tools, so that the alternatives go from being ideas to being realities, which could also be interpreted as forms or suggestions to go from those imaginary realities to tangible realities of well-being. I want to clarify that this does not imply that radical socio-environmental transformations will be possible only if specific steps are followed as a recipe but that particular perspectives or proposals exist that are based on fundamental principles for the shift towards a world where many worlds fit, as diversity, justice, creativity, joy, and care.

I propose that the ethics of care and food sovereignty as perspectives that can support this social transformation, on the one hand, because these proposals also point out the flaws in the development discourse and extractivist practices those communities and academics, and even CEPAL (Economic Commission for Latin America)⁴⁶, have reported.

On the other hand, both the ethics of care and food sovereignty highlight the importance of the everyday and propose that the most intimate scales are essential places to trace relationships and explore how relationships sustain life on a day-to-day basis, as well as a place

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⁴⁶ According to Gudynas, a remarkable event occurred at the beginning of 2020 regarding the development discourse in Latin America. The secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) admitted in an interview that the development strategies that had been followed in the continent were exhausted (Gudynas, 2020).
that shows other not so visible effects of territorial transformations, such as those reported in this chapter.

The ethics of care, by highlighting and emphasising the power of care relationships and networks, problematises the neoliberal economy by questioning whether well-being would be equivalent to the “principles of individualism, egalitarianism, universalism, and of a society organised exclusively around principles of efficiency, competition, and a ‘right’ price for everything” (Lawson, 2007, p. 3). However, questioning these neoliberal and predatory principles involves the embodied practices that bring principles into action (Coulson, 2016), which leads us to search and reflect on how care practices are incorporated into everyday life, as well as ways in which we can evaluate how much care a relationship is receiving or losing, either between people or between humans and non-humans.

On the other hand, I propose food sovereignty as a valuable ally in translating ethics of care principles to practice. Food sovereignty (see chapter two for a detailed explanation of this concept) relies on principles, arguments, and practices that highlight the need to celebrate and promote human and non-human relationships and put relationships and care in the middle of the systems, fully resonating with the ethic of care and the importance to join different voices to construct better futures.

Associating food sovereignty with ethics of care is worthy not only because of the value and centrality that food sovereignty gives to human and non-human relationships (Iles & Montenegro de Wit, 2013; Schiavoni, 2016) but also because its principles and practices can bring tools to recognise and examine care networks that occur at different scales and daily, besides highlighting the importance of the quotidian. Authors such as Shiavoni (2016), Iles and Montenegro (2013, 2015), Bezner (2019a), and Soper (2020) have pointed out the great value that everyday life, day-to-day actions, would have in the construction of food sovereignty and how from everyday actions it is possible to challenge the power structures that sustain so many forms of oppression, including hunger.

As presented in the following chapters of this thesis, the quotidian is a powerful sphere for transformations where food can fuel radical changes to make a world where many worlds fit.
5.7. Chapter summary

In this chapter, I explored how large-scale extractivist activities and their imagined realities in La Guajira have broken or destroyed the relationships and networks of care that are woven among the Wayúu, between the Wayúu and other communities, and between and within the non-human, and especially the networks that support the Wayúu food systems and food sovereignty.

I emphasised that the development discourse has been solid and adaptable enough to continue despite its failure, thanks to its promises of progress, well-being, and sustainable development, which Ulloa calls imaginary realities (2021). Complementarily, I take Segato's idea about the historical project of things and the historical project of ties (2021) to expose how large-scale extractivism and its imagined realities in La Guajira have given priority to the project of things, and this has radically transformed the territorial dynamics, the relationship and care forms and networks between and among the Wayúu and the non-human, creating a relationship sacrifice zone.

I proposed that the imaginary realities have at least three main characteristics or logics that result in the creation of relationships sacrifice zones: i) break relationships among humans, among non-humans, and between humans and non-humans; ii) propose that relationships and care networks can be ‘replaced’ with welfare programs and because iii) imaginary realities quickly adapt and appropriate dominant discourses (i.e., climate change) to remain in force and continue to support new forms of large-scale extractivism.

I used three large extractivist projects in La Guajira to exemplify these characteristics. Salinas de Manaure illustrates how these extractive and dispossession processes or activities break relations among the Wayúu between the indigenous communities of the region and between the Wayúu and the non-human. Then, through the Cerrejón mine, I showed how extractivism despises the relationships it breaks or harms and indicates that these can be ‘replaced’ by programs and projects with ‘social responsibility’, which also creates dependency relationships. Finally, through the Guajira Azul project, I presented how extractivism has been sustained through the creation of imaginary realities of progress, well-being, or sustainability that, although seem harmless or even positive, continue to be based on the same logic of expropriation, dispossession, and accumulation, and
generate or perpetuate negative impacts on care networks and relationships that exist among communities and the non-human.

In the last section, I echoed authors such as Ulloa (2021), Gudynas (2020, 2021), Acosta (2008; 2011), Escobar (2018), and Svampa (2015), who indicate the urgency of making way for radical socio-environmental transformations that go beyond extractivism and lead to living *vidas sabrosas* within the existing planetary limits, for which I propose that the perspectives of the ethics of care and food sovereignty can be illuminating and valuable. On the one hand, these perspectives illustrate how extractivist activities attack and destroy life-sustaining relationships, reinforcing the need for radical transformations that put relationships at the centre. On the other hand, both the ethics of care and food sovereignty invite us to focus on what happens in the most intimate spheres of life, such as everyday life and the household, which I considered the place where territorial transformations are first reflected, as well as the first place of resistance, and from where it is possible to begin to recover the project of ties, reversing the relationship sacrifice zones.

In the next chapter, I explore how the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira illustrates how the handling of this situation by institutional actors is strongly linked to the idea that relationships can be replaced by welfare measures, which are clear examples of *bad care* government policies that end up aggravating the Wayúu crisis.
6. Food sovereignty for managing a food crisis: the role of care

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I pointed out that one of the main characteristics of extractivist projects in La Guajira is that their activities and logic destroy or affect care networks and suggest that care can be replaced by compensation and social responsibility programs and projects, which in La Guajira means schools, roads, churches, jobs and mainly, food and water delivery programs to those communities most impacted by these projects. However, this extractivist argument ignores two crucial points: that care networks and relationships are not replaceable or equivalent to welfare programs and that not all care is good: bad care exists. In this chapter, I take La Guajira’s humanitarian crisis to illustrate what bad care consists of and how it could be interfering with the (re)construction of the Wayúu food systems, where food sovereignty, once again, represents a path for systems transformations.

6.2. A humanitarian crisis is a care crisis

In September 2019, I visited Leonardo at his house in Maicao, another of the main cities of La Guajira. He is a Wayúu artist and is part of the Junta Mayor de Palabreros. This Wayúu organisation accompanies the conflicts between Wayúu rancherías throughout the territory (equivalent to the lawyers for Western culture). Due to the organisation’s function, this group of palabreros and other accompanying persons have travelled throughout the department, mediating conflicts and seeking their resolution, making them great connoisseurs of what is happening in La Guajira. During that visit, I was particularly interested in asking his opinion regarding the measures installed by the Colombian government and other organisations interested in helping to respond to the 2014 food crisis in the department.

Leonardo told me that he had felt excluded from the crisis management process since the Wayúu food practices and items (such as their diet, preparation and different cultural meaning of food) are not considered or valued by food institutions and companies.
According to him, institutions that responded to the crisis, such as the ICBF (Colombian Family Welfare Institute), argued that food preparations commonly consumed by the Wayúu people, such as mazamorra (a mixture of corn with goat's milk), did not meet the nutritional requirements to be considered a proper meal, suggesting its replacement by Bienestarina47, a multivitamin powder distributed by the ICBF for more than 70 years to children and people at risk of malnutrition and which, according to this institution, it is an ideal source of minerals and vitamins.

Likewise, Leonardo expressed discontent and rejection of the proposals of certain institutes and allied parties to respond to the crisis. He mentioned how several proposals from these institutions are disconnected from the Wayúu reality, overlook the urgency for proposals with long-term results, are inefficient and indifferent to the needs of this community, and are without space to include solutions proposed by the Wayúu. This segment of our conversation brings an idea about the reason for his displeasure with the institutional responses in the face of the crisis:

For example, Cerrejón designed and installed an experimental farm in our territory to teach us (to the Wayúu) to grow potatoes, and we never understood that. This idea is absurd; I mean, produce potatoes here? Why this exotic idea of asking us to grow potatoes in a desert instead of inviting us to talk about corn, how we manage to grow it through the year, and what we do with corn? (Maicao, September 2019)

Who would think of planting potatoes here, in a desert (Figure 6-1)? Proposing that idea while the communities are facing a humanitarian crisis is a mockery of the needs and problems of the Wayúu.

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47 Bienestarina is a ICBF product defined as "a high nutritional supplement produced by the ICBF since 1976 for the most vulnerable population of the country and is part of the institutional programs. It is a precooked food based on a mixture of cereals, legumes and powdered whole milk, with vitamins and minerals and essential fatty acids and easy to prepare. It contains amino-chelated micronutrients that improve absorption in the beneficiary population and has an adequate balance of essential amino acids” (Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, n.d.).
Leonardo’s anecdote summarises the disconnection and insensitivity with which the food organisations and other companies dealt with this crisis and the focus of their interventions. For these food organisations, companies, and the national government, this crisis was due to a lack of food, an event that could be managed rationally as if a crisis were a linear event with previously established steps or stations that follow a sequence. Likewise, this understanding of a crisis corresponds to what academics such as Layla Branicki - inspired by the crisis management ideas of Ian I. Mitroff - have defined as a rationalist approach to crisis management (Branicki, 2020), in which crisis management should follow established steps: first problem identification, followed by mitigation, and ending with recovery and repair. According to Mitroff’s argument, crises can be understood as manageable, linear, temporal situations where risks and outcomes can be measurable and quantifiable and for which the final goal is to return to the previous state before the crisis event, something like a return to ‘normality’.
However, the fact that this rational approach has been the most used by food organisations in La Guajira does not mean that it is the best approach or the most accepted by the affected community; neither means that this rationalist approach works. Despite several interventions, hunger remains a significant problem in La Guajira because this crisis management is inappropriate.

La Guajira food crisis marks a point of inflexion and reflection that indicates that new ways of responding to a crisis are urgently required, as well as new policies and perspectives capable of dealing with this (unresolved) crisis but also able to avoid coming crises.

Looking for alternatives starts by recognising that "crises are complex, multi-faceted, and ill-defined systems of highly interconnected problems” (Alpaslan & Mitroff, 2021, p. 1) and agreeing that it must be possible to face a crisis in different ways. Still, it is necessary to put on other lenses to see the situation's complexity, identify and discuss previous responses and flaws, and point out different solutions.

The need for new ways of facing a crisis resonates with the call of feminist authors such as Farhana Sultana (2021a, 2021b), Sandra Ezquerra (2011), Yayo Herrero (2017; 2020), and Silvia Federici (2013), who have argued that a feminist perspective of the crisis would bring new solutions, would visualise other origins, give more voice to those who suffer these events and, above all, transform the systems that produce and sustain crises. Mainly, the ethics of care and the feminist political ecology have emphasised that a final crisis goal cannot be to return to the previous state but the system’s transformation because, as lucidly said during the Chilean protests in 2019, “we will not get back to normal because normal was the problem” (no volveremos a la normalidad porque la normalidad era el problema). According to the ethics of care and feminist political ecology approaches, a crisis illustrates the failures and vulnerabilities of the systems but also is an event that could open spaces to recognise, perceive or create other alternatives, other ways to recover and sustain those systems, calling for creativity, diversity, and other realities conception.

In this chapter, I try to respond to two calls: to the feminist appeal to identify or create alternatives to manage crises and to the ethics of care claims about giving rise and open spaces to ethics and care for
crisis management (Alpaslan & Mitroff, 2021; Branicki, 2020; FitzGerald, 2020; Simola, 2003). In this sense, in this thesis chapter, I propose that the ethics of care is a framework that identifies other origins, problems, and solutions for the crisis in La Guajira. I highlight how a feminist political ecology perspective can stress that crisis management should start from the fact that crisis effects are neither neutral nor homogeneous for those who experience them. Likewise, I explore how the ethics of care can challenge the rational ways in which the La Guajira crisis has been managed, offering other logic, measures, and mainly other final goals, that indeed welcome other voices and experiences from those who have lived the crisis, processes that could take place that recognise the centrality of care and relationships for life-sustaining and transformative power (Held, 2006).

I propose that food sovereignty brings a sensitive and helpful perspective and practice to envisage crisis management guided by an ethics of care perspective, mainly because food sovereignty practices can encompass primary ethics of care claims about locating care and relationships in the centre (Sachs, 2020; Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014), and with this, food sovereignty arguments and practices could potentially transform systems, especially, or starting with, the food system.

This chapter is divided into three sections: in the first part, I describe the main food policies proposed by the state institutions, international food organisations, companies, and NGOs during the La Guajira crisis in 2014, signalling the institutional core concerns and their strategies to solve the crisis, and pointing out how these are mainly based on the food security model. A second section aims to point out how La Guajira food policies could be a representation of what academics such as Joan Tronto and Annemarie Mol have called bad care (Mol, 2008; J. Tronto, 2010), which also reflects the pretension of trying to manage a humanitarian crisis under a rational approach. Finally, I present how food sovereignty could answer the feminist and ethics of care calls when indicating that locating care, relationships, emotions, context, and diversity in the centre could be tremendously transformative.
6.3. Food institutions and organisations: their understanding of the crisis and their (bad) proposals to solve it

Before presenting some food policies implemented in La Guajira during the 2014 crisis, it is pertinent to consider what political ecology warns us about socio-ecological crises, especially from a feminist political ecology perspective. According to this field, a starting point is to recognise that the effects of a crisis are not equally distributed within a society or community, and then intersectional analyses are central. Intersectionality is a theory developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (Crenshaw, 1989), an African-black feminist lawyer, who proposed a framework that recognises and analyses the multiple social and identity factors intersection-like race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and/or age-, besides individual socioeconomic status, that shape the personal response to everyday activities and could define people's capacity and opportunities to overcome emergencies, as crisis events (Smith, 2019; Woods, 2019).

The feminist political ecology has suggested that gender is a dimension that greatly defines people's capacity to respond, adapt and recover from a crisis. According to the feminist geographer Diane Rocheleau, gender provides a particular understanding of different aspects of the relationship between nature and society (Rocheleau, 1995; Rocheleau et al., 2004), a position that brings different perspectives and experiences about environmental and political issues, where gender could define how people could access resources and experiences different forms of violence gender-related. For example, Diana Ojeda and Eloísa Berman-Arévalo, in their work on oil palm plantations in Colombia, showed how a gender analysis revealed that the activities behind this monoculture involve violence against women such as sexual harassment, highlighted the precarious working conditions in these plantations and the unpaid work that women and children carry out on these crops and the emotional effects of water contamination by pesticides (Berman-Arévalo & Ojeda, 2020).

Different organisations and researchers have reported these differentiated effects of the crisis on women. According to international organisations and researchers (Jerneck, 2018; Lafrenière et al., 2019; WHO, 2014), women, children, and the elderly population are harder hit by crises, including climate change.
impacts such as floods and droughts, eventualities such as tsunamis or earthquakes, water and food crisis, becoming more vulnerable to illnesses and having a reduced life expectancy compared with other groups as men.

It does not mean that women are naturally more susceptible to these risks for being women, but because of the gendered division of labour, power, and resources (Pearse, 2017). For example, in some contexts, women have less access to information and educational resources that could help them cope with risks (Agarwal, 2014), showing how their limited technological and education skills are defined by access opportunities, not by their capabilities.

Gendered blindness could reproduce and reinforce inequalities and exacerbate crisis scenarios when the need for an intersectional analysis and research is unreocgnised, and gender is assumed as a neutral category. To some extent, institutional responses are failing to solve current food crises and prevent future ones by overlooking the particular ways that a food crisis impacts women- despite the extensive research and evidence supporting this (FAO et al., 2020; Ni Aolain, 2011; Smith, 2019; Sultana, 2018)-, as well as ignoring the forms in which women, children and older adults are crucial for the food system maintenance and community nutrition.

Women and girls constitute 60% of the population facing hunger and malnutrition, and the proportion is even more considerable in poor, less educated, unemployed, and marginalised women (CARE, 2020). As mentioned by the international policies researcher Sophie Harman, “women act as a ‘shock absorber’ in periods of crisis (...) Women absorb the burden of care through self-exploitation (leading to direct and indirect health impacts on women as a gender), reliance on family, or outsourcing care roles to poorer women” (2016, p. 525). In La Guajira’s case, Wayúu women and children are particularly affected by this hunger crisis (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2014). Part of their strategies to cope with this event was to change their food dynamics inside their households and communities by, for example, eating less (or not eating) to ensure their relatives' food intake (fieldwork observations, Cabo de la Vela, June- July 2019). Other studies have also reported this tactic during crisis times (Aromolaran, 2004; Béné et al., 2015; Olum et al., 2017).

However, although the national government and food organisations were somehow conscious of the differential effects of the crisis among
the Wayúu people (i.e., institutions recognised that children and women must be the prioritised population for attention), the way that these institutions responded to this event seems to ignore this difference and revealed that Colombian and international institutions approach this crisis as an event where effects were symmetrically distributed among the population, implementing homogenised, standardised and decontextualised plans, resembling and reproducing a rationalist crisis management approach.

According to Ian Mitroff, crises are “disasters precipitated by people, organisational structures, economics, and technology that cause extensive damage to human life and natural and social environments. They inevitably debilitate both the financial structure and the reputation of a large organisation” (Branicki, 2020, p. 875). Mitroff suggest that a crisis can be managed by following five steps or stages: i) signal detection, ii) prevention/preparedness, iii) damaged containment, iv) recovery and v) learning (Paraskevas, 2013).

As Layla Branicki has pointed out, this classic model for crisis management has served as a guide for a rationalist approach (Branicki, 2020). According to this approach, crises are perceived as linear situations with an initial stage (detection of signals) and a final one (learning), where it is possible to restrict what situation/measure/result would define the end of the crisis. It is also an approach that assumes that it is possible to prepare for crises and proposes that estimating this type of event's social, ecological and economic outcomes is feasible.

Likewise, as Branicki highlights, crises guided by the rational approach are conceived as events that can be ‘managable’, a role that teams of experts in crisis management would fulfil, such as “CEO and top executives from operations, legal, human resources, management information systems, security and safety, environmental health, public affairs, and finance” (Branicki, 2020, p. 876).

Understanding crises as a linear, structured, manageable process that can (or should) be guided by a specialists group leave no room for political ecology and feminism arguments, such as the differentiated effects of crises on the population (Sultana, 2011; Ulloa, 2007), the connections between distinct crises (Sultana, 2021b), the power asymmetries that are reinforced during and due to crises (Pascoe & Stripling, 2020), or the inequalities that deepen with the crisis or with
the mismanagement of it (Loftus & Sultana, 2020). Regarding these points, the analysis of La Guajira crisis management demonstrates that both the national government and food institutions (such as NGOs, companies, foundations, and international food organisations) ignored these feminist warnings and guided their response to this crisis with a rational approach.

For this study, I evaluated the response of the most relevant food organisations and institutions in La Guajira by analysing the policies, plans, and programs these institutions implemented during the crisis (see Table 2 and Table 3 in the appendix section). The first point that guided this analysis was to explore what was, according to these institutions, the cause of the humanitarian crisis, followed by evaluating whether these organisations considered the heterogeneity of effects that a crisis can produce depending on affected people's position (their gender, sex, class, etc.), as well as the defined or expected objectives of these food plans and how these organisations measured the impacts of their proposals.

Concerning the first point about how food organisations understood the crisis, it is worth noting that although hunger has been a recurring and visible figure among the Guajiros and Wayúu people, the characteristics and magnitude of what occurred in 2014 represented a series of unusual and challenging obstacles to which the Wayúus were unable to respond simultaneously and effectively, such as climate change effects, massive migration from Venezuelans to Colombia, violence from different sources (Colombian guerrillas, paramilitary groups, urban armed groups, drug dealers) and an unstable national political scenario (see context chapter to a further description), which ended up worsening the humanitarian crisis, besides evidencing a fragile, vulnerable and unequal Wayúu food system.

The multiple crises that coincided in La Guajira in 2014 were perceived differently by the food organisations and the Colombian State. First, the national government used climate change and the Venezuelan situation to justify the magnitude of the food crisis and

48 For example, in 1776, the colonel Antonio de Arévalo affirmed that “the Guajiros are always needing food”. Similarly, the Swedish researcher Gustaf Bolinder filmed malnourished children in La Guajira in 1920, and in 1973, the French ethnologist Michel Perrinen documentary "The way of the dead Indians", portrayed hunger as a mythical Wayúu being (Bonet-Morón & Hahn-De-Castro, 2017).
explain why the government's actions could not contain such significant global crises. Latterly, and mainly thanks to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) demand against the Colombian government (see context section), the Colombian government actively responded to this crisis - which had even been reported since 2004 by the Wayúu communities and institutions such as the Ombudsman's Office\textsuperscript{49} (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2014)- creating a significant budget\textsuperscript{50} with resources coming from the public, private, national, and international organisms.

During this time, aiming to develop and implement hunger relief policies for La Guajira, the government began a set of alliances with governmental institutions, foundations, and NGOs. International organisations launched their projects or coordinated actions with governmental institutions\textsuperscript{51}. The United Nations created a permanent headquarters in Riohacha, where ONU, UNICEF, UNDP and WFP offices are located for La Guajira (Figure 6-2).

\textsuperscript{49}The Ombudsman Office in an acute document condemned a “systematic and massive infringements to principles and fundamental rights, physical integrity, health and social security, to the vital minimum amount of drinking water and balanced nutrition for indigenous children, (...) for the State lack of protection, headed by the government, both national and regional”. About nutritional issues in La Guajira, this document highlighted that it is a particularly serious situation as “for almost a decade the department has already shown, even in State reports, serious food security concerns” (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2014).

\textsuperscript{50} According to ICBF, from 2013 to 2015, USD$50 million were inverted in contracts with La Guajira foundations working with early childhood (el Tiempo Newspaper, 2015).

\textsuperscript{51} Many national and international institutions and organizations arrived at La Guajira or strength their presence in the territory. However, for this case, there are going to be considered those with a stronger presence in La Guajira or those internationally recognized.
For the Colombian state and food organisations that responded to the crisis, and even for the IACHR, the root of La Guajira crisis- or the crisis signal detection in Mitroff’s terms (Paraskevas, 2013)- was lack of food and water. For these institutions, guaranteeing water and food distribution and availability were the paths for action formulation and the way to resolve this crisis. This approach based on guaranteeing availability echoes one of the most representative food security pillars. Under this model, hunger tends to be related to a lack of food (Clapp, 2014), leaving aside other equal or more relevant factors, such as socio-political or environmental issues, on which food sovereignty has insisted.

As mentioned in chapter 2, food security is a model proposed and promoted by global food organizations such as the FAO or the WFP (2009) that guide public food policies at different scales. In the case of Colombia, its food policies are also mainly directed by the food security approach, giving special attention to guaranteeing food availability. For instance, the IACHR indicated that the Wayúu people's malnutrition corresponds to a lack of food and water scarcity...
The Ombudsperson office shared this crisis origin, indicating in the humanitarian crisis report that the Wayúu people's nutritional situation could be attributed to the county water scarcity reported since the 2000s (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2014). The WFP, FAO, foundations, and NGOs interviewed during fieldwork also recognised the relationship between water scarcity and nutritional problems.

A Catholic foundation officer mentioned during a conversation about the hunger roots in La Guajira that the “La Guajira hunger problem responds to the Venezuelan situation and the remarkable drought here” (Foundation officer, Cabo de la Vela, July 2019).

When asked about the origins of the crisis in La Guajira, one of the FAO officials stated that the lack of water is a crucial factor:

(\textit{La Guajira}) is one of the departments with the most significant problems with extreme drought. A third (5 out of 15) of the municipalities are in extreme drought. Of these five municipalities, practically four are without any possibility of production (Uribia, Manaure, part of Maicao and more than half of Albania). (FAO, Riohacha. September 2019)

Likewise, this official also mentioned that Venezuelan migration partly explained the crisis in the department:

\textit{There is a problem with how the number of families is increasing in each community (Wayúu) at the rural level. If before there were no (resources) for the 30 (members), there would be much less for the 200-something.} (FAO, Riohacha. September 2019)

For one of the WFP officials interviewed for this research, the crisis in La Guajira originated and will continue due to climate change, migration, lack of water, and because there are no State policies to deal with the crisis:

\textit{I think it can further sharpen the issue (the crisis in La Guajira). One, due to climate change, there are no longer regular rains, affecting food production. Two, because of the Venezuelan migrants and returnees, the crisis at the border can further exacerbate the issue of malnutrition in the communities because there is a larger population, more significant pressure on livelihoods, water, and even on the territory, it can create conflict between families and exacerbate the issue of food. The}
lack of water significantly affects the issue of food production. And above all that, there is no clear department policy that can counteract this situation. (PMA. Riohacha, September 2019)

This official indicated an important point: there are unclear State policies in Colombia for crisis management, and those that exist follow a rational approach that victimises and reduces people to numbers (malnourished, dead, recovered). When following a rational crisis management approach, food institutions aim to ‘quantify’ hunger through an undernourished population census and a set of anthropometrical measures to assess the nutritional status of the community and then have some ‘numbers’ to determine their achievements.

To illustrate how organisations and Wayúu established the magnitude of the problem, the organisations and institutions established proposals and programs to avoid future deaths and recover 7,000 Wayúu children facing malnutrition. However, for Wayúu communities, these numbers do not correspond to reality. As a Wayúu leader related, “the national government talked about setting a nutritional recuperation program to benefit 7,000 children; our census indicates that 34,000 children are facing severe (nutritional) problems. Then we ask: what about the other ones? It seems that they (the State) do not want to look to La Guajira properly” (el Tiempo Newspaper, 2015).

That is, the State was allocating resources and effort to attend to only one-fifth of the total population affected, ignoring 27,000 remaining cases that could notably increase and force to adopt urgency measures for malnutrition response. This type of omission, being unable to properly determine the number of people facing problems and allocating insufficient resources for communities’ issues, was described in an interview with Lucia, a Wayúu woman and coordinator of one of the ICBF schools located near Riohacha:

(The State) has an outdated database. Look, for example, in the 1987 census, we were seven people, and today, in 2019 (according to national population statistics), we are still the same seven people, (it is like) no one was born, and no one died. That was a struggle (with the government) because, look, we are more; you cannot send a resource for seven people when we are already more than 300 people. (Guayamaral community, September 2019).
Concerning the anthropometrical measures, in La Guajira- as well as in other regions- height-weight indexes/relationships, children mortality, and prevalence of some non-communicable diseases such as anaemia or diabetes\textsuperscript{52} among the population are the most frequently used indicators that help to frame a nutritional problem, stress the urgency level or indicate warning signs. Under this rational logic, changes in these indicators could represent progress, setbacks, or stagnation in the effects of the policies implemented in the communities and signal whether or not the crisis has worsened or improved. That is, under this rational approach followed by La Guajira food organisations, the end of the humanitarian crisis would be equivalent to individuals in the affected community reaching an indicated weight or achieving an ideal weight-to-height ratio. Once the Wayúu community achieves specific anthropometrical values, the end of the crisis could be declared.

In this regard, when I asked one of the WFP officials who determined the exit of this organisation from a community, he replied that:

\textit{We (WFP) make an exit plan for the communities when (the communities) have exceeded their level of vulnerability. (Riohacha, September 2019).}

For this organisation, the level of vulnerability is understood as a weight/height ratio. Once the population targeted by a project reaches a certain measure or value, the organisation interprets that number as the end of the ‘vulnerability period’. These organisations need to understand that much more than a good weight/height ratio is required for a population or individual to stop being vulnerable.

\textsuperscript{52}In this point is worth noticing that although exist commonalities and join goals about what an optimal nutritional status means, and these nutritional indicators are useful to point out problematic situations, as their use made with different actors establish a kind of common language and solutions to specify targets (i.e., increase population weight or reduce child mortality among different people), some of these indicators cannot be homogenized to the whole population. Individual nutritional status responds to their food preferences, possibilities and by the type of food relationship, as well that cultural, environmental, economic, social and genetical characteristic, particularities that must be considered for problem framing.
Food programs and plans implemented in La Guajira failed to consider systemic and historical violence, heterogeneity, particularities, and positions faced by the Wayúu people around the crisis. As presented in Table 2 and Table 3 (see Appendices), few organisations include, for example, diverse and local foods; none emphasised the need for fresh food, and none supported the reconstruction of food exchange networks between the Wayúu and other indigenous groups. Only a couple encouraged the creation of participatory spaces in which the Wayúu could speak and present their perceptions and experiences of what was happening to them. Only the ICBF cared about designing food programs with different approaches for the Wayúu children. In addition, none of the State or international organisations and institutions clearly and directly indicated the effects of extractivism in the La Guajira crisis (see chapters three and five).

As previously mentioned, crisis effects are not neutral: gender, socioeconomic situation, race, or age define the ability to face and overcome a crisis. Wayúu communities are not equals, and neither is their experience of crisis; there are differences between rancherías and between Wayúu located in the middle of the mountains compared to those who live in the cities or on the beach; there is also diversity within the same community and among the same family. Not all community members are young and healthy men; there are boys, girls, babies, adolescents, women, men, non-binary people, older people, and healthy and unhealthy Wayúu. Their socioeconomic situation also varies, as does their educational level. No food organisation has formulated policies to encompass Wayúu communities’ diversity.

Still, this analysis also showed that following a rational approach and concentrating efforts on food supply and reaching specific desired numbers and values (i.e., number of kilos or centimetres) does not necessarily guarantee or imply the resolution of a crisis. A follow-up report on the humanitarian crisis carried out by Human Rights Watch and the Johns Hopkins Centre for Humanitarian Health showed how the number of malnourished Wayúu children continued to increase despite efforts and the urgency of the situation (Human Rights Watch, 2020). According to this report, "in 2019, the official rate of deaths from malnutrition among children under five years of age in La Guajira was almost six times the national rate" (Human Rights Watch, 2020, para. 7).
Similarly, one of the last reports on the nutritional situation of the department carried out by the organisation Dejusticia (one of the most important centres for legal and social studies in Colombia) concluded that poverty and malnutrition rates in La Guajira continue to increase year after year, arguing that this is the result of inequalities in all its forms. The Wayúu nutritional status will not improve if other determining factors, such as regional water access, basic sanitation and education, are not addressed (Gutiérrez-Martínez et al., 2021).

These reports and investigations - as well as this research - are evidence that the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira continues. Institutions monitoring the nutritional status of the Wayúu showed that massive investments, structural plans, and the great attention that the region was receiving (elements that could seem ideal and decisive to end any problem) are insufficient to overcome the Wayúu crisis. This is further supported by interviews with research participants and indicates that a rationalist crisis management and food and water provision cannot respond to the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira.

It is undeniable that thousands of lives in La Guajira were saved thanks to this type of rationalist approach combined with a food security model - and this is undoubtedly valuable - although this noble achievement should not prevent us from evaluating and exploring the effects of humanitarian aid on communities and the networks, connections, and motivations that are woven around humanitarian crises, that are not always as noble or well-intentioned as appear. De facto, as I will present in the next section, even the best intentions can generate unintended impacts, worsen the situation of the already affected people, and even sustain and strengthen social inequalities.

6.4. Not all care is good: Bad care policies during La Guajira’s humanitarian crisis

I argued that one of the reasons why a rational approach did not work for this humanitarian crisis is that this approach failed to identify the roots of the crisis. Although it may seem logical to think that a food crisis is ‘solved’ by providing food, Christopher B. Barret and Daniel G. Maxwell stressed that much of the unwanted effects of humanitarian aid occur because "food aid has long been based on a
false assumption that the best way to fight hunger is with food" (2005, p. 337).

Simplifying a hunger crisis to an issue of providing enough food is very convenient for the national government, institutions, and companies (mainly the extractivist ones), which could replace decades of violence in all its forms, environmental impacts, unfulfilled promises of development, progress, and wellbeing, for food packages and calories provision promises. This was the case for those Wayúu families who received monthly food parcels from organisations and institutions in La Guajira (Figure 6-3).

Figure 6-3. Wayúu people are reclaiming a monthly food parcel from a foundation. Cabo de la Vela, August 2019. Photo: Daniela De Fex-Wolf

Exploring the effects of private sector intervention in Malawi's nutrition policies, Raj Patel et al. stated that this nutritionist logic has
imposed “a set of ideas and practices that seek to end hunger not by directly addressing poverty but by prioritising the delivery of individual molecular components of food to those lacking them” (2015, p. 22). This approach has allowed exploitation to be survivable for those who suffer from it.

Pretending that hunger, a situation with deep roots in inequality, oppression, and all kinds of violence, could be solved with industrialised food packages loaded with minerals and vitamins has also generated the adoption of a homogenous diet and standardised policies, most of them designed under a food security approach, where eating seems as a survival process, and not as a broad human dimension, which intersects with different social axes and allows relationships between different worlds (human and non-human) and geographies. Food organisations and institutions end up falling for the same foods, justified by the same medical concepts, ignoring and leaving no place for other equally valid and efficient ways of dealing with hunger coming from different perspectives, such as the indigenous ones.

In La Guajira, food organisations failed to consider that the Wayúus—probably like all indigenous communities in the world—have suffered several extreme events of starvation and drought throughout their existence. They ignored that inhabiting remote, complex and challenging places, such as La Guajira deserts, is a living and irrefutable proof that the Wayúus are a competent community, adapted to living in desert conditions. They know how to do it and have done it for centuries. As I further present in chapter seven, the Wayúu people can (re) build and transform their systems; they are an autopoietic community.

None of the organisations acknowledge this experience or seek to ask the Wayúu communities how they have overcome previous crises or what food they prefer. This would help them to learn from this community and generate solutions appropriate for the Wayúus and their contexts. At this point, food organisations in La Guajira have continually failed. Their ignorance of the Wayúu people and territory has resulted in inefficient food plans and worsened the nutritional situation of those most affected.

Another serious problem with how aid organisations have approached the humanitarian crisis is that they do not give a voice to all members involved, including communities. Only certain people or
some institutions with specific titles and from certain places are listened to and followed by the national government and other institutions. At the same time, communities, those that live and survive crises, are seen as simple aid receptacles. This perception not only takes power away from people for everyday decisions such as what to eat and why, but it also interrupts and denies any network built around food.

None of the analysed proposals contemplated the possibility of creating networks between dispersed Wayúu communities in the territory nor aimed to re-establish previous connections with nearby indigenous groups, such as those that inhabit the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, with whom the Wayúu have a great affinity and with who, as I presented in the previous chapter, already had a network that supported part of their food sovereignty. None of the organisations and institutions attending the 2014 crisis in La Guajira included policies or plans that highlighted the diversity of networks, people, and food behind the Wayúu diet and whose strengthening would support rapid and effective response and attention to future crises in La Guajira.

The food policy analysis revealed that the rational approach followed by the food institutions’ failure to detect the roots of the La Guajira crisis (conveniently reducing it to a food problem) and unsuccessfully implemented policies that sought numbers rather than lasting and worthy systems transformations led to an inability to address the humanitarian crisis adequately. This rational approach also failed by imposing a group of ‘experts’ assumed to know more about crisis management than the Wayúu, who were facing it. Above all, this analysis's main result was that a rational approach to crisis management could not detect that this crisis was a care crisis at its root.

According to the sociologist Sandra Ezquerra, a care crisis refers to "the highlighting and exacerbation of the difficulties of large sectors of the population to take care of themselves, care or be cared for" (2011, p. 176). These difficulties would be the product of imbalances in the distribution of care, which may be the result of new economic systems, environmental, social, or political issues, in which these changes and new dynamics were unable to restructure how tasks are traditionally distributed, generating overloads for some people and a disconnection with the responsibility for care in others. Likewise, Ezquerra suggests that the care crisis is a symptom of the false
dichotomies between the public and the private, the individual and
the collective, the feminine and the masculine, or nature and society,
that are deepening and aggravating.

Part of what I intend to highlight in this chapter is that understanding
the current crises from a care perspective necessarily leads us to
place priorities and focus elsewhere and on other people. For
instance, by analysing the La Guajira crisis from this point of view, it
is possible to identify all the elements that Ezquerra and other
authors have pointed out as symptoms of a care crisis. When
considering the roots of this crisis, it is possible to identify that it
combines elements of colonisation, evangelisation, displacement,
large-scale extractivism, State abandonment, and different types of
violence (see chapters three, five and seven), processes that made it
impossible to perform care practices, and that has been somatised
through the weakening of the Wayúu food systems and community
nutritional problems, and ended up preventing or hindering the ability
and desire of the Wayúu people to care and be cared for.

Likewise, from this perspective, and as I presented in the previous
chapter, the massive transformations in Wayúu territory and life, as a
result of the large extractive projects installed in the department,
were (and will continue to be) incapable of promoting socio-ecological
systems and restructuring dynamics that allows care. As explored
below, these profound changes in the Wayúu lifestyles ended up
overloading the Wayúu people with care tasks, especially women and
children.

When analysing food policies from this care perspective, it was
possible to identify that very few of these organisations and
institutions consider care elements or allow care to be restructured.
For example, as I mentioned earlier, there was no evidence of any
policies implemented during the crisis that sought to create or
restructure relations between the Wayúu and other nearby indigenous
groups. Instead of supporting food system restoration or the inclusion
of different indigenous communities in the crisis management
actions, food institutions focused on delivering food packages and
Bienestarina. In this regard, although it could be thought that food
delivery is a policy designed from a care perspective, a slightly more
profound exploration of this type of approach illustrates an important
point: not all care is good.
Virginia Held has pointed out that putting care at the centre is transformative because it gives voice and attention to people and issues that are generally marginalised. With this, according to Held, the lives of these people would be improved (Held, 2006). However, it is essential to exercise extreme caution because not all care generates positive transformations; bad care exists.

Annemarie Mol (2008), in her book *The Logic of Care: Health and the Problem of Patient Choice*, argues that good care must necessarily be understood as a shared job in which both the person who cares (caregiver) and the person who is cared for (care-receiver) are actively involved in the entire care process. For Mol, good care is contextualised and specific (i.e., a policy implemented in one place cannot necessarily be transferred to another), and it refers to those practices or policies that are willing to change or positively improve the lives of the other. Mol emphasises that this type of care is collective: policies and procedures should not only aim for the autonomy or efficiency of the person being cared for but for the possibility that advances and improvements result from processes and discussions that take place collectively.

Tronto, in agreement with some of Mol’s arguments, stressed that good care must: “first, present a clear account of power in the care relationship and thus a recognition of the need for a politics of care at every level; second, a way for care to remain particularistic and pluralistic; and third, that care should have clear, defined, and acceptable purposes” (J. Tronto, 2010, p. 162). This author highlights that good care must focus on- and continually keep in mind- the power relations between the care receiver and the caregiver, the particularities of each context, and the purpose of this care. Regarding this last element (the purpose), Tronto warns that objectives or goals must be clear and make sense to the parties involved; that is, why, when, where, and to whom specific policies must be well-defined and involve caregivers' and care-receiver’s consensus. On the other hand, for Tronto, bad care (opposite to good care) could be defined as those institutions or policies that “lack adequate accounts of power, purpose, and plurality” (2010, p. 163), where it is possible to identify or perceive abusive or inadequate practices.

When evaluating La Guajira food policies under Mol and Tronto’s good and bad care notions, it was possible to identify that a large part of the responses that were implemented in the department could be
classified as bad care policies. This disconnection with the surroundings and reducing La Guajira crisis to a food supply problem partly responds to the fact that the institutions in La Guajira have limited their policies and crisis management to food security guidelines, focusing on calories supply and following ‘expert’ recommendations, with little room for diversity and community participation.

Food institutions' responses and stories, and observations listened to or noted during my fieldwork showed that, in general, La Guajira crisis responses lacked diverse experiences and solutions and clear and agreed purposes among the caregivers and care-receivers. There was also a lack of response that intended to challenge the different systems of oppression, discrimination, and injustice that the Wayúu face daily.

For example, Leonardo's story, with which this chapter begins, is a reflection of a policy with no agreed purpose between the community and Cerrejón, where this company defined the Wayúus’ needs without considering them and proposing ideas as absurd as growing potatoes in a desert. Another example of bad care concerns the adverse effects of the local and global distribution of certain food items and the failure to take responsibility for policies that harm care receivers. As mentioned by different people during fieldwork, in response to the nutritional crisis in 2014, the ICBF sent a large quantity of Bienestarina to children under nutritional risk but overlooked the need to send drinking water to dissolve this powder. As a result, children's caregivers opted to mix it with the poor-quality water available in their communities. Wayúu children, who were already facing malnutrition, consumed Bienestarina with unpotable water, as the one registered in Figure 6-4, causing severe diarrhoea that aggravated their critical malnutrition status even more than before taking this product. This example illustrates a lack of territorial recognition and a very distant communication between communities and organisations, which increased malnutrition.

As expressed by a regional Ombudsman officer, the “institutions need to know people's territory because when they do not do that, they can produce or exacerbate hunger. For example, why the ICBF keeps
sending food that needs to be refrigerated to Wayúu communities?”53 (Riohacha, August 2019).

Figure 6-4. A freshwater container in a Wayúu community. Cabo de la Vela, August 2019. Photo: Daniela De Fex-Wolf

Also, when analysing the origins of Bienestarina ingredients, it is possible to glimpse that behind so many vitamins and minerals, an old duo acquaintance is hidden: the extractivism and development model. An investigation carried out by the Colectivo Agraria Abya Yala in 2011 showed how soy agribusiness in Argentina has “impacted the daily practices of feeding and daily consumption of the vulnerable population in a country like Colombia” (2011, p. 1). This group of

53This example mentioned by the Ombudsman officer refers to an institutional report that stated that “(ICBF) schools do not have refrigerators, which causes food decomposition, especially meat and dairy products that are eaten by children, leading to intestinal infections and illnesses that are further complicated if children are underweight and undersized for their age” (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2014).
researchers showed how soy produced in highly industrialised monocultures in south Latin America reaches the tables of the most nutritionally vulnerable Colombians through *Bienestarina*. A La Guajira nutritionist, Válerin Saurith, showed that 90% of soy from *Bienestarina* comes from genetically modified seeds and is produced under ethically questionable practices in Argentina and the United States (Saurith, 2020). Food aid should not imply that people elsewhere suffer violence; what we consume should be free from oppression and injustice on all scales and forms.

Another evidence of bad care is related to how caregivers (institutions) overlook the community’s expertise and sustain hierarchies (i.e., the organisation's members have more expertise than the communities). As mentioned by Ana, a Wayúu community leader in a *ranchería* near Maicao, the national government explicitly requests for a Wayúu ‘trained person’ (i.e., someone literate in Spanish) to mediate negotiations with government sectors (Maicao, August 2019). While this could seem like a requirement that benefits Wayúu people when permitting a straightforward conversation between parties, this ‘suggestion’ ignores that it is highly probable that the best-informed person about community issues is the Wayúu traditional leader, which is commonly an elderly person, often illiterate and unable (or does not want) to travel to other cities to negotiate, but in whom the community trusts to represent their voices.

Also related, there were no hunger relief programs executed or strengthened during the La Guajira humanitarian crisis that prioritised the inclusion of people respected by the community, such as *palabreros* (a kind of lawyer inside the Wayúu group) and *ouutsū* (a Wayúu spiritual guide) to spread information about ways to alleviate malnutrition. They also failed to translate communication materials into *Wayúunaiki* (Wayúu language), which would have improved the spread of information and increased community participation among Wayuu people. Suppose policymakers genuinely want to formulate proposals that respond to the community’s needs. In that case, they should include the Wayúu territories' particularities, community hierarchy, and social dynamics and adapt their negotiations to people’s requirements.

The last example of bad care is the failure of crisis response to recognise or even mention the unpaid care work that Wayúu women did, neither in official documents nor during interviews with
representatives of these organisations. Likewise, in the records and the interviews, the gendered impacts of this food crisis were not discussed. These organisations ignored that women and children generally perform and administer food-related activities. During a food crisis, these groups are the first ones to note the increased risk of reduced food supply and the first ones to seek alternatives and plan crisis management (Cock, 2016). Women and children are the “shock absorber of this crisis” (Cock, 2016, p. 121); food organisations should particularly support caregivers.

Maria, a Wayúu woman and mother of five children living in Cabo de la Vela municipality (a central touristic point in La Guajira), said that during lean times, including the 2015 crisis, she was forced to diversify their income sources (all of them tourism-related). She needed to use more time to create artisanal products and work as a cook for tourists while simultaneously continuing with her unpaid care duties, which included preparing and feeding her children and husband and taking care of sick and older people while her kids searched for water in distant places. With this, she doubled her already hard and long working day.

In La Guajira’s case, children are also ‘shock absorbers’, as they are their mothers’ right hand for household duties, including fetching water (a process that can also increase their daily energy expenditure) and taking care of younger siblings. They also consume reduced food portions during periods of food scarcity, thus experiencing an increased risk of contracting digestive illnesses (linked to poor quality drinking water and limited access to appropriate sanitation facilities) (fieldwork observations, Cabo de la Vela, June-July 2019). However, despite this, no food policies or humanitarian programs in La Guajira valued children and women’s contributions and roles in the food system and family nutrition nor registered women’s overcharge during periods of crisis.

Regarding the gender-health interrelation, no humanitarian response in La Guajira included issues around sexual and reproductive healthcare for Wayúu women and adolescent girls, such as access to family planning, safe abortion facilities54, counselling, contraceptives,

54 Despite abortion is legal in Colombia since 2006 according to the Constitutional Court sentence C-355, this is a procedure that still generates stigma and is questioned by various sectors, so that access to it, although legal, is still very restricted, especially for indigenous women.
and gynaeco-obstetric care and services. These policies can be crucial during a hunger crisis, as malnutrition responses can impact infants born to malnourished mothers.

Although these policies do not exist, it does not mean that the community does not require them. During my fieldwork in Cabo de la Vela, two Wayúu women (both younger than 30 and mothers of three and five kids, respectively) approached me at different times to tell me about their difficulties with feeding their children and their desire to be able to access contraception and reproductive services. This highlights that, for crisis management, food organisations should recognise and provide diverse rights access (women's rights, education, water, food) as this is an approach for restoring human capacity and desire to care and be cared for.

6.5. Replacing bad care policies: food sovereignty to incorporate good care perspectives in a crisis management

In the previous sections, I presented how the humanitarian crisis management in La Guajira had primarily failed due to the rational approach and food security model that guided and continues to lead agencies and institutions implementing food policies in the department. As I exposed, these two approaches (rational crisis management and food security) mistakenly linked this humanitarian crisis to the lack of food, concentrating a good measure of its efforts and resources on delivering food, leaving aside actions that would challenge the unjust and oppressive systems that cause and sustain the crisis in the department. Above all, these approaches failed to identify that La Guajira crisis is a care crisis, taking few actions that would allow or support affected people to recover their ability to care. Likewise, I also showed how the responses to the crisis are not aspiring to transform the systems that generated this crisis and ended up supporting, designing, and implementing food policies that created more negative than positive effects. That is, in La Guajira crisis, more policies could be classified as bad care rather than good care policies, which aggravated the nutritional situation of the Wayúu (as in the case of the Bienestarina mixed with poor quality water that ended up generating even more digestive problems for the already fragile children), allowing the crisis to continue.
However, as previously mentioned, it is worth bringing back how feminism interprets crises, that is, as an opportunity to transform systems, remembering that “we will not get back to normal because normal was the problem”. Along these lines, the economist Amaia Peréz-Orozco mentioned that "moments of crisis are moments of change and of putting structures in check; therefore, feminisms must have a strong discourse that counteracts orthodox rhetoric and that visualises inequities and structural problems that are emerging through the cracks in the system” (2006, p. 9). Anna L. Tsing also states this possibility of ‘rebirth in the crack’ in her book *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (2015), where she describes that as the *matsutake* mushroom is capable of arising in degraded environments, we must insist, and believe, in seeking other possibilities, other forms of rebirth, amidst the ruins. Though it may not be necessary to create new realities and possibilities, perhaps those possibilities of building in the crack already exist, and La Guajira crisis is an opportunity to resume those paths already trekked.

I propose food sovereignty as this path that already exists and that must be retaken to solve the current crisis and avoid future ones. Bring food sovereignty arguments in a crisis context also joins the claims that diverse authors have made about food sovereignty as a fundamental approach to guide an urgent transition in the current food systems, looking to achieve fair and sustainable ones (Desmarais et al., n.d.; Holt-Giménez, 2010; D. Lewis, 2015; Schanbacher, 2010). This purpose is shared by social movements (Masioli & Nicholson, 2010), such as *Fuerza Mujeres Wayúu* (La Guajira social movement), *Junta Mayor de Palabreros*, and indigenous and Afro Colombian communities (Rodriguez Castro, 2020; Satizábal & Batterbury, 2018; Turner et al., 2020a), and which effects would also be contributing for community resilience (or community autopoesis, as illustrated in chapter seven) and to reducing vulnerability risk for future crisis events.
Food sovereignty echoes arguments of the ethics of care, beginning with the urgency of putting care (the possibility of caring and being cared for) at the system's centre and reorganising priorities and society from this point. This reorganisation around care would expressly recognise the value of those who care for others, whether in hospitals, schools, those who produce food or search for water in desert regions, like this group of Wayúu men who go daily on their bicycles or their wheelbarrows to fetch and transport water to their rancherías (Figure 6-5).

The recognition of the care value would ideally lead to better compensation or fairer and more dignified working conditions. Specifically, from the food systems point of view, this recognition of care would lead to more rigorous evaluations of the working conditions of those who work the land or fish and could generate advances in the elimination of modern forms of slavery.
A crisis managed with a care perspective insists on the need for plurality, on the importance of including as many voices and experiences as possible. On this point, food sovereignty also agrees in arguing that it is central that diversity constitutes a permanent ingredient in all food policies, disagreeing with the false assumption of ‘one size fits all’, which is frequently promoted by the food security model and followed by foods and crisis management institutions, and that has resulted in standardised and homogeneous (and ideally plastic packaged) programs. Instead, food sovereignty celebrates diversity by declaring that there is no single way to achieve food sovereignty. There does not exist, and there should not be a recipe to achieve food sovereignty since this- as well as care- depends on the context, capacities, and needs of those who receive and those who give care, including nature.

The way food sovereignty highlights the role of nature emphasises the human and non-human conditions of interdependent beings, which highly resonates with care ethics arguments (J. Tronto, 1993, 2013). For food sovereignty, as well as for agroecology (Bezner Kerr et al., 2019b; Misra, 2018) or ecofeminism (Mies & Shiva, 2001), the relationship between society and nature is a continuum. Maria Puig de la Bellacasa (2017) has shown how care logic, practices, and benefits are transferred from humans to non-humans, challenging through care the borders that divide nature and society (see chapter two for more about the ethics of care theories and debates). Food sovereignty agrees with the need to eliminate these borders, showing how caring for the land or food is a way of caring for ourselves, which is a powerful form of self-care.

Food sovereignty also challenges the limits that a rational approach seeks to define about who should be part of the food policies construction by insisting on making the food system build a collective and participatory process. In the context of food sovereignty, the group of experts would not be that group of specialists in risk calculations, project management, or financial analysts, but rather those who know the territory, how to farm or fish, or who transmit the traditions to other generations. Following a food sovereignty model means situating participatory spaces as essential spaces where all community members, particularly the most affected, would join to identify routes, share their experiences and strategies to cope with crisis circumstances, and also places to confront food organisations and their plans, while (re) constructing social fabric and reinforcing
and evaluating care and solidarity to sustain and enable life (Federici, 2004). In this regard, as participation is the central food sovereignty pillar, this movement explicitly recognises the need to include diverse and often dismissed voices when discussing food policies, placing women's voices as highly relevant when considering that “women can bring different values to food” (Cock, 2016, p. 128) that other community and institutional members could not be noticing.

Finally, another of the points on which care and food sovereignty coincide refers to the purposes of their actions. Tronto mentioned how good care is recognised by its final goals or objectives. In a crisis context, it would be equivalent to the affected people being once again capable of caring and being cared for. In this line and regarding crisis management, it could be argued that from the rational approach, the final purposes are generally related to values or quantifiable measures to be achieved in a defined time. In a hunger crisis, organisations' and institutions' efforts and resources are mainly addressed to provide food for affected people, placing people as simple and passive food policies and aid receptacles.

It is important to notice that, under crisis scenarios, food sovereignty recognizes the value of some actions promoted under the food security model, such as the immediate delivery of food aid in emergencies and crises to keep people alive. Still, food sovereignty insists that these must be short-term measures, as action must be quickly mobilized to encourage people's voices, promotes agroecology practices, rebuilds social fabric and collective actions, and mobilises affected people to challenge conventional power structures that sustain hunger and other inequalities. That is, following a food sovereignty approach during a hunger crisis could mean temporally supporting people's lives through food aid, although at the same time actively promoting collective initiatives that reinforce solidarity and community care networks, reconstructing the community food system and resilience to avoid a future crisis, or be able to respond and recover for them when occur.

Along the same line, food sovereignty proposes that crisis can be tackled through practices of solidarity, alternative economies, and collective care actions that challenge oppression and discrimination systems. Food sovereignty recognises that food systems and care relationships are created and sustained by daily practices, in which
women are decisive thanks to their roles of feeding others, protecting ecosystems, promoting fairer forms of food systems, and even the ones who are mainly responsible for transmitting knowledge and techniques to other generations (related to food or other activities), like this Wayúu woman in Cabo de la Vela who teaches her nephews and grandchildren to weave (Figure 6-6).

Figure 6-6. Wayúu woman knitting a *chinchorro* (traditional Wayúu hammock). Cabo de la Vela, August 2019. Photo: Daniela De Fex-Wolf

Regarding the everyday practices value in the food systems, researchers such as Arlene Voski Avakian and Barbara Haber point out the need to consider the “*daily lives of ordinary people*” (2006, p. 2), that is, note the need to examine the quotidian connections between humans and food, the work behind every plate of food and how responsibilities tied to it are divided in a household context, as
well as the gendered dimension of food consumption (A. M. Collins, 2018).

These relationships that are created or reinforced when care is put at the centre are transformative because it allows facing events such as a crisis from a different perspective, with other focuses of priorities and other objectives, and also because admitting uniting apparently opposite or disconnected study areas, such as crisis management and food sovereignty. In the process of connecting different fields through care centrality, coincidences and common points between areas become visible, such as the need to transform systems (a desire shared by the ethics of care, political ecology, feminism, food sovereignty, economy, sociology, ecology and so on), the urgency for new goals, new objectives that move away from economic growth and which are capable of "enhancing the other's wellbeing" (Noddings 2003 cited in Branicki, 2020, p. 878). It also connects various disciplines that insist on eliminating the false dichotomies between nature/society, masculine/feminine, or private/public, and points to other warning signs of a crisis, such as people or the community's inability to care and be cared for. When different areas agree to put care at the centre, other windows or paths are open for communities to avoid returning to normality.

6.6. Chapter summary

The Guajira crisis of 2014 highlighted two critical points: on the one hand, the seriousness of the inequalities and injustices that the Wayúu have been facing for decades, where their demands and urgency for this regional humanitarian situation have been systematically ignored and despised by the State and other national and international food organisations, who only responded when the IACHR made the demand. On the other hand, considering that, to date, the humanitarian crisis has not been resolved could represent that the approach guiding this crisis is wrong or incomplete.

In this aspect, the ethics of care, together with (feminist) political ecology, make a valuable contribution by pointing out that, as the effects of a crisis are not distributed symmetrically, diverse and heterogeneous approaches are necessary to understand a crisis’s causes and how these events are experienced. Additionally, from an
ethics of care perspective, La Guajira crisis is a crisis of care whose most apparent sign is that the Wayúu people are not managing to care and be cared for. Part of this failure to care is the result of decades of violence, dispossession, racism, and discrimination, much of this product of large-scale extractivist practices that have been carried out in the region since the 1950s (as I present in chapter five). Another source of this inability to care comes from bad food proposals, commonly designed following a restricted food security approach.

Understanding this as a care crisis means reassessing crisis management priorities and objectives, giving more attention to marginalised voices (which are also generally from those who care, such as women and the elderly population), trying to strengthen the relationships between and among the human and the non-human, and set as goals systems transformation that supports people to be once again capable of caring and being cared for.

Translating these ideas of care into practice implies opening space for diversity and creativity to think of new ways to transform systems that put care at the centre. However, it also leads us to ask ourselves if those paths no longer exist and if those routes to face food crises through an ethics of care perspective have not already been identified and put into practice. Fortunately, food sovereignty is a route that could guide a food crisis in another way, from another perspective capable of including care priorities such as plurality, interdependence, participation, the search for purposes that make sense for caregivers and care receivers, and more radical ways of transforming and challenging systems, which, as we will see in the next chapter, can emerge from such obvious, yet invisible, places as self-care, households, the quotidian, and community dynamics.
7. Resisting, re-existing and caring through food sovereignty

7.1. Introduction

In the last empirical chapter of this thesis, I present and explore different ways the Wayúu communities have resisted violence, oppression, and attacks against their territories. I argue that communities are resisting in several ways and from different territories (their body-territory), including practices of self-care, care networks formed by their closest relatives and partners (or sorority care networks), and webs that are woven with individuals and groups within and outside the community, where virtuality is becoming essential to connect with others allies, mobilise and publicise their struggles in other settings. I argue that these strategies seek to demonstrate that the Wayúus is an autopoietic community, that is, a group capable of creating and (re)building their elements and systems to sustain their lives in the territories, and with this, the Wayúu community is developing strategies to going beyond the State (Lopes de Souza, 2010) when reaffirming their territorial autonomy. In this chapter, I illustrate that the Wayúus are making use of elements and arguments of food sovereignty to ‘camouflage’ and strengthen their demands and their actions around the right to food, water, territory, and care, proposals that are being mainly led by Wayúu women and comes from a place as invisible as powerful: the everyday.
The Body (Alexis Banylis)\textsuperscript{55}

Buddha did not eat for days.
Jesus gave himself up to torture.
Gandhi abandoned sex.
My mom, during the dictatorship, smoked three cigarettes packs per day.
Always the body.

In August 2019, I met Silvio. He is a Wayúu indigenous young man living in a ranchería between Riohacha and Maicao, a member of the Junta Mayor de Palabreros, and an indigenous rights activist who quickly became a crucial colleague in this project. During an initial conversation, Silvio suggested me to meeting him and his uncle Leonardo at a human rights event in Riohacha (II Encuentro Amplio de Derechos Humanos).

This event was planned by regional authorities motivated by the critical security issues taking place in the region, mainly because of social leaders’ threats and assassinations, which have notably increased after the Colombian government and FARC guerrilla peace

\textsuperscript{55} El cuerpo (Alexis Banylis): Buda no comía por días/ Jesús se entregó a la tortura. /Gandhi abandonó el sexo. / Mi mamá en la dictadura fumaba tres paquetes de cigarros por día/ Siempre el cuerpo.
agreement signed in 2016 (see context chapter for further details about this agreement and consequences).

The event was composed of social leaders from diverse Caribbean Colombian coast municipalities (notably mainly women), national and international institutions- including the national prosecutor, the ombudsperson, and human rights officers as the ONU- and members of the two most crucial and visible collective movements in the region, Junta Mayor de Palabreros (where Silvio and Leonardo were key members) and Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu, discussed during a whole day three main topics: social leaders safety, environment degradation and communities situation due to these issues.

From the beginning of the meeting, it was possible to perceive that territorial disputes between communities and external actors (such as extractivist companies) were one of the primary roots of people's worries, which effects, according to the meeting’s participants, are frequently translated in social leader’s life threats and environmental degradation. Some panellists and assistants, curiously all women, reported that violent actions were not limited to or necessarily involved physical or sexual injuries but also psychological and emotional acts of violence, as related by Teresa, one of the foremost leaders from Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu. During Teresa’s intervention, she pointed out that threats differ between women and men, claiming that women need special protection starting from their initial denounces. The regional attorney replied to Teresa's comment

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56Junta Mayor de Palabreros is a Wayúu organization created in 2008 seeking to organize, preserve and strength the normative Wayúu system used to solve conflicts within and between Wayúu communities and other territorial actors. It is formed by 37 palabreros (a kind of Wayúu lawyer) distributed in whole Wayúu territory in Colombia and Venezuela (UNHCR/ANCUR, 2010).

As a curiosity, a Colombian peace agreement is fundamentally based on an integrated system of truth, justice, repair, and non-repetition designed faithfully reproduced from the Wayúu normative system, where the Junta Mayor de Palabreros played an essential role as an adviser during the peace agreement formulation (Silvio, 16/08/2019).

57Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu is a social movement formed by Wayúu women in 2006, aiming to make visible Wayúu human right violation due to internal armed conflict (paramilitarism, guerrillas groups and territory militarisation), extractive projects in their territory, forced migration, especially faced by indigenous women(Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu, 2019).
mentioning that people need to be “objective when reporting life threats, and not threaten themselves (auto-amenazarse) looking to have ‘social status’”\(^{58}\) (Riohacha, August 2019).

The regional attorney's statement was rejected by social leaders and other assistants attending the event, like Marta, a community leader from a coastal municipality who replied that “denied or underestimated threats reported by social leader becomes a State excuse to do not protect leaders, but they are killing us”\(^{59}\). After the audience manifested their support for Marta’s claim and displeasure with the officer’s sentence, she added: “We have the territory impregnated in our blood. The territory is what allows us to live”.

When Marta mentions in her speech that her territory is impregnated in her blood, she is indicating, from her experience, the connection between her body and her territory, pointing out that the territory is felt, perceived, and experienced thanks to and through the body.

The body-territory idea comes from a reflection that arises from indigenous, black, and peasant groups, mainly located in Latin America, which gained more strength at the end of the 90s, when these groups began to claim their concern about how the large-scale extractivism arrival to their territories was making it impossible for certain forms of life to continue, preventing a world where many worlds fit (see chapter five). These complaints and connections between the body-territory had an echo in the Latin American feminist movement, who, from their fields of study, have argued that the large extractivism entrance in the region coincided with an increase in cases of violence against women who inhabited territories of interest, marking an association between body, territory, extractivism, and violence that indicates that “what is experienced by

\(^{58}\) Threaten people receive State protection, including armoured cars and escorts, which for some are prestige symbols associated with influential people like politicians or businesspeople.

\(^{59}\)“Nos están matando” (“they are killing us”) sadly becomes a common denouncement by social leaders in the country, referring to social leaders systematically killed after the peace agreement by paramilitary, ELN guerrilla and other no-legal groups, strongly related to the traffic drugs industry. To understand the magnitude of this problem, it is worth keeping in mind that until March 2020, 442 social leaders, 55 of them women, besides 199 FARC ex- combatants, were killed in Colombia following the peace agreement (Osorio, 2020; Somos Defensores, 2020; Valenzuela A, 2019).
the body is simultaneously experienced by territory in a codependent relationship” (Zaragocin & Caretta, 2021, p. 1504).

As a result of further exploration of these connections/relationships between body-territory-violence, community feminism (feminismo comunitario) developed the idea of body-territory, which is, in addition to a concept, a methodology that women in Latin America have used to analyse spatial dynamics, in particular those related to extractivist processes and gender-based violence (Zaragocin & Caretta, 2021). In the formulation of the body-territory concept, the work of community feminists such as Lorena Cabnal, a Mayan Xinca indigenous woman from Guatemala, has been central, who, in dialogue with other decolonial and Latin American feminists such as Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui and Julieta Paredes, posits that the body-territory is a political slogan, a community proposal, an emancipatory political act and a feminist coherence, which leads to the claim that the personal is political. Cabnal argues that the defence of the body, especially feminised bodies, is "a daily and indispensable struggle because the body-territory has been a disputed territory for millennia" (2010, p. 22).

Different feminists share the idea that, historically, the bodies have been territories of dispute. Julieta Paredes (2008), Rita Segato (2016), and Silvia Federici (2004) have demonstrated how violence against (feminised) bodies has been used as a weapon of intimidation and attack to conquer territories and accumulate wealth. Segato, for example, points out that much of the violence occurs in the body of women, which has become “the very battlefield on which the insignia of victory is nailed and the physical and moral devastation of the people, tribe, community, neighbourhood, locality, family, or gang, that that female body (through a process of significance of an ancestral imaginary) embodies” (2016, pp. 80–81).

Along these same lines, the feminist geographer Delmy Tania Cruz-Hernández highlights that the body "has been stripped of its sensitivity, its flesh, its viscera, its miseries, its joys and its pleasures" (2015, p. 1) and suggests that the methodology brought by the body-territory concept is valuable to recover that lost (or uprooted) sensitivity because it allows the body to talk about itself, and from that dialogue between body-territory, build other possible worlds.
Likewise, Cruz-Hernández (2015, 2016) highlights that paying attention to the body is a way of giving voice to the most intimate scales, the most micro, and connecting intimately with other scales or territories, which opens the way for emotions, sensations, and physical reactions to become part of the narration of the experiences in and of the territories, where emotions are interwoven with the experiences and serve as channels to connect them with those sharing similar stories of violence, life threats, and resistance.

Given this violence against women’s bodies to conquer territories and to avoid or reverse deterritorialisation, community feminism proposes that it is necessary to position the body as a territory and understand the defence of the body as the first defence territory, that is, the body is the first territory from which people fights for the recovery and defence of territory, body, land. From there, Cabnal proposes to fight for what she has called political healing (sanación política), which is achieved when the oppressions, violence, and inequalities harming territories are replaced by the recovery of freedom, achieved by gathering, pleasure, rest, leisure and joy (Cabnal, 2020). For Cabnal, political healing is a way of "claiming joy without losing indignation" (López, 2021, para. 23), which could be interpreted as resisting violence while continuing to fight to create and transform realities.

According to Colombian artist and intellectual Adolfo Albán-Achinte (2013), territories (like the body or art) resist and re-exist. For this author, resisting implies denying or opposing what oppresses or limits, but resisting is also re-existing. As Albán-Achinte explains in this fragment that, although it refers to Colombian Afro-descendant communities, it perfectly applies to other historically marginalised communities, such as the Wayúu:

“I conceive re-existence as the devices that communities create and develop to invent life daily and thus be able to confront the reality established by the hegemonic project that from the colony to the present day has inferiorized, silenced, and negatively visibilized the existence of Afro-descendant communities. The re-existence aims to decentre the established logic to search in the depths of cultures —in this case, indigenous and Afro-descendant— the keys to the organisation, production, food, ritual, and aesthetic forms that allow to dignify life and re-invent it for keep transforming life. The re-existence points to what the community, cooperative, and
union leader Héctor Daniel Useche Berón ‘Pájaro’, assassinated in 1986 in the Municipality of Bugalagrande in the centre of Valle del Cauca, Colombia, once stated: What are we going to invent today to continue living?” (2013, p. 455)

The body is the first territory that resists everything that oppresses and prevents freedom and dignity. At the same time, the body is the first territory that re-exists, from where it is invented other possibilities to continue living, from where fairer and more careful worlds can be created that allow life to be dignified.

In the previous chapters of this thesis, I presented some ways in which the Wayúus have resisted what oppresses and prevents them from taking care of themselves (i.e., colonisers' actions and large extractivist projects), such as when the Wayúu make use of legal channels such as the national constitution and international legislation (such as ILO 69. See chapter five) as ways to resist and recover the right to their territories and their right to care. However, although valid and used by the communities, these are strategies of resistance and territorial defence that have been created by institutions and organisations outside the affected communities (such as the IACHR, the UN or the Ombudsman’s Office in Colombia) through top-down processes that fail to identify, include, give voice to, or respond to the different forms of oppression and violence experienced by historically marginalised and violented communities.

None of these resistance and demand mechanisms proposed by the institutions recognises the different territories that the indigenous communities defend, such as the body-territory or, in the case of the Wayúu, the water territory. Likewise, these institutional strategies and legislation do not necessarily work or give way to re-existence mechanisms, such as ways in which communities can challenge systems and allow them to re-invent their life.

Remarkably, these institutional mechanisms of resistance and appeal ignore the community agency capacity. For this reason, identifying the forms of resistance and re-existence that arise within and from the communities is necessary. In the case of this research, it is crucial to determine how the Wayúu (individual and collectively) defend their multiple territories (their bodies, lands, and waters) and how, from their bodies - the first territories- the Wayúus oppose and create strategies and tactics against of the different forms of
violence, as extractivism (which also contribute to creating a care crisis as presented in chapter six).

Furthermore, it is also necessary to recognize who are creating resistance and re-existence mechanism amid, or despite, the ruins of decades of large-scale extractivism and the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira.

To explore what makes it possible to occur these processes of resistance and re-existence in a community, I use the autopoiesis concept, which was first proposed by the Chilean biologists and neuroscientists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, who define an autopoietic system as one capable of producing its own components (Maturana & Varela, 2004). I argue that the Wayúus is an autopoietic community, that is, a community capable of producing and reproducing themselves thanks to their care networks, and despite the magnitude of the crises they are facing, which has made it seem that the Wayúu have lost their ability to reproduce and sustain themselves (or their possibility to care).

In this chapter, I indicate that the Wayúu people seek to recover (and prove to external actors) their capabilities and knowledge to sustain life (or their condition as an autopoietic community), for which their food systems and food sovereignty are making an essential contribution to this purpose. For the Wayúus, recovering their food systems and food sovereignty is becoming one of their forms of re-existence, being a kind of Trojan horse that contains and also gives space to other community struggles and demands. While improving the Wayúu food systems seems like a process strictly related to recovering their nutritional health, specific practices and arguments (many related to food sovereignty) this has ended up supporting other community objectives, such as regaining their right to care and the right to territorial autonomy.

I describe how these resistance and re-existence strategies are woven mainly by Wayúu women motivated by recovering their possibility of caring and being cared for, by strategies coming from a place as invisible as powerful: the quotidian. Through this chapter, I mainly contribute to the ethics of care by showing how food sovereignty can be an ally for the recovery of care and its relocation to the centre of the systems. I also point out some "gendered forms of resistance" in Wayúu communities (Berman-Arévalo & Ojeda, 2020; Leguizamón, 2019; Sultana, 2018), mainly those linked to
community food systems and food sovereignty, and finally, I aim to contribute to the feminist geography that highlights the household and the everyday practices as places of resistance, transformation and re-existence (Berman-Arévalo & Ojeda, 2020; Turner et al., 2020b).

This document is divided into three sections: In the first one, I introduce those who are at the forefront of the Wayúu resistance and re-existence, continuing with the presentation and exploration of their forms of self-care, and ending with the analysis of the strategies that the Wayúus have created and used to (once their bodies are protected) defend other territories and demonstrate themselves as an autopoietic community. The chapter concludes by presenting how the Wayúu have made food sovereignty a vehicle to transport various struggles that are taking food systems and their dynamics as their starting point to weave the Wayúu re-existence.

7.2. Which bodies are resisting and re-existing?

Before exploring the forms of resistance and re-existence of the Wayúu, it is necessary to understand why these processes generally have a woman’s face, where women are frequently in the first line of resistance action. Although the crises and conflicts for and in the Wayúu territory affect both men and women, feminist researchers from different fields and latitudes have argued that feminised bodies (women, children, and the elderly) experience differently and are more critically affected by territorial conflicts. I began to explore these differentiated conflicts effects in chapter six of this thesis, when I presented how the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira represents dissimilar effects for Wayúu women and men, showing how, for example, women and children have the highest levels of malnutrition, and women are also the first group demanding solutions that account for the complex situation of this department. However, why are Wayúu women suffering most from conflict over their territories, and why are they also the first to propose alternatives?

To respond, it is necessary to bring the contributions of those researchers who began to wonder about the relationship between space and the body. Feminist geographers such as Doreen Massey (Massey, 2005) and Linda McDowell (McDowell, 1997, 1999), for example, argue that power defines which bodies may or may not
occupy a space, where certain bodies representing specific power are welcome in a particular space, while others with less power would be displaced or excluded from that same space. The main contribution of these first investigations on the body-space relationship is that they began to question spaces as neutral places, pointing out that each body’s power allows it to be located or not in a particular space (Cruz Hernández, 2016).

The Latin American decolonial feminist movement also explores and contributes to the space-body field of study. Researchers such as María Lugones (Lugones, 2010), Yuderkis Espinosa (2014), and Rita Segato (Segato, 2013) consider that women bodies who inhabit colonised places, such as Latin America, face differentiated forms of oppression that are still in force, highlighting colonisation as a process that subjected women's bodies to particular violence forms.

From communitarian feminism, the body-land concept is proposed to indicate how violence exerted in different territories is connected and expressed. Julieta Paredes (Paredes, 2008) and Lorena Cabnal (Cabnal, 2010, 2015) belong to a group of researchers that argue that women's exploitation did not begin with the colonisation processes but occurred (and occur) within indigenous communities themselves even before invasions and colonisation processes (see chapter three). This group of researchers shows how various actors have historically used women's bodies (inside or their communities) as vehicles to expropriate land, knowledge, and community resources.

In the Colombian case, the Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres60, a research group resulting from the FARC-Colombian government peace accord (see chapter three), affirms that women’s bodies are facing “the systemic actions of the diverse armed actors that have learned to violate their bodies, their living spaces, and rights as a form of contempt and intimidation” (2013, p. 115). This group has identified that actors in certain territories have learned that women's bodies contain and allow the possibility of continuing life, so eliminating or displacing them from their territories means the same as ending that community, that way of life that is possible in a territory thanks to the knowledge, traditions, customs, care networks dictated and promoted by the women from a community. Actors interested in certain regions learned that excluding women from their territories is

60 https://rutapacifica.org.co/wp/
equivalent to eliminating the main obstacle to their appropriation plans.

As mentioned in chapters five and six, violence resulting from dispossession, neo-extractivism, and the humanitarian crisis particularly affect Wayúu women and children. Everything that has happened and is happening in Wayúu territories affects Wayúu bodies directly and, to a greater extent, the feminised bodies of this community. Different participants interviewed during the fieldwork of this research expressed how the extreme dry seasons in the region represent more significant efforts for women and especially Wayúu children, who are the ones who are usually in charge of looking for water in lagoons, wells, and rivers near their rancherías. One of those participants interviewed in Cabo de la Vela told me that when he was a child, and there was a drought event, he had to walk almost two kilometres looking for water:

_I needed to walk, and I carried the water on my shoulder. I brought an 18-litre water bottle, and sometimes I brought up to two._ (Cabo de la Vela, July 2019).

Not only natural phenomena such as drought or climate change effects have differentially affected the Wayúu, but projects developed in the department have also brought consequences to them. Some participants recounted how the creation of roads crossing and connecting the department implied risks for the communities, especially for Wayúu children and women that are usually in charge of searching for water or food or delivering messages or parcels between rancherías, then had to traverse these roads (full of trucks and cars travelling at high speed) to connect with their families or water sources on the other side of the road (fieldwork observation, Riohacha, September 2019).

Besides, those large extractive projects, such as the Cerrejón mine, affected water or the hydrosocial territories (Boelens et al., 2016b), critically and violently altering the connection of the Wayúu with their territories through a series of violence that took place in these aquatic territories and that is reflected in the Wayúu bodies.

The _Fuerza Mujeres Wayúu_ (FMW) members have insistently and bravely denounced territorial damages by extractivist activities. Since 2006, this organisation has been showing how the _Cerrejón_ mining project has remarkably affected the natural environment, violating the rights to water, food and health, deforesting, polluting
communities' sources of drinking water and the air, and has diverted its rivers, especially the Ranchería river and the Tabaco, Bruno and Cerrejón streams (Ulloa, 2020), affecting the Wayúu health, who also have been forced to abandon their territories in search of other spaces where they can continue to reproduce life calmly and safely.

According to Jazmín Romero Epiayú, a Wayúu leader and a key member of FMW:

*While the Ranchería River is an economic resource for extractivist companies, it is an ancestral and sacred public good for us. We are not women looking for (economic) resources; we are seeking to motivate people to fight against these multinationals destroying our territory. We (Wayúu women) give life, and (extractivist companies) should learn from our example and be responsible for generating life. Without this (the women value recognition), we cannot talk about environmental policies or sustainable development* (2015, para. 10)

Members of the Wayúu community (especially their women), the FMW, and other allied social movements and groups have confronted Cerrejón and other extractivist companies, putting their bodies as the first line of defence and struggle. With this, they support what Cruz-Hernández suggests when she affirms that the body-territory proposal is an invitation to “look at bodies as living and historical territories that allude to a cosmogonic and political interpretation, where our wounds, memories, knowledge, desires, individual and common dreams; and in turn, invites us to look at the territories as social bodies that are integrated into the network of life and therefore, our relationship with them must be conceived as an ‘ethical event’ understood as an irruption in the face of the ‘other’ where the possibility of contract, domination, and power have no place” (2016, p. 44).
Embracing the body-territory idea is the most appropriate way of understanding that what takes place in a territory is manifested in the bodies that inhabit it (human and more-than-human), either because of the consequences on health (i.e., water and air pollution and its impacts on the organisms), the redoubled efforts to fulfil daily tasks (i.e., search for water in more distant places), or due to the urgency of creating strategies in the community and at home to safely...
navigate the territories that now include other actors. However, it is pertinent to highlight that the bodies of the Wayúu women, the bodies of those that take care of others, will be the first to experience the changes in the environment, and it will be those that will create strategies to protect themselves and their communities motivated by the deep and particular relationship that these bodies have with their territory, product of women roles performed within their homes and communities.

7.3. Resistance, self-care, and freedom

Although feminised bodies experience violence against their territories with greater intensity, this violence is not distributed in the same way among women. In the case of the Wayúu people, those women in leadership positions are the most susceptible and affected by violence. By leadership position, I am not only referring to those who are part of social movements or who represent the Wayúu in front of institutions or events but also those women who lead the reproduction of life within the communities, those who are in charge of caring for others, such as mothers, grandmothers or ouutsú61, from whom violence is expressly directed.

A commonality among Wayúu women who are putting their bodies on the first line for their territory defence is that they are appealing for the right to inhabit their territories in the ways that the community decides, which can be seen as the struggle for the right to care and be cared for in specific territories, in places that are representative for the community. Social leaders claim the right to live in those places, making visible and denouncing the violence they faced for occupying certain enchanting territories to sectors and groups. These social leaders risk their lives by resisting external actors' plans as their bodies incarnate the opposition. Francia Márquez, a black leader and Colombia's vice president, was a victim of life attacks for defending her territory from illegal groups and economic interests (specifically a gold mining). She affirms, doubtless, that "we (social

61Wayúu women who are in charge of interpreting the dreams of the members of the community, are considered as a spiritual authority because of their role as a bridge between this earthly world and the oneiric world.
leaders) are being assassinated for the resistance that we carry out and for defending our territories" (Verdad Abierta, 2020b, para. 2).

Indeed, every life is sacred, but social leaders’ lives must be specially protected at all costs for their role in the community. To kill a social leader is denying that other worlds and other forms of life are possible; it is to silence the voice of the people they represent (usually historically neglected communities such as peasants, indigenous and black people); it is to leave a community without memory, without roots, breaking the negotiation and dialogue bridges that social leaders have been creating between diverse territorial actors, processes commonly headed by leaders and crucial in countries as culturally diverse and conflictive such as Colombia.

Social leaders have gained greater visibility by representing the territorial struggles and organising their communities to fight battles against territorial appropriation, natural resource overuse, and contamination. They have been exposed to threats and attacks by groups interested in their territories. As explained by Tatiana Prado, a researcher at the Fundación Ideas para la Paz, "when there is a greater social organisation, a greater visibility of social organisations and stronger leadership, the role of these armed groups (or those interested in a territory) is to attack these leaders to give a message of who is in charge in the territory and which are their agendas” (Verdad Abierta, 2020b, para. 15).

Wayúu leader women have been constantly threatened and targeted by diverse violence. Teresa, one of the FMW leaders, recounted at the human rights event one of the forms of violence that she had recently experienced:

>When I arrived at the school to pick up my son, they told me someone had already picked him up. I had not asked anyone in my family or acquaintances to pick up my son. I went home and found him with a man I did not know. He (the man who had taken his son from school to Teresa's house) did not tell me anything, but his mere presence, what he had done, meant that they (those who threatened her) knew where I lived, my routines, they knew who my son was. (Riohacha, August 2019).

A report made by Mongabay Latam and Rutas del Conflicto about FMW women threats recounts how intimidation of its members began in 2008, almost from the beginning of this social group (2006), when a taxi driver warned her that they were following her, that they knew
where she lived, saying that “you are saved today. We have not killed you just because we do not want to” (Sánchez, 2021, para. 5). The report also states that FMW is a target of the paramilitary group Águilas Negras, which in 2020 decreed FMW members a military objective, threatened with killing them and recruiting their children. For example, Águilas Negras gave 48 hours to leave La Guajira to one of the FMW members.

At the human rights event, Teresa stressed that threatened women must be protected from the moment they denounce the first intimidation. The illegal groups in La Guajira use non-physical violence (psychological and emotional) to make the Wayúu leaders fear and leave the department. None of the members of FMW is threatening themselves - as the national government official assured - these threats are as real as the interests in dispossessing the Wayúu of their territories.

The Colombian government has frequently questioned the veracity and urgency of the threats received by social leaders in the country and is sluggish in its actions to protect and defend social and environmental leaders (Verdad Abierta, 2020a). In fact, in departments such as La Guajira, the presence of the State is almost nil, conveniently appearing at certain times, as a Wayúu driver stated while he was transporting me through the department while doing this investigation:

*The Colombian State only appears (in La Guajira) every four years during political races.* (Cabo de la Vela, September 2019).

Regarding the absence of the State and the moments or reasons why it occasionally appears in the department, Silvio commented on the following:

*Our relationship with the State is through the monetary resources they provide to communities (royalties by mining activities), health and education programs, and ICBF (...)*

*Although we do not have a good relationship with the State, as we do not support any political campaign for any political candidate.* (Maicao, August 2019).

In this context of State absence in La Guajira and its opportunistic appearances, how do the leaders and other Wayúu community members protect themselves, and to whom do they turn when threatened?
As I will present, the answer lies in minor scales: the body itself and its closest and daily relationships.

7.4. Beginning to resist (and re-exist) from self-care and sorority strategies

Even knowing that being a leader exposes them to being threatened and attacked, the Wayúu leader women remain firm in defending life and the right to their territory, which they continue to promote by relying on their care networks. In this research, it was possible to identify three sources of resistance and re-existence: i) self-care, ii) care networks that are formed with the closest people (family, friends or comadres), and iii) extended community.

7.4.1. Self-care

Self-care can be understood as protection and defence measures that must be taken individually before caring for others to change the realities and re-exist. The construction of those other possible worlds, where people can have a good life or a tasty life (Vivir sabroso), as Afro-Colombians in the Chocó department propose (Quiceno Toro, 2016), necessarily requires that all those who want to contribute to the construction of that other reality have a good, healthy, cared and safe living conditions. In the words of a leader of a collective movement, Teia dos Povos (Bahia, Brazil): “It is necessary to focus on healing internal wounds (...), to make art, write, and do everything that can help in the healing process of wounds blows that this system has imposed on us. The world we want to build needs militants, warriors who are healthy in mind and body (...) we need all of you for the fight to come” (Coletivo Etinerâncias, 2021, pp. 28–29).

Audre Lorde, writer and Afro-American feminist, spoke about the power of self-care and how this is a political act. She was one of the first to associate self-care with activism by stating that “caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare” (Lorde, 1988, p. 131). For Lorde, self-care is seeking ways to allow us to continue existing in a system that has made existence difficult for many. Advocating and practising self-care is the raw material for any revolution.
Regarding what is needed to promote a change, to transform the system, Angela Davis, the African American activist and feminist, also highlights self-care not only as a vital ingredient of the revolution but as the main difference between the activism of the 60s-70s and the current one: “Self-care has to be incorporated in all of our efforts. And this is something new (...) This holistic approach to organising is, I think, what is going to eventually move us along the trajectory that may lead to some victories” (Mirk, 2016, para. 2).

For Lorde, Davis, and many others, self-care is a strategy for survival and resistance to daily violence, a position from which it is possible to fight and resist all forms of oppression. However, self-care is also a re-existence tool, a way to begin to build and mark the paths to realities that represent individual and collective desires and possibilities, and a place to initiate a transformation into more caring and loving societies.

In the case of the Wayúu, in this research, I was able to identify forms of self-care that could be considered ordinary, such as regular visits to the doctor, dietary care (as the preference for certain foods for being considered healthiest), exercise, care and prevention of situations of abuse and bullying. However, there were two forms of self-care among Wayúu women that particularly caught my attention: financial and reproductive self-care.

**Financial self-care** can be understood as those measures that Wayúu women take to secure economic resources (almost secretly) for their needs or family affairs and emergencies. During the fieldwork, I saw how Luz, a 50-year-old Wayúu woman living in a ranchería close to Cabo de la Vela, sells the fish her husband catches daily and gives him the amount agreed upon in the sale and saves her payment. Luz also offers a fish cleaning service (removing viscera and scales) and frying it, getting extra money that she adds to her savings (fieldwork observations, Cabo de la Vela, July 2019).

Something similar happened with one weaver woman from another ranchería who said she used part of it for household expenses, and another part is saved for emergencies or plans, such as funerals, marriages, and other family celebrations (Cabo de la Vela, July 2019).

Interestingly, this financial self-care is more common among Wayúu women than men in this community. Of the 14 Wayúu men interviewed during this research, only three told me they tried to
save whenever possible. For others, money represents a means to meet daily duties, as if the possibility of making plans or thinking about the future were exclusive to women. When talking to Jonas, another of the great colleagues in this investigation, about the payment agreements he has with the owner of the hotel where he works, he told me the following:

_I do not receive a well-defined payment for my work in the hotel. My payment depends on what I need. Look, for example, if I want to buy clothes, I go to Francisco (his boss) and tell him to give me money to go to town, and he gives me money. Or if I want to see my family in the mountains, I ask him for money (from Francisco), and he gives me_

- _And that paying modality for your work in the hotel seems fair for you?

- _Of course, if it allows me to work when and how I want._ (Cabo de la Vela, July 2019)

Jonas agreed with his boss that this form of payment gives him the freedom to work under his conditions and preferences, taking days off or working the number of hours he considers. However, this payment agreement serves to respond to immediate needs or desires without much room for financial self-care, plan for future ideas, feel safe and prepared for emergencies, and limit the possibility of supporting urgent collective needs or issues.

Concerning reproductive self-care, it is necessary to mention that sexual and reproductive education topics continue to be taboo in the Wayúu communities, especially for women, so it was difficult to explore this topic in greater depth during the fieldwork. However, two field experiences can give some clues about how Wayúu women have made their sexuality and reproductive rights a form of self-care that implies recognising their bodies, their stories, memories, what it means to decide to be a mother or not, and assuming the power of these decisions in their life.

Coincidentally, during my time in Cabo de la Vela, a Wayúu girl had her menarche. In the Wayúu culture, this event is celebrated by the whole family because it marks the passage from a girl to a woman and symbolises the Wayúu people's continuity. Traditionally, the preparations for this celebration began in the menarche, where Wayúu women were locked up in appropriate places for weeks, or even months in certain rancherías or families, having contact only
with their grandmothers and mother, who during this time taught these young women to take care of themselves, to others and prepared them to be wives and mothers through cooking, home care, and knitting lessons. Once this confinement occurs, women are reintroduced to their communities in a traditional Wayúu dance in which their possible suitors are present. Later, these women would get married, and it is commonly assumed that they would have children (different Wayúu women recounted this tradition during my time in La Guajira).

However, this is changing: not all the young Wayúu longer want to celebrate this step as their mothers or grandmothers did, and neither wants to get married and have children. The family of the young Wayúu woman who had menstruated for the first time while I was doing my fieldwork organised a small celebration, to which all of us who were in the ranchería at that time were invited. Among them was an official from the foundation that installed a desalination plant in this ranchería, who asked this young woman to do that traditional dance “that she had seen in the movie”62 (Cabo de la Vela, July 2019). The Wayúu young woman replied to the foundation officer that she could see that dance on YouTube if she wanted. Funnily, her little sister also affirmed that, during the confinement, the young woman was not reflecting on the step she had taken or preparing herself to ‘be a woman’ but that she remained interacting on social networks and watching videos. For some of the guests, the attitude of this young Wayúu woman was one of disdain for her traditions and her Wayúu culture. However, for this woman, it was a way of breaking the rules and expected roles that she exercises as a Wayúu woman, claiming her rights over her body and the way she wants to live. The next day she was heading back to a Colombian city to finish high school and apply to college to study journalism.

Another example of reproductive self-care was commented on by my colleague Maria, a 30-year-old Wayúu woman and mother of five children, who told me that her husband wants to have more children, but she does not. To deal with these conflicting desires, she visited the community health centre, told the doctor on duty about her

62This person is referring to the film The Wind Journeys by Colombian director Ciro Guerra, which recounts the time of the bonanza marimbera (cannabis boom) in La Guajira and shows some of the Wayúu traditions, such as the yonna dance that is performed as a life celebration and courtship (see https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1426374/)
situation, and asked her to indicate a contraceptive method that did not involve hormonal treatments or barrier methods since her husband could not accept it. The doctor suggested and explained the rhythm method, in which Maria could define her most fertile days and avoid intercourse with her partner on those days, reducing the chances of getting pregnant again to some extent. Maria told me that she had been following this method for a couple of months and that “everything is going well” (Cabo de la Vela, July 2019), and that she had taught it to other women close to her who, although they did not want to continue having children, neither have the support of their husbands for find contraceptive alternatives. Deciding when to become a mother and how many children to have is also a form of reproductive self-care.

In common, both financial and reproductive self-care are paths to freedom, of having economic resources to solve emergencies, to escape if necessary, to protest against the assertion that specific lives do not matter, it is a place to shelter from violence, from where people decide their own life (for example, be a mother or not), from where people regain control over their bodies. Nevertheless, as the feminist writer and scholar Sara Ahmed mention, if by practising self-care we stop caring for others, then another component of self-care is related to the need and urgency of creating community networks, especially in fragile communities, where “we reassemble ourselves through the ordinary, everyday, and often painstaking work of looking after ourselves; looking after each other. We need a handle when we lose it (...) a way of holding on when the possibility you were reaching for seems to be slipping away” (Ahmed, 2017, p. 240). It is necessary to create collective care networks to sustain and continue everyday life.

7.4.2. Sororal strategies

For the social leaders of La Guajira, specifically from the Wayúu communities, responding to their personal needs and desires is the first step to starting a revolution. However, guaranteeing self-care, although essential, is only the beginning of the titanic objective of changing systems and societies to more careful and loving ones.

In her book Living a Feminist Life, Ahmed proposes that “we have to work out how to survive in a system that decides life for some
requires the death or removal of others. Sometimes to survive in a system is to survive a system. Some of us have to be inventive to survive” (2017, p. 237). In the case of the Wayúu, the ‘we’ that Ahmed refers to would be those people who unite and fight to continue existing, particularly those women who are putting their bodies on the front line of resistance (and re-existence) to what is taking place in La Guajira and that are exposing themselves to increasingly strong and violent reactions against them and the groups they are part of for surviving and rejecting a system that insists on eliminating them.

Challenges faced by activists and their forms of care were researched by Jane Barry and Jelena Đjordjevic, who, in their book What is the Point of Revolution if We Can't Dance? (2007) compiled the voices and opinions of more than 100 human-rights women activists in 45 countries to explore personal well-being strategies so that their work as defenders could be sustainable.

In this book, which is an excellent example of care and activism studies, one of the participants recounts some of the challenges, obstacles, and attacks that activists women face:

"Attention to the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of women has been one of the weakest points in our work as feminists. In the very social and institutional spheres in which we operate, the combined effects of the growing backlash against the women's movement, harassment by the media, cultural and religious fundamentalisms, the pressures resulting from having to leading organisations, and the challenges of balancing family and professional obligations, make it very difficult for everyone to conserve their energy. Many of us are tired, worn out, depressed, and angry, and many of us have been through periods of intense crisis characterised by broken relationships, family problems, betrayals by trusted people, bitterness, and deep pain” (2007, p. 4).

What this activist relates points to the fact that once the first territory (the body) is defended and cared for (or simultaneously), it is necessary to take care of the closest network, which in the case of the activists would be the group of people with whom they mobilise, the social movement of which they are a part and in which they are supported. The Wayúu women leaders, particularly those who are part of the FMW, have recounted how their care and protection
scheme does not depend on or is limited to what the State offers but rather widely falls and depends on a care network that is woven horizontally with her movement companions, from where its members are articulated so that everyone’s life is more liveable, safe and peaceful.

Care within the collective is what structures the movement’s actions. The actions of the social movement, the possibility of carrying out acts as a collective, participating in events, mobilising to protest or to seek resources, and being able to engage in politics, are some of the tasks of a social movement that require coordinated care networks. When asking about those activities or actions carried out by the Wayúu, both those that are part of the FMW movement and those that do not, that allow social mobilisation and the movement continuity, I found that the forms of care that manifest towards others, especially towards those who are putting their bodies on the front line of battle, are essential for the movement permanence.

For example, one of the FMW members mentioned the support she receives from her colleagues in the movement and her family to take care of her children in her absence. She spoke of how the community mobilises to obtain funds to support the trips of this movement through raffles and food sales and how they contact and connect with other social movements in the region to support themselves with lodging and meals when one of them needs to travel to certain places. Regarding alliances with other movements, the FMW highlights that one of the strategies for strengthening the organization and its protection is the "creation, integration and support of social networks and other community processes, for example, the network SEIMAKAN that is made up of indigenous women from the Caribbean and the network of Wayúu Pushimaajana communicators, the Network of rural women at the national level, the Wayúu Communications School and the Network of Indigenous Women on Biodiversity of Latin America and the Caribbean (REMIB – ALC)” (Fuerza de Mujeres Wayúu, n.d.).

A sensational form of collective care that FMW promotes is the political training workshops and peace lectures with a differential approach to communities in La Guajira. In 2016, the FMW movement was contacted by CINEP/ Peace Program representatives to "generate training mechanisms in political participation processes, in defence of the rights of ethnic groups, in strengthening the organisations themselves" (Cinep/PPP, 2017b).
Researchers who have accompanied these training schools indicate that the political training demanded by social organisations and Wayúu members in La Guajira is related to the need to know how to respond to extractivism and defend the environment, points on which the researchers have focused their training workshops that began in the south of La Guajira. FMW has received support from OXFAM Colombia to carry out a peace lecture with a differential approach for Wayúu children, carried out by members of the Wayúu community and members of the FMW organisation, which aims to tour the department (Notiwayuu, 2022).

There are also less visible forms of the care networks woven within social movements that are equally valuable and necessary to continue insisting on other possible worlds. Organize spaces for community meetings, take the time to explain to community members what is happening in their territories in Wayúunaiki and more straightforward ways, arrange collective petition rights, travel to other rancherías looking for support, and to cities to file complaints, and even apparently banal issues such as lending clothes, shoes, and do make-up and hair to those who are going to represent Wayúu people at social events in which these social movements meet with other actors (State, companies, NGOs, organisations) are also precious, valid and necessary forms of collective care.

Figure 7-3. Wayúu traditional weave. Guaymaral, August 2019. Photo: Daniela De Fex-Wolf
7.4.3. Re-existing with/thanks to the community

In the case of La Guajira, specifically of the Wayúu, care networks woven around the social leaders are not articulated solely by members of the social movements. Their families, friends, and other community members also build another layer of the care network that sustains the lives of the leaders and the community.

The network of community members is formed from children to the elderly population, where each has a role in this fabric that sustains life. For example, during my fieldwork in different La Guajira localities, I was able to observe how children get together in pairs or small groups to carry out essential tasks for their homes and communities, such as herding the goats, helping when the fish arrives, looking for water, firewood and food inside and outside their communities and taking care of their younger siblings in the absence of their mothers or grandmothers. Elderly members also contribute by taking care of the little ones when their parents work or when someone must travel (whether due to commitments related to the social movement or not), the children remain under the responsibility of the community adults. Likewise, in health emergencies, community members who have some form of transportation (usually a motorcycle) offer to take the patient to the nearest health centre. The community raises funds to support this transfer and take care of their families during this time.

On occasions such as births, the community is organised to celebrate the new member's arrival, where some donate goats, others are in charge of cooking, and others give clothes to the baby and the mother and take care of the new family (fieldwork observations, July to September 2019).
The forms of care woven with and within the community are manifested in different ways and from other places. During the fieldwork, I was able to observe how young Wayúu people living in urban areas (inside and outside of La Guajira) use their social networks to make complaints, publish information about the region, to give visibility on social networks to everything that concerns them, or that it is not receiving sufficient attention in the media or by the government (fieldwork observations, July to September 2019). It was interesting to see how social networks such as WhatsApp and Facebook are tools actively used by young people in the rancherías.
and outside of them to find out about their relatives who are in other communities or urban areas and accompany the growth of their younger family members and friends, or to receive photos of what their families are eating or doing in the rancherías while they are in the cities. These care networks are woven thanks to virtual tools that make them feel cared for and accompanied despite physical distances.

The FMW organisation also uses the expansion and strength of social networks to promote internal mobilisations and to take their struggles to other audiences in different places, which echoes Bayfield and collaborators' work (2020) that points out the importance and role of safe virtual spaces (such as WhatsApp or Facebook groups) to sustain feminist networks.

Recently, FMW took advantage of the success of the song We do not talk about Bruno (No Se Habla de Bruno), which is part of the repertoire of the Disney movie Encanto (which is a film inspired by Colombia), to promote and give visibility to the fight of this community against the Cerrejón company. The FMW movement launched the “Let's talk about Bruno” campaign (Quintero Díaz & Monsalve, 2022), referring to the Bruno stream, which is one of the main tributaries of the Ranchería river that supplies several Wayúu communities and is strongly threatened by the action of Cerrejón, a company that diverted it in 2017 to supply carbon extraction needs, putting the lives of the Wayúu at risk by affecting the source of drinking water that largely sustain their food systems and also attacking water bodies such as rivers and lagoons, which are essential elements of the Wayúu cosmology (Guerra Curvelo, 2015) (see more about Cerrejón- Wayúu conflicts in chapter five).
Social networks have allowed people and organisations far from La Guajira and without ties to the Wayúu to begin to be part of the struggles of this community (CENSAT Agua Viva, 2017). Since I started to carry out this research, I have noticed that members of the civilian population, traditional media (newspapers and newscasts), national research institutions (such as CINEP and CENSAT with their #LiberenAlBruno social media campaign), and research groups from both public and private universities and even companies (Grupo Éxito and Grupo Argos, both important economic groups in Colombia) have begun to follow what is happening in La Guajira closely, the progress of the IACHR ruling, the social leaders' security situation and the department water bodies condition. For the follow-up and involvement level with the Wayúu struggles, social networks have increasingly become crucial for this community since these new members of the care network are not only accompanying and supporting processes that are taking place in the Wayúu communities, but they are also exerting pressure in the national government, the elephant in the room in the Wayúu environmental and social situation.
Regarding the relationship between the State and social movements, Segato affirms that the (feminist) social movements (she refers to the feminist movement, but I consider it also applies to other social movements) should withdraw from the State (sacar los pies del campo estatal) but without abandoning it: “You cannot abandon the struggles in the State field, due to their laws, policies, and institutions. However, I want to say that we must carry out other struggles, only ours and in another field, marginal for the State aegis, with self-managed and self-protection strategies. We need stronger ties between women, ties that shield our lived spaces, regardless of laws and institutions, and that break the nuclear family model” (Gago, 2015, para. 15).

The relationship between the State and the Wayúu is complex and implies what Segato suggests: withdrawing from the State without abandoning it. On the one hand, the Wayúu withdraw from the State when they must defend their territories from the government decisions, such as the concessions that continue to be granted to resources extraction companies (see chapter five). However, on the other hand, the Wayúu people cannot ‘abandon it’ due to the magnitude of what is happening in the department; the critical humanitarian crisis (see chapter six) leads this community to seek State support for implementing water, food, health, education, and
climate change mitigation programs and to support them in their fight for human rights.

While confronting and pointing out the absence and abandonment of the State and, at the same time, seeking to receive its support at times and in specific ways, the Wayúu seek to demonstrate to the State and citizens in general that they can manage their territories, of defining what type of assistance and support they want to receive. Additionally, they insist that territorial control must continue to belong to this indigenous community, which has and must design the routes and paths and indicate who within their community is indispensable to recover their care networks and sustain life in their territories. The Wayúus are seeking to demonstrate to the State that they are a community capable of reproducing, structuring, and transforming itself; they seek to show that they are an autopoietic community.

The Brazilian geographer Marcelo Lopes de Sousa (2010) proposes that, in general terms, social movements and communities face three fundamental challenges when relating to the State: opposing the actions and decisions of the State (going against the State), fighting for the State, and build or reaffirm the autonomy of movements and communities to go beyond the State. In the case of the Wayúu, and as Lopes de Souza indicates in his work, these three relationships, or faces of the same relationship, co-occur and are complementary. The Wayúu fight against the State when they oppose large projects and the systematic denial of their human rights and their existence as an indigenous community, as well as when they point out that social leaders’ threats and regional environmental degradation occur under the Colombian State's complicit gaze (Quintero Díaz & Monsalve, 2022).

The fighting for the State occurs when the Wayúu organises themselves and make use of the tools and structures that the State itself creates and controls to claim or recover their human and community rights, as well as occupy political positions within the government63, spaces in which the indigenous presence is becoming more common.

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63Some Wayúu people are currently occupying indigenous seats in the Senate and Chamber. For example, Karmen Ramírez Boscán, a Wayúu woman, was recently elected to represent Colombian citizens abroad
The struggle to *go beyond the State* would refer to those processes and actions that the Wayúu has carried out to recover their autonomy and control over their territories while demonstrating their capacities for self-management and promoting institutions transformation from the State, national and international aid organisations, and companies. In the next section, I will emphasise processes that the Wayúu have undertaken to *go beyond the State*, understanding these as the actions this community has taken to demonstrate its autopoiesis.

### 7.5. Demonstrating autopoiesis

According to Maturana and Valera, autopoietic systems “are defined as units and as networks of production of components that recursively, through their interactions, generate and realise the network that produces them and constitute, in the space in which they exist, the boundaries of the network as components that participate in the realisation of the network” (2004, p. 21).

In this sense, a system can transform, change, and reproduce components and elements according to the system's needs or circumstances. This autopoietic capacity, which applies both in nature and societies (Escobar, 2014; Rodríguez M & Torres N, 2003), is regulated by the same system, following environmental conditions and the system members or elements' preferences or desires, achieving a state of balance, of homeostasis, between the environment and the interior. However, this balance can be affected by certain surrounding events, elements, and circumstances that affect the ability to self-regulate, to respond to stimuli, or in other words, inhibit their autopoietic capacity.

Circumstances faced by Wayúu, especially those related to the large-scale natural resources extraction in the department since the 1970s (see chapter five) and the subsequent humanitarian crisis (see chapter six), have affected and called into question the autopoietic ability of this community, essentially because Wayúu people have lost control and power over their territories, understanding these as their bodies and their lands. As presented in the previous chapters, the Wayúu deal with less power and decision-making space over their territories. Often, projects in their territories are carried out purely motivated by economic interests that benefit a few, without the
informed consent of the community (CENSAT Agua Viva, 2018), implementing bad care policies (as presented in chapter six), all of these inconsistent, insensitive and counterproductive to the Wayúu needs and desires.

In front of this scenario of dependence and self-preservation loss, the Wayúu communities and their leaders have had to find creative ways to survive and resist the current reality while appealing to be an autopoietic community, one able to build and re-exist in other worthy and careful worlds. Finding innovative tools in this context is not a simple task, especially considering that, as Audre Lorde points out, "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (1984, p. 1). However, amid a care crisis context and large-scale extractivism, the master's tools - which in this case take the form of alliances with the State, the civil population, organisations, and other institutions present in the region - are accepted, which leads to questioning how Wayúu people could be using 'the master's tools' in creative and even unsuspected ways to build on the crack and transform 'the master's house' (the current system)?

I suggest that the answer comes from the every day- a potent place- and includes two aspects or dimensions that must receive more attention: the forms or elements that are included and the rhythms in which this new world is woven, seeking to be more careful, dignified, sustainable and sympathetic realities.

In this research, I found that, in general terms, the rhythms in which the tools to build other worlds start to support communities’ movements and actions are primarily defined by external factors and times. Some examples of external factors that affect community strategies and timing are, for example, the Colombian (and Venezuelan) political scenario, the government changes (which in La Guajira are very frequent due to the recurring corrupt actions of the politicians on duty (Colombia Plural, 2017)), corruption, the abrupt discontinuation of plans and government programs and other institutions of the department due to logistical and budget problems, or environmental issues such as El Niño or La Niña phenomenon.

Within communities, families or entire rancherías migration to other regions for environmental or socio-economic reasons, public health issues (such as the hunger crisis or the pandemic), and social leaders’ threats and attacks are factors that also bring other rhythms and limits to the fabric of that different and more careful world.
In this uncertain context, community processes must be flexible and attentive enough to notice how external and internal factors can affect their weaving rhythm in different ways, either by hindering their projects, for which the community responds by focusing their energy on parallel tasks, or on the contrary, giving strength to the main objective of the community, cases in which the communities take these infrequent institutional impulses to advance and consolidate their community projects, or as the Brazilian collective *Etinerancias* alleged: “where (the collective movements) meet the flow, discharge”\(^64\) (2021, p. 35).

Choosing which master's tools will be used is necessary to avoid temporary and superficial results in the communities. As Lorde warns, "(use the system tools) may allow us temporarily to beat him (the system) at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change" (1984, p. 2). However, the Wayúu are suggesting, especially their women and leaders, that this is not always the case, as some master's tools (such as certain elements, institutions, and resources), when well used, can achieve long-term, radical changes, genuine and in favour of the (re)construction of autopoietic communities.

In the case of this community, it was possible to identify that although the national government and other institutions offer a wide variety of institutional tools (programs and projects) for the Wayúu (i.e., construction of roads, housing, delivery of means of transportation, community gardens of health centres with an ethnic focus implementation), only proposals that have characteristics or bases related to community care, territorial control, and food systems succeed to attract the Wayúus attention and commitment. The Wayúu select specific tools that the State and other institutions offer them (*struggle for the State*) to build a community project that allows autopoiesis (autonomy, self-preservation), care, and dignity, carrying out lasting and consistent processes coherent with culture and regional conditions, and that are projects that the community can sustain, that would enable the Wayúu to *go beyond the State*.

In this sense, I argue that for the Wayúu people, the central points for repairing their autopoietic capacity are the food systems recovery, the right to care, and their territorial autonomy right. These are complex demands which imply sensitivity, creativity, resourcefulness,

\(^{64}\)“(Os movimentos sociais) onde conseguem encontrar vazão, deságguam”
and knowing how to choose the institutional tools and the times to
use them. Despite the challenging context, and the few *spaces in the
crack* to build new realities and re-exist, the Wayúu have found in the
food programs an ideal *Trojan horse* to camouflage, in a nutritional
framework, their aims for the food systems and sovereignty recovery,
as well as important bases for territorial autonomy and the recovery
of the right to care and be cared for.

7.6. Using food programs as a *Trojan horse*

A legend said that the Greeks camouflaged themselves in a wooden
structure in a horse shape to enter Troy and recover Helena.
Similarly, the Wayúus are using food programs and plans designed by
the national government and other institutions to be implemented in
La Guajira as a structure that carries inside the purposes of
repositioning the collective care value, recovering their food systems
and food sovereignty, in addition, to regain autonomy and control
over their territories.

The Wayúu intervention in the food programs so that these could turn
means to the mentioned ends has not been easy. This community has
had to position its guidelines in the few gaps that the institutions
open during the design and implementation of the food programs and
be strategic in their proposals so that these could serve as channels
to contribute to other parallel objectives, taking advantage of the
different promises and resources that institutions in the region are
willing to provide to the Wayúu.
The choice of the food projects as the Trojan horse for achieving other community objectives partly occurs because these programs have become the most stable and frequent communication channel between the Wayúu communities and the institutions. Food programs are one of the common ways in which companies and institutions create connections and links with communities, either to execute food plans and projects to assist the community during crises or to implement projects as a form of reparation and compensation for the impacts of the large-extractivist projects developed in the region.

A signal of the importance of this channel is that the few relationships that exist between communities and institutions or extractive
companies have been mediated by the food programs they have been implementing in the communities, particularly for those affected by extreme weather events (droughts or floods) and for natural resources exploitation. For example, Cerrejón provides in some rancherías food and water periodically as a way of ‘repairing’ the ecosystems that it has interrupted or destroyed due to their activities, as well as EPM provides water to the rancherías closest to their projects as a way of compensating the Wayúu people for the road’s construction and wind power plants installation.

The relationship between the community and the State is different from the one the Wayúu have with extractivist companies, where, even though the State relation is intermittent and opportunistic (as the Wayúu driver describes it, "it is a relationship that only appears every four years during political races"), it is still a relationship with a longer duration compared to the one that the Wayúu have with extractivist companies, with a trajectory and a certain degree of stability and continuity in those projects that are related to food and water, where these plans have become relatively stable, and long-lasting communication means between the Wayúus and the government. For example, the relationship between the ICBF and indigenous communities through school meals and feeding programs for early childhood (such as De Cero a Siempre program) and nutrition plans for pregnant women are projects that require (and are forced by law to) direct and permanent communication between the community and this State institution.

An interesting point about the food programs is the frequency with which they interact with the communities. Institutional projects such as roads or energy networks communicate with the communities sporadically and in different intensities, being more frequent and intense the closeness between companies and communities at the beginning of the works (at the moments of conciliation with the community), during contingencies in the implementation (delays, changes) and at the time of delivering the work. On the other hand, institutional food programs are present in the communities daily, reaching a good percentage of the Wayúu population. For instance, all the seven Wayúu communities visited during the fieldwork receive some nutritional assistance from the State or other institutions.

65Program created in 2011 by the ICBF for integral early childhood care in socioeconomically vulnerable populations (see https://deceroasiempreterritorial.icbf.gov.co/)
Through these State food programs, many Wayúu families guarantee at least one of the daily meals. This quotidian relationship between food programs and communities, which for some communities and a specific population (such as children) is even the only way to acquire food, makes the food plans part of everyday life, a very powerful sphere where these programs -literally- enter the Wayúu houses every day.

Regarding food, the decision of what enters or not in the houses is mainly regulated by the Wayúu women. Nutritional organisations such as the FAO are aware of this. According to one of the FAO agents interviewed, food plans designed for Wayúu communities have the advice and evaluation of the women of this community, as, according to him, Wayúu women are the leading nutrition experts in the community (FAO officer. Riohacha, August 2019). Something similar was reported by one of the officials of the ICBF, that commented that school menus must be consulted with women from the Wayúu community before being implemented in schools (Riohacha, August 2019), which has become one of the gaps that the Wayúu (especially women) have been using to install their guidelines in the institutional food programs.

When analysing the community demands regarding food plans and programs that seek to be implemented in the region, it was possible to notice that many of the community claims echo food sovereignty arguments or pillars (Declaration of Nyéléni: Forum for Food Sovereignty, 2007). Although it is interesting to mention that none of the Wayúu people interviewed during this research who have participated in food plans consultation and conciliation processes mentioned food sovereignty in their speeches and that even the ICBF is not very familiar with this concept, as noted by one of the ICBF officials who indicated that “I did not fully understand what food sovereignty means” (Riohacha, August 2019).

The Wayúu food plans consultants mentioned that for them, the food provided by institutions and companies must correspond to the specific needs and preferences of the Wayúu (Food sovereignty principle 1. Food for the people); that Wayúu food systems and food providers present in the communities need to be considered in the food policies (i.e., livestock and agricultural activities current in the community) (principle 3. Locate the food systems, and principle 4. Situate control at the local level); and that is required to validate and recognise the knowledge of women who care for (and feed) such as
mothers and grandmothers in the design of food plans and school menu (Principle 5. Promotes the knowledge and skills of the community).

For example, Zaida - a community leader, authority, and a recognised cook at the national level that has participated in national gastronomy fairs- is one of the evaluators of the ICBF food programs for her community. In conversations with this institution, she suggested exchanging certain cereals and proteins for others, justifying that these are more related to the Wayúu culture and that are more easily accessible (in economic terms because they are cheaper and in physical access terms because they can be acquired in or near the community). Zaida proposes, for example, changing the lentil (a food not produced in the country and imported from Canada and the United States) for Guajiro beans, which are from the region and can be harvested every two or three months. She also proposed to change chicken- which is brought frozen from the interior of the country, requiring continuing the cold chain in communities with little

Figure 7-8. A Wayúu woman weaving a hammock. Guaymaral, September 2019. Photo: Daniela De Fex-Wolf
or no access to electricity and refrigerators and freezers, then increasing the probability of losing food or consuming them in poor condition—by goats, which could be acquired in the community or neighbouring rancherías and that do not need a cold chain to be preserved, since this meat is habitually preserved through traditional techniques such as salting, smoking or preservation in oils or fats.

Another of the Wayúu mentioned that in her community, they are asking the ICBF to exchange cow's milk for goat's milk, arguing that it is nutritionally equivalent (the caloric value and the content of minerals and vitamins are similar) and that Wayúu children are more accustomed to goat's milk, which reduces the cases of indigestion and diarrhoea that are reported when children consume cow's milk (fieldwork observations, Cabo de la Vela, July 2019).

The inclusion of water in food programs is a challenge for the Wayúu. This resource is a complex issue for the Wayúu and institutions (Ulloa, 2018b, 2020). Although water is essential for food (it allows food to be cooked and washed, it is necessary for the population's nutritional recovery, and it is a public health matter), it is a resource very scarce and difficult to access in the department and institutions that provide food in La Guajira do not want, cannot or are not responsible for guaranteeing communities access to water. For example, according to one of the ICBF officials interviewed in Riohacha: "The ICBF does not have within its obligations, nor its actions, the tools to supply water, also because it is not up to the ICBF, that belongs to other entities" (Riohacha, August 2019).

According to the ICBF, they are not responsible for supplying water to communities where the ICBF has a presence. However, rancherías are demanding to send a water tank along with the food brought for the ICBF school menus, justifying that it is impossible to prepare food for children's schools without water. Given this, the ICBF has no other option but to agree with the community's request and deliver water to their schools, a concession that the communities are using to suggest to the ICBF that instead of frequently sending car tanks to communities, grant resources to the community to artesian wells construction. In specific communities, the ICBF has accepted this proposal and has sponsored wells and water mills construction, which are built aiming to provide water to children's schools but have ended up benefiting the entire community, who now have more stable access to water (fieldwork observations, June to September 2019).
When the Wayúu achieve the inclusion of local foods in institutional programs (such as Guajiro beans, goat meat or milk), obtain resources for water well construction, and get their traditional knowledge validated, recognised, or consulted to advise the institutions, they are showing some ways in which the communities use the master’s tools and are managing to ‘take advantage’ of gaps opened by the institutions during the food programs negotiation and conciliation processes to create or recover their food systems and their food sovereignty. Likewise, by trying to rebuild their food sovereignty using specific tools provided by the State, the Wayúu show that some forms of re-existence can arise from the same institutions (i.e., the national government) that have excluded, dispossessed and violated them for decades. In this process, the community also ends up signalling and re-signifying spaces as intimate and unnoticed as the community kitchen as the place from which another possible world begins to be proposed.

Interestingly, in this research, it was possible to observe that in these negotiations, the Wayúus not only ended up recovering part of their food systems and food sovereignty through the unintended institutional and companies’ support but also these processes between communities and institutions, commonly led by Wayúu women, are also generating particular ‘secondary effects’ in other spheres of this community, such as progress in the right to care and territorial autonomy.
Regarding care, it should be highlighted that specific community demands regarding food program design only can be fulfilled if some care networks are re-established and recognised. To begin with, and as mentioned above, Wayúu women's participation in institutional meetings is possible thanks to a network of people, especially other Wayuu women, who are in charge of feeding, accompanying, cleaning, and/or taking care of the children, spouses and older adults of those who attend the meetings. Although none of the food institutions interviewed during the fieldwork promotes or recognises
This invisible network that allows Wayúu women to participate in gatherings around nutritional issues, the community organizes internally to facilitate the participation of these Wayúu women in these meetings, which also illustrates how community organizational processes support their members and require these daily care networks to persist.

Although the institutions do not explicitly support or encourage care and their networks, or this is not their primary objective, they do so when they support the communities' requests for certain foods (such as goat or Guajiro beans). For example, the Guaymaral community, appealing for the right to prior consultation with indigenous communities, required the ICBF to change the chicken from the school menu for goat meat bought from the community, and the ICBF accepted the proposal. The institutions had to contract with the community goats' owners to be the school's official goat meat suppliers. These agreements between the Wayúu people and food institutions end up recovering or reinforcing Wayúu food systems such as goat farming, which now receives economic support and demand from the ICBF, and also reintegrates or includes certain members of the community (shepherds and/or cattle owners) in some community decisions.

Including local and traditional food items in food programs generate effects beyond those resulting from the economic transaction between the community and institutions. When institutions accept to include certain foods in the school menus or resolve to support the water wells construction in the Wayúu communities, the institutions end up backup and even depending on the care networks that are needed to produce certain foods or to build specific infrastructure within the communities. For example, the demand for certain grains such as Guajiro beans or corn forces the ICBF to look for a supplier of these within the community or in neighbouring rancherías or requires them to create agricultural plans to plant them in the communities and then buy the product. Likewise, with the agriculture reactivation supported by institutions, other members of the community, such as elders and young people, return to be involved in feeding children and re-establish particular social dynamics that are created thanks to agriculture, such as caring for the crops, the organisation within the ranchería to take care of the irrigation, the harvest, and the crops surveillance, and the subsequent distribution, sale, or exchange of these foods.
Although these community organisation processes are closely linked or mainly motivated by agriculture and grazing activities, the consequences of the links that are created and the involvement of various (other) community members in these processes are also perceived in other community spheres that are not necessarily related to nutrition or food systems, such as the processes of transmitting local knowledge, or creating valuable support networks for different actions (as improve house structures) or strengthening circular economy networks. In other words, this ends up having repercussions on the right to care and be cared for, an issue in which the Wayúu have been losing autonomy over the last four decades (as I presented in chapter five, the Wayúu began to lose the right to care during the evangelisation process and especially when the Wayúu children were interned in Capuchin centres).

With the food systems and food sovereignty recovery (many of these driven by negotiations with institutions), the community also advanced in their right to autonomy and territorial control rights regained. During the fieldwork, it was possible to observe differences in the degree of control that each ranchería has over its territory and in the negotiation process for the use of the land between the communities and external agents (for example, road construction or power lines instalment) according to the food system recovery level or stability of a ranchería. Differences in negotiation processes and territorial control were notable between those communities that had water wells, mills, cattle and/or community gardens and those that did not have this, where the former could reach more horizontal and fair agreements compared to those with more fragile food systems or that wholly dependent on food assistance.
Silvio community has achieved (through negotiation processes with State institutions such as the ICBF) to implement community gardens and promote the consumption of Wayúu food in the community school. Likewise, the ranchería has used royalties granted by the government (delivered to the communities most affected by megaprojects) to construct a water well and improve roads and homes. This infrastructure (roads, improved housing, community gardens, and water well), together with knowledge of indigenous legislation (as well as the growing number of members of their community entering higher education institutions), has allowed his ranchería (Montañita) to achieve better conditions in the contracts and negotiations that take place between the community and external agents. For example, in 2019, the community was in a land-use conciliation process with a power company requesting to build one of the power towers on the outskirts of the community. As Silvio told me, the company offered to compensate them with $125 million (£25,000 approx.) for using a part of their territory for 25 years (£1,000 per year). The community met and sought the advice of engineers, architects, and economists from this community, who, after analysing the proposal, rejected the insignificant value offered.
and indicated to the company's negotiator that his proposal was offensive:

You are not dealing with animals here. You are not negotiating a bundle of cassava; here, we are negotiating our territory. In the prior consultation, it was agreed that no technician, engineer, or even the president could come here to disrespect any community member, even if it is a child, or even mistreat any animal. (Maicao, August 2019)

The community obtained the value they requested, several times higher than what was offered, money they used to improve the water well, their houses, school, and a small power plant installation. In contrast, the neighbouring ranchería that is in the same impact area of the project, so that it would be equally affected by the power tower, was unable to renegotiate the value offered by the power company (£25,000 for 25 years of land use).

Figure 7-11. Montañita ranchería. August 2019. Photo: Daniela De Fex-Wolf
The discrepancies in the negotiation achieved by these two communities lie mainly in the differences in the degree of community organisation and the infrastructure of each of these communities. While Montañita ranchería has a community garden, water wells, a school within the community, and respected and supported community leaders, the neighbouring ranchería - which is of a similar size, has an equal number of members, and the same environmental conditions - has a very fragile food system, depend on food assistance and regular water supplies and do not have a water well, community gardens, cattle or school in the community.

Infrastructure and community organisation, which in this case have been mainly supported and promoted by the agreements with the institutions’ 'coverup' in food systems recovery aims, seem to be establishing negotiating rules and arrangements that can be reached in a community with external agents, and these (infrastructure and community organisation) seem to be avoiding, or at least hindering, dispossession by allowing the ranchería to continue in their territory and recover the option recreate their means for life in that place.

How the Wayúu, especially their women, have identified and used the gaps and institutional tools to recover their food systems- and with this advance in the recovery of other rights such as care and territorial autonomy- represents creative, recursive, and careful re-existence forms that occur from the quotidian, and pointing out paths to different possible futures where life can be re-signified that have as their starting point a place as powerful as invisible as the community kitchen. It is thanks to the care networks - which women essentially lead- that exists and is possible a community's food systems and the daily food consumed, and that it is also the place from which the Wayúu are showing their autopoietic capacity, that is, their ability to transform, change and adjust to the pressures and circumstances of the environment, as well as the place from which they exhibit and propose (gendered) forms of resistance to the many and diverse forms of violence that Wayús have been facing for years.
7.7. Chapter summary

In this chapter, I explored the Wayúu resisting and re-existing strategies from their body-territories to the impacts of extractivism, violence, and social, political, and environmental issues in La Guajira. I argued that the Wayúu are using their autopoietic capacity, which in this study refers to the community’s ability to create or rebuild those systems or elements that allow the continuity of life through networks and forms of collective and individual care, supported by food sovereignty elements. In these processes, the Wayúu bodies, especially the women ones, are becoming territories of struggle,
resistance, and creation of alternatives to re-exist, deploying actions that include self-care (such as financial care or reproductive care), sorority care (those strategies that are created among the women of the community to take care of each other), and care with and through the neighbourhood (those forms of care that involve people inside and outside the community).

These care strategies that are created by the community seek, in general, to go beyond the State, that is, to build or reaffirm the autonomy of the community to make or intervene in decisions that could affect the Wayúu bodies-territories or, put in other terms, reconstruct or reaffirm the autopoietic capacity of this community. Seeking to demonstrate their autopoiesis, the Wayúus are using State tools, or the master tools (Lorde, 1984), to recover rights over the territory and its food systems and food sovereignty. The master tools that the Wayúu are using are mainly linked to the food programs implemented in La Guajira by the State (i.e., ICBF) and other national or international institutions related to food or humanitarian assistance (i.e., FAO, WFP).

Humanitarian assistance programs have been taken by the Wayúu as Trojan horses to ‘camouflage’ their claims in terms of rights to care, territorial autonomy, and food sovereignty within the agreements reached after the negotiations and demands that they are created around the delivery of food and water like, for example, when in the school feeding program, the community proposes to food institutions the exchange of chicken for goat meat, alleging that the latter is more easily accessible and its meat is preserved without the need of freezers, a proposal that -when accepted- results in the reactivation of grazing networks, community economy and the participation of more community members in school feeding programs, which ultimately ends up promoting care networks and community food sovereignty.

In these processes of resistance and re-existence, the Wayúu women are the main protagonists. On the one hand, women are often the first to experience territorial transformations in their bodies since their working hours increase, the food on their plates is reduced, or the distances are searching for water increases. Likewise, women have identified food systems and food sovereignty as means for socio-environmental transformations in their territories and communication channels with institutions present in La Guajira, and making use of their quality as experts in nutrition and their authority
and leadership roles inside communities, have been able to identify different food systems components or activities and have linked community members to them, increasing community participation in institutional food programs, as well as in care networks.

On the other hand, Wayúu women display particular and powerful forms of resistance and re-existence, such as the transmission of knowledge through generations and the creation of sorority care networks that allow, for example, certain members to participate in events of interest to the community.

Interestingly, and echoing feminist geographers such as Zaragocín (2021), Ojeda (2020; 2021), Ulloa (2016a, 2016b, 2018a, 2021), and academic ethic theorists such as Tronto (2017), these forms of resistance and re-existence are occurring from household and bodies, a small and invisible (almost despised) scale, from where other possible worlds are being cooked, where we all fit, and where care and relationships are the main ingredients.
8. Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

From understanding the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira as a crisis of care, in this thesis, I examined how relationships, networks, practices, and forms of care between humans and more-than-human have been transformed, especially as a result of large-scale extractivist activities and pointed out the forms and practices of care that have allowed communities to resist and re-exist (Albán Achinte, 2013).

From La Guajira, and specifically from the hand of the Wayúu indigenous community, I argued that care is a political dimension and practice that has been strongly intimidated and threatened by large-scale extractivist activities, especially by the projects that have been installed in the department since the 70s until today. I postulated that the Wayúu community food systems and food sovereignty have been (and are being) reflecting these changes, transferring territorial changes to the interior of the homes and bodies of the community members. At the same time, I proposed food sovereignty as a place to start transformations towards other economic, social, political and environmental systems or models that are more diverse, careful, aware of planetary limits, and worthy. In this analysis, I made use of arguments, perspectives, and tools of (feminist) political ecology that allowed me to identify how the effects of territorial transformations and crises in La Guajira are experienced differently by community members, and that also led me to make visible how the Wayúu communities, especially women, are creating strategies and daily practices to sustain or rebuild their care networks, taking food systems and food sovereignty as a starting point, and empowering and making visible collective care networks that can be created from their own houses.

This thesis pointed to care as an essential practice for sustaining social fabric, establishing more-than-human relationships (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017), and as a potentially transformative place. The following section summarises the main contributions of the empirical chapters of this thesis, the central debates in which this thesis is inserted, and points out some topics for future research for those
interested in issues related to ethics of care, political ecology, and food sovereignty.

8.2. Contributions from this thesis

This thesis arose from the curiosity to understand the roots of the food crisis in La Guajira, which is particularly affecting the Wayúu community. I started from the fact that this is not a consequence of a lack of food in the department but of systemic and structural failures that resulted in a humanitarian crisis.

Through research, I found that the networks of care that sustain life, and especially those that create around food systems and food sovereignty, had been transformed or even eliminated due to significant territorial transformations (such as large-scale extractivism) and socio-political and environmental situations, such as Venezuelan migration, drug trafficking and climate change. The crisis in La Guajira is thus the result of impacts on care networks; in other words, the crisis in La Guajira is a care crisis.

In La Guajira, difficulties in exercising the right to care (being cared for and the possibility of caring) are linked to the development discourse, which has influenced social, political, and economic models, and its rhythms, hoarding of resources, and constitute a form of expansion that blur planetary boundaries and underestimate the socio-environmental dynamics that sustain life, such as the interaction and relationality between humans and more-than-human worlds. Many of these relationships, or all, are based on relationships of mutual care (Y. Herrero, 2020; Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017; J. Tronto, 2017).

This research suggested two main elements to elucidate La Guajira crisis solution, both guided by perspectives and tools of the ethics of care, political ecology (feminist) and food sovereignty: it is necessary to recognise that development discourses are affecting care networks and relationships. On the other hand, this research invites us to identify and highlight forms of resistance and re-existence that communities create in the face of threats and attacks on the right to care, stressing that communities have not remained immobile in front of transformations and changes that have affected their everyday life.

Regarding this second point, and as I describe below, this thesis argues that food systems, food sovereignty, and diets are the first places or dimensions where territorial changes are reflected (such as
those resulting from extractivist activities), as well as the places where are gestated forms of collective resistance.

In this thesis, I stress that the ‘people who care’ are the first to feel the attacks on the right to care and are also the first to mobilise for their recovery and defence, which resonates with and supports arguments from the feminist political ecology and ecofeminism (Segato, 2013; Shiva, 1989b), that argues that women mobilise more actively in the face of transformations and threats to their territories. Regarding this, one of the conclusions of this thesis is to indicate that the possibility or the fact of losing the right to care -understanding this as being able to care and feeling cared for- is a powerful social mobiliser.

Even though care is a daily activity carried out or received to a greater or lesser extent by everyone throughout life, the discussions regarding its importance remain limited and restricted to particular disciplines or spaces (i.e., private spaces or social or health sciences) (J. Tronto, 2010).

Care continues to be associated with intimate and private spheres of life (home) and restricted to women, who seem to be the only beings who care or for whom care is relevant. Feminist economics has been making significant advances in the importance of care, placing it as a nucleus of discussion with significant relevance for public spheres, as shown by Silvia Federici (2013) and Natalia Quiroga Díaz (2019). They demonstrate in their works that capitalism, for example, essentially functions because it relies on unpaid work. According to recent studies, the economic contribution of this ‘invisible’ work is equivalent to 20% of GDP, and women (those who care) make 70% of this contribution (Vaca, 2021).

This thesis contributed by showing that food sovereignty is also a field of study from which care is supported, valued, and visibilized and from where its transforming power is celebrated. In this research, an analysis of the Wayúu food systems, diets, and food sovereignty demonstrated that these systems are sustained thanks to caring networks and relationships that are woven inside Wayúu communities and with other communities (indigenous or not), between different ecosystems and non-human organisms, and between the human and the non-human worlds. I also illustrated, from food systems and food sovereignty, how care relationships are
highly affected by territorial transformations, producing crises such as the one faced by the Wayúu people.

Likewise, this research signalizes that care is common with different disciplines, which from their fields of action, come to discuss and contribute to the assessment of care and relationships.

Emotional political ecology studies, for example, have suggested that emotions matter when evaluating nature-society relations because, as affirmed by Farhana Sultana, "emotions are always embodied experiences signifying, among other things, that a thorough understanding of specific sites and contexts is a prerequisite for any serious research endeavour – a point that sits remarkably well with a core ethos in (feminist) political ecology" (2008, p. 634). The ethics of care highlights emotions as a manifestation of care, of importance for the other (human or more-than-human). Regarding this, I could register that for Wayúu people, emotions of anger, frustration, sadness, or impotence fuel their social manifestations.

In the following sections, I will expose this thesis's contributions and the answers to the questions of this research.

8.2.1. Large-scale extractivism and (relationship) sacrifice zones

In this chapter, I analysed the influence of the development discourse in La Guajira on the care networks of the Wayúu communities, showing that this discourse had led to the implementation of large-scale extractive projects in the department, which the national government and other institutions promoted under the promise of well-being, progress, development, and more recently, climate change mitigation, pledges that Astrid Ulloa (2021) defines as imaginary realities: hard-to-fulfil promises in exchange for an excessive natural resources exploitation.

I showed that these imaginary realities deny the value of relationships by promoting almost exclusively a project of things - investment in material things and the association of these with well-being and progress- above the support or promotion of the project of ties- the investment in creating and sustaining relationships and care networks (Segato, 2021), which ends up creating what I called relationship sacrifice zones, which I define as: those regions, territories or places in which- due to the destruction, appropriation or contamination of the place- is not possible or is difficult to sustain or
create relationships within people, within the non-human (for example, ecosystems or ecological relationships between non-humans beings and their environments), and among people and the non-human.

I argued that the extractivist projects and their imaginary realities present three characteristics, or logics, that allowed or led to the creation of relationship sacrifice zones in La Guajira by i) affecting relationships within the Wayúu communities with other human groups (indigenous or not), and with other non-humans; ii) suggest that relationships and care networks can be ‘replaced’ by assistentialist programs, and iii) the imaginary reality adaptability capacity can easily and quickly adapt to mainstream or starting discourses (i.e., from promising social welfare to pledging climate change mitigation).

I claimed that development discourses and their imaginary realities, regardless of their version, are incapable of sustaining, replacing, or reconstructing care networks (care and extractivism are antonyms), supporting from the ethics of care perspective what political ecology academics such as Gudynas (2020), Acosta (2017) or Svampa (2015) have been indicating in their studies about the development discourses incompetence to fulfil their promises of well-being or progress.

In this thesis, I proposed that the ethics of care, together with food sovereignty, support and point out some characteristics that must be considered in the transformation of systems, such as the valuation of relationships, care networks, diversity, and participation, where the everyday is a place from where these systemic transformations are discussed and are moved towards worlds that start to value the project of ties over the project of things.

8.2.2. Good care, bad care, and food sovereignty in times of crisis
In this chapter, I focus on the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira and explore whether there were components or elements of the ethics of care in the food policies and programs implemented by State and international institutions during this crisis. I showed that part of the failure comes from designing food policies mainly guided by a food security approach and also because institutional policies implemented welfare programs trying to ‘replace’ lost or affected care networks resulting from extractivism and other social, political, economic, and
environmental factors (such as the climate crisis or the political and migratory crisis in Venezuela), replicating development discourses and their imaginary realities approach and logic (as previously mentioned).

In addition, I illustrated how the absence of ethics of care approaches in these institutions leads to bad care policies (Mol, 2008). For Joan Tronto, bad care represents those institutions or policies that "lack adequate accounts of power, purpose, and plurality" (2010, p. 163). In the case of La Guajira, I could identify that the food policies implemented did not seek to create horizontal power relations between institutions and communities or attend to the specific needs and demands of the community (on the contrary, food institutions promote homogenised, standardised, and ideally packaged food plans), nor sought or promoted that Wayúu communities reach or regain autonomy (both in nutritional and territorial terms). Another result of this bad care policy is that food programs fail and waste resources and time at crucial moments.

I argued that the food sovereignty approach could guide the management of food crises since its arguments, pillars, and practices translate to practice ethics of care arguments, leading guides to designing good care food policies. For example, food sovereignty proposes and seeks the appreciation of the particularities and the context (proposing the creation of food systems that respond to the needs, preferences, and characteristics of the place and the communities), incites the need for spaces for participation and food systems collectively designed (puts people at the centre of decisions), fight for systems free of oppression and discrimination (recognises that oppression, violence, and inequalities can be faced from food systems) and values nutritional diversity as a reflection of human diversity. All these components echo the main features of the ethics of care: relationality, collaboration, and diversity.

8.2.3. Recovering care rights through food sovereignty
In the last empirical chapter of the thesis, I focus on the Wayúu community and its forms of resistance to the care crisis. Recognising that marginalised communities have always resisted crises and threats to their body-territories (Cruz Hernández, 2016; Cruz Hernández & Bayón Jiménez, 2020), I indicated that the Wayúu people had done so from resistance and re-existence forms and
strategies, the latter defined by Albán-Achinte as "devices that communities create and develop to invent life daily and thus be able to confront the reality established by the hegemonic projects that have inferiorized, silenced and negatively made visible (some) communities" (2013, p. 455).

Through the analysis of these strategies, I stated that the Wayúu, and in particular the Wayúu women, are responding to threats and attacks on their body-territories on three fronts: self-care when creating individual protection strategies (as financial care and reproductive care); sororal care networks, which I define as collective care networks that are woven with the closest relatives, friends or colleagues, where empathy and the feminist ear are crucial elements (Ahmed, 2017, 2021); and networks that are created with other members inside and outside the community, in which Wayúu members participate, as well as other indigenous communities, social movements, academics, and those members of the population (indigenous or not) that resonate or support the demands of the Wayúu, connections that are currently being created through virtuality.

Care networks weaving from the Wayúus bodies to other territories are fulfilling three central functions: i) helping them to defend, sustain and protect their body-territories; ii) allowing the Wayúu people to demonstrate or recover the autopoietic capacity of the community, which I outline, supported by the definition of autopoiesis by biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela (2004), as the capacity of a community to build, transform and/or rebuild their own systems in the face of specific impacts, whenever it is necessary and/or whenever it is desired; and iii) these care networks are allowing the community to go beyond the State (the elephant in the room), which in the context of this thesis is understood as the actions carried out by communities and/or social movements to reaffirm or build their autonomy (Lopes de Souza, 2010).

Regarding this last point, going beyond the State, I argued that paradoxically- the Wayúu are recovering their autonomy by using State tools and resources (or using the master tools, following Audre Lorde's work (1984)). In this research, I was able to identify that in some rancherías, State food programs (as well as others coming from non-State institutions and organisations) are being used by the Wayúu, particularly by the women of this community, as Trojan
horses to camouflage struggles and claims for their right to food, water, territorial autonomy, and care.

Much of this ‘coverup’ has been thanks to food sovereignty, whose arguments and practices are being used by communities to justify their claims, demands, and requests regarding food and food systems (for example, when demanding guajiros beans instead of lentils or proposing the change from cow’s milk to goat’s milk), which, when accepted, brings benefits to other care networks and other relationships that go beyond food systems, such as the reactivation of circular economy systems or the reincorporation of labour to the communities (i.e., Wayúus who used to work in other places now find paid work opportunities in their communities).

Likewise, in this research, it was possible to notice that in situations of negotiation between Wayúu communities and external agents (i.e., energy or road construction companies), communities with more stable or active care networks achieve fairer agreements and more favourable negotiations deals compared to those communities with less strong care networks, indicating that care is a practice that can lead to challenging systems of oppression and inequality.

8.3. Implications of this thesis in current debates
Political ecology, especially in Latin America and the global south, has focused mainly on studying extractivism and its socio-environmental effects (Martínez-Alier et al., 2021), while in other geographies, such as the global north, the focus is on the relationship between climate change and socio-environmental conflicts (Sultana, 2021b). These relationships identified by political ecology are relevant to current times, especially when we consider that nature-society relationships are changing rapidly and generating impacts as significant and severe as a pandemic.

Authors such as Sören Köpke (2021) have indicated that political ecology has not had a strong voice in recent debates on the food systems-socioenvironmental transformations nexus. In particular, the author warns that political ecology has surprisingly remained on the sidelines of discussions about hunger and malnutrition and debates around the connection between climate change, food insecurity and social conflicts. This research seeks to contribute to this gap pointed out by Köpke by indicating how political ecology has sufficiently powerful and revealing tools to point directly to the geopolitical and
socioeconomic roots of food crises, such as the one experienced by the Wayúu, and confront the mainstream discourse that mistakenly insists that hunger is a food lack problem.

Political ecology is one of the fields that has given more openness to new methodologies to explain, understand or relate a situation and its impacts, such as a crisis (Colectivo Miradas Críticas del Territorio desde el Feminismo, 2017; Zaragocin & Caretta, 2021). Emotions as a research methodology are becoming increasingly important (González-Hidalgo & Zografos, 2020; Sultana, 2008), becoming an important tool to recount the experiences of researchers during and after fieldwork (Fois, 2017) or to describe and analyse the lives and challenges of colleagues and research participants (Bayfield et al., 2020), where emotions often represent channels of collective strength.

Authors such as Joyce Davidson and Christine Milligan state that the "recognition of the inherently emotional nature of embodiment has led many to the conclusion that we need to explore how we feel—as well as think—through 'the body'" where "our emotional relations and interactions weave through and help form the fabric of our unique personal geographies" (2004, p. 523).

In this regard, Marien González-Hidalgo and Christos Zografos (2020) indicate that more studies are needed to capture emotions and personal-political dimensions in front of environmental conflicts. With this thesis, I contribute to this purpose by indicating how dignified rage is an emotion shared by different social sectors that strengthen social mobilisation against extractivist projects in Colombia, specifically in La Guajira. Likewise, hope makes its way amid this care crisis scenario thanks to collective care networks from where other worlds are being imagined and installed.

Care is a field of research that is increasingly capturing the geography interest (Schwiter & Steiner, 2020). Some geographers have explored how care has political potential, revalues power positions and asymmetries, and allows for the construction of different spaces (Hanrahan & Smith, 2020). The role of care in geography has been thoroughly investigated in the global north but has not been sufficiently explored elsewhere, such as in the global south. It is necessary to understand how care varies (its practices, its networks, its meaning) in different places and for other actors (Hanrahan & Smith, 2020; Raghuram, 2016). This thesis contributes
to this field, illustrating how care is understood, experienced and practised in Wayúu communities. I present different forms of care, such as self-care or sororal care, and explain how care is a practice that defies boundaries, as when is done in virtual dimensions (Schwiter & Steiner, 2020) where, for example, social movements receive (virtual) support and accompaniment from different sectors inside and outside the country through WhatsApp messages or crowdfunding. Likewise, I contribute to the care literature by showing how in Wayuu communities, care is created with non-human worlds, when are established relationships of care and responsibility for that other world, such as when children take care of animals, community gardens or water, and simultaneously create links with those other beings and spaces.

The relationship between care and food systems also represents an important current gap in the literature. Some studies have explored the relationship between agriculture (the care of other worlds) and human well-being and health (Coulson, 2016; Hayes-Conroy & Hayes-Conroy, 2013) and how places like community gardens (collective care places) are resistance spaces and from where oppressive systems are challenged (Hanmer, 2021). Although, little is known about how food systems practices (or the food sovereignty construction) could lead to or allow the ethics of care development and transformation (Giraud, 2021). This thesis contributes mainly to this gap by pointing out how it can recover and strengthen care practices and networks by reconstructing food systems and food sovereignty.

8.4. Future Research and Final Reflection
Throughout the research and writing of this thesis, I identified some topics that I consider interesting to explore further, most of them related to food sovereignty and political ecology. Understanding how care networks around food are created and maintained requires further research. It would be interesting to explore children’s role in food systems and food sovereignty (during the fieldwork, I noticed that children play essential roles in this). Far from romanticising those activities as these are child labour, an exploration of this could shed light on the children’s role in the reproduction of life through their participation in the food systems about to what extent their roles in the food system interfere in the construction of their identity,
or in how events such as a crisis particularly affected this population (nutritionally and from a mental health perspective).

Another area that requires further exploration is the connection between the body-territory concept and food. Socio-environmental problems such as deforestation, mining, agribusiness, or hydroelectric plants tend to generate specific effects on the food items consumed by communities inhabiting regions where these activities occur, leading to communities suffering from poisoning, allergies, and intestinal or skin problems. Health illness associated with extractivist activities is a form of violence that daily harm the food consumed and highlights the connections between the territory and the body.

The role of the State in the construction of food sovereignty remains one of the main questions for food scholars (B. McKay et al., 2014; Roman-Alcalá, 2018; Schiavoni, 2019; Thompson, 2019). This thesis endorsed that more research is needed on how communities are (re)building their food sovereignty without the State, or as the Wayúu are doing it, using its tools and resources in favour of their autonomy.

Finally, more studies are needed to explore the role of the relationships woven in virtual dimensions (through social networks, blogs, and message systems) in the strengthening and expansion of care networks, especially the virtual interactions that occur in times of crisis and social upheaval.

Care networks are going through one of the decades' most challenging and complex moments. The pandemic, the climate crisis, the constant war and hunger, and growing poverty accelerated at cruel rates are symptoms of a generalised and global care crisis. In this context, talking about care is becoming more frequent and urgent, signalling a momentum to (finally) truly take care of the private sphere and raise it in the public sphere. It is an excellent time to insist on locating care in the middle of the systems (put life in the centre) and, from there, build policies and systems that give priority to other elements different from those that have been central up to now (i.e., economic growth), with policies that adjust to and respect the planetary limits, and that allows a world where several worlds fit.

I hope that this thesis contributes to drawing attention to the importance of care and its incredible power, to the need to place it at the centre of decision-making processes, to emphasise its ability to connect with different disciplines- and the energy that care arguments acquire when combined with food sovereignty and political
ecology-, and to highlight the everyday care networks as a crucial scale for socio-political problems exploration and analysis.

Care practices and relationships are tremendously powerful, transformative, sensitive, and of course, tasty.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Approval Form

Cardiff School of Geography and Planning

SUBMISSION OF ETHICAL APPROVAL FORMS

Staff and MPhil/PhD Projects

ALL FORMS FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SCHOOL ETHICS COMMITTEE IN GOOD TIME (PREFERABLY 2 WEEKS) BEFORE THE NEXT SCHEDULED SREC MEETING.

An electronic version must to emailed to Ethan Lumb, Secretary of Ethics Committee LumbE@cardiff.ac.uk / Tel Ext: 76412/ Room 2.54 Glamorgan Building as a work attachment, bearing a relevant staff and/or PGR Student signatures.

Title of Project:
Culture implications in food security and gender roles. A case study in a coastal indigenous community

Name of researcher(s):
Daniela De Fex Wolf

Date: 31/10/2018

Signature of lead researcher:

Student project

Anticipated Start Date of Fieldwork:
03/12/2018

Recruitment Procedures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Does your project include children under 16 years of age?

Have you read the Child Protection Procedures below?

Does your project include people with learning or communication difficulties?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Does your project include people in custody?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Is your project likely to include people involved in illegal activities?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Does your project involve people belonging to a vulnerable group, other than those listed above?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Does your project include people who are, or are likely to become your clients or clients of the department in which you work?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Does your project include people for whom English / Welsh is not their first language?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Have you read the Data Protection Policy below?</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Have you read the Health &amp; Safety Policy below?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cardiff University's Child Protection Procedures:*


If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above questions please outline (in an attached ethics statement) how you intend to deal with the ethical issues involved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Protection:</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

296
If you have answered 'no' to any of these questions please explain (in your ethics statement) the reasons for your decision and how you intend to deal with any ethical decisions involved

### Possible Harm to Participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing a detriment to their interests as a result of participation?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Research Governance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Does your study include the use of a drug? You will need to contact Research Governance before submission (<a href="mailto:resgov@cf.ac.uk">resgov@cf.ac.uk</a>)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Does the study involve the collection or use of human tissue? You will need to contact the Human Tissue Act team before submission (<a href="mailto:hta@cf.ac.uk">hta@cf.ac.uk</a>)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If there are any risks to the participants you must explain in your ethics statement how you intend to minimise these risks

### Data Protection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Will any non-anonymised and/or personalised data be generated and/or stored?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Will you have access to documents containing sensitive data about living individuals? If &quot;Yes&quot; will you gain the consent of the individuals concerned?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data protection Act Guidelines

https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/data-protection

If there are any other potential ethical issues that you think the Committee should consider please explain them in an ethics statement. It is your obligation to bring to the attention of the Committee any ethical issues not covered on this form.
**Health and Safety:**

Does the research meet the requirements of the University's Health & Safety policies?


Does the study involve the collection or use of human tissue (including, but not limited to, blood, saliva and bodily waste fluids)?

If yes, a copy of the submitted application form and any supporting documentation must be emailed to the Human Tissue Act Compliance Team (HTA@cf.ac.uk). A decision will only be made once these documents have been received.

**Risk Assessment**

Has the relevant risk assessment form been completed?

Research abroad, complete:  
\Geoplpool1\geopl\SHARED\05 - RESEARCH\ETHICS\SREC Forms & guidance\SREC Risk Assessment Forms\RA_Abroad_Example.doc

Research in the UK, complete:  
\Geoplpool1\geopl\SHARED\05 - RESEARCH\ETHICS\SREC Forms & guidance\SREC Risk Assessment Forms\RA_UK_Example.doc

Research on campus, complete:  
\Geoplpool1\geopl\SHARED\05 - RESEARCH\ETHICS\SREC Forms & guidance\SREC Risk Assessment Forms\RA_Campus_Example.doc

If yes, ensure a copy is submitted with the completed application

If no, explain why a risk assessment form is not necessary...

**Please provide the following information for the Committee:**

**Funding Source**

ICETEX / ESRC Research Training Support Grant

**What are the main objectives of this research?**

The main objective of the research is to understand social and cultural responses to external changes such as climate change and resources/territory conflicts, and their effects on gender roles and food security dimensions in an indigenous coastal community (Wayúu) in La Guajira, Colombia.
Who are the research participants?
Wayúu Indigenous people (in La Guajira, Colombia), stakeholders, decision-makers, NGOs, foundations, and academics who have studied this group in Colombia

What methodologies will you be using?
- Participatory action research
- Interviews with stakeholders, decision-makers, community leaders, and governmental authorities in middle and high Guajira and in academic institutions that work with La Guajira and/or Wayúus communities at the national level during two fieldwork campaigns.
- Timeline methods with fishermen, farmers and community members in Wayúu communities
- Secondary data from national documents and reports (ELCSA and Census 2005 and 2018)

Ethics Statement

If your answers to questions 1-19 raise any ethical issues, please explain here how you will deal with them.

- Question 6
Does your project involve people belonging to a vulnerable group other than those listed above?
Yes, this project will be centred on an indigenous coastal group (Wayúu) in La Guajira, Colombia
Wayúu communities live in a region at the risk of dry and flood seasons, food insecurity and especially vulnerable to climate change impact such as sea level changes and global temperature increases.
Also, they are a community that inhabits between Colombia and Venezuela, resulting in border and political issues
I will be supported by Los Hijos del Sol foundation, which works with Wayúu communities. They will present me in the communities and support me during fieldwork campaigns.
Besides, some academics in Javeriana and Atlántico Universities, which have been working with Wayúu communities and the Colombian Caribbean region food security status, will back my project with secondary data and regional contacts
During data collection, I will consult, negotiate and provide a consent form to participants to protect participants, guarantee their rights and achieve mutual understanding about the proposed research
Participants will be informed about their right to withdraw from the research at any time and without the necessity to explain their reasons
The use of and access to research data and results will be agreed upon with the participants
I will acknowledge and respect indigenous people as a community and as individuals, respecting their cultural property rights regarding knowledge, ideas and cultural expressions and materials.

Participants' personal information will be anonymous whenever possible. Research data and mainly files containing personal or identifiable data will be encrypted or password protected and only accessed by agreed team members.

Hard copies such as interview notes, prints of photographs, or video or audio tapes will be kept securely locked away.

I promise to give feedback to the communities

- **Question 8**

Does your project include people for whom English / Welsh is not their first language?

Yes, Wayúu indigenous people speak Spanish and their indigenous language, and Spanish is my mother tongue.

Governmental organs in La Guajira (such as Indigenous Affairs Secretariat) have trained interpreters that I will contact in case I need to speak with someone that does not speak Spanish.

In this case, I will look for translators familiar with the participant's culture. To avoid power dynamics between the researcher and interpreter, the translator will be incorporated as research partners during the research process, preferably since the earliest stages of planning, and their opinions, perspectives and interpretations will be considered in the project. We (interpreter and I) will formulate accurate questions, avoiding ambiguities and confusion.

- **Question 9**

Have you read the Data Protection Policy below?

Yes, I have read and understood the data protection policy.

- **Question 10**

Have you read the Health & Safety Policy below?

Yes, I have read and understood the Health & Safety policy.

**Any changes to the nature of the project that result in the project being significantly different from that originally approved by the Committee must be communicated to the Ethics Committee immediately.**
Appendix B: Pasaporte a la Ciencia - Colombia Científica Program.

Contribution description

Description contribution to the challenge-focus of the country (Colombia) developed within the framework of the Colombia Científica program

This thesis contributes to the FOOD challenge-focus of the Colombia Científica program / Pasaporte a la Ciencia Program-Doctorates.

In my research project- carried out thanks to ICETEX funding- I take food sovereignty, political ecology and the ethics of care to analyze the humanitarian crisis in La Guajira, Colombia, which disproportionately affects the Wayúu community. I argued that this is, in essence, a care crisis, and I show how food sovereignty practices carried out by the Wayúu represent alternatives and solutions to this crisis and ways to prevent future events.

My research provides theoretical bases for constructing public policies that respond adequately to crises and situating food sovereignty as a practice that must be promoted at the national level.
### Table 2. Humanitarian crisis relief proposals by organizations, institutions, or groups in La Guajira, Colombia, during 2014-2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group/Organization/Institution/Agency</th>
<th>Proposal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Wayúu community* *These are the proposals suggested as a priority by the Wayúu group that filed the complaint with the IACHR</td>
<td>The State must open the floodgates that restrict the passage of the Ranchería river; review the viability of mining projects in La Guajira; adopt measures that guarantee the food supply for Wayúu people, especially children, that permit them to live a dignified life on a permanent, indefinite and priority basis (CIDH, 2015).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Instituto Nacional de Salud / Observatorio Nacional de Salud</td>
<td>Jobs creation; improve roads and vias; optimize clean water and sanitation; expand education coverage; support projects that include traditional knowledge and improve traditional food systems; evaluate together with communities current La Guajira nutritional plans; foster community participatory spaces; value traditional authorities' experiences and comments; build a health system model diversity-conscious; develop ethnographic work to identify malnutrition cultural construction; improve food access; development strategies to reduce deforestation; critically evaluate mining effects over water and food access for La Guajira residents; create surveillance and constant monitoring mechanisms; promote interchange experiences of successful food sovereignty processes; develop binational food strategies with Venezuela (INS &amp; ONS, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. ICHR</td>
<td>the State must adopt measures to preserve the life and integrity of the Wayúu people, ensuring the availability, access, and quality of health services with an appropriate cultural approach to address child malnutrition and other preventable diseases; take measures so that communities have access to sufficient and sustainable drinking water and food, and in the case of food, with cultural relevance; establish mechanisms to identify malnutrition promptly and intervene immediately; create linkages between Wayúu people and organizations (CIDH, 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. ICBF</td>
<td>Developed and implement a ‘micro-focalization’ strategy to identify the nutritionally vulnerable population and began an integral attention process; creation of nutritional, medical, and psychosocial recovery centres for children in</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>E. Unidad Nacional de Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres (UNGRD) &amp; Departamental Water Plan (PDA)</strong></td>
<td>Supply water trucks, tanks, desalination plants, wells, and heavy machinery to the department; construction of water supply infrastructure, in addition to the aqueduct and sewerage networks, and improvement of water sources (CIDH, 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F. Programs for the prevention and reduction of anaemia in children under two years of age, breastfeeding, and immunization</strong></td>
<td>Delivery of micronutrient powders to children between 6 and 23 months; breastfeeding and infant feeding courses for health professionals; vaccination schedules for children under six years of age, women of childbearing age, and adults over 60 years of age (CIDH, 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G. Alianza por el agua y por la vida en La Guajira program (water and food security program)</strong></td>
<td>Doubling water coverage in rural areas, increasing food security programs by 50%, attending to 100% of the cases of malnutrition and people at risk (CIDH, 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H. ReSA, IRACA, and temporary employment programs of the Department for Social Prosperity (DPS) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</strong></td>
<td>Community gardens installation, wells, and water treatment plants construction, consultation processes with traditional authorities, and support for food autonomy processes (Sentencia T-302/17, 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Constitutional Court recommendations</strong></td>
<td>Support and stimulate the creation of projects with components of food sovereignty, implementation, and recovery of water sources, improvements in the road structure, highlight the need for Wayúunaiki translators, reject discrimination and prejudices against the Wayúu population, value local knowledge, encourage spaces for community participation, emphasizes the need of creating sustainable and independent food projects, recognizes the diverse realities among the Wayúu population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J. World Food Program (WFP), La Guajira office</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Provide emergency humanitarian assistance through community kitchens, vouchers, and food kits&quot;, support Wayúu food systems building, especially native seeds preservation, and provide training to communities (WFP officer interview. Riohacha, September 2019).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K. Food and Agriculture</strong></td>
<td>&quot;The institution has been improving a quick food production model, through agrotechnical-&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization (FAO), La Guajira office</td>
<td>technological proposals, with three fundamental components: livestock, agriculture, food and hygiene, and involving risk and disaster management and resilience generation transversally”, besides support ancestral seeds recovery initiatives (FAO officer interview. Riohacha, September 2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Catholic Foundation</td>
<td>Desalinization plant instalment, monthly non-perishable food delivers to 50 Wayúu families, children's food program (breakfast and lunch) to those assisting the school centre (participant observation, Cabo de la Vela, June to July 2019 and foundation officer interview. Cabo de la Vela, July 2019)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To respond to how food organizations include diversity in their proposal, I analysed the programs and plans implemented by 12 food organizations, institutions, and foundations (Table 1) through a set of questions to analyse each proposal/organization. For gender, I questioned if the proposals consider different gender roles (Gender 1); if organizations seek to promote the transformation of gender roles (Gender 2); if they recognize the link between gender and health (Gender 3); and if these organizations recognize the care work done by women (Gender 4). About intersectionality, I sought to identify if, besides food, organizations and institutions recognize at least one more factor associated with hunger (for example, if food programs also include components of education, health, housing, or anti-racism). The summary of these responses is condensed in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of the proposals presented by the organizations to alleviate and overcome the food crisis of 2014, analysing whether they presented a gender, intersectional approach, and the six pillars of food sovereignty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization &amp; Proposals (Table 2)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Intersectionality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Wayúu community</strong></td>
<td>No No No No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. INS / ONS</strong></td>
<td>No No Yes No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. ICHR</strong></td>
<td>No No Yes No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D. ICBF</strong></td>
<td>No No Yes No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E. UNGRD &amp; PDA</strong></td>
<td>No No No No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F. Programs for the prevention and reduction of anaemia in children under two years of age, breastfeeding, and immunization</strong></td>
<td>Yes No Yes No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G. Alianza por el agua y por la vida en La Guajira program</strong></td>
<td>No No No No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H. ReSA, IRACA, and temporary employment programs of the DPS and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development</strong></td>
<td>Yes No Yes No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Constitutional Court recommendations</strong></td>
<td>Yes No Yes No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J. WFP (La Guajira office)</strong></td>
<td>No No No No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K. FAO, La Guajira office</strong></td>
<td>No No No No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L. Catholic Foundation</strong></td>
<td>Yes No Yes No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>