The Effect of Perspective-giving on Post-conflict Reconciliation. An Experimental Approach[1]

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ABSTRACT

Discussion groups are a promising tool for bridging the divide between former conflict antagonists. However, such groups do not always produce the desired outcome of improved attitudes, even when they meet the conditions generally seen as favoring positive interaction. In this article, we examine specific discussion protocols that mitigate polarization risks while fostering reconciliation. Using a randomized, controlled design, we formed a pool of 429 ex-combatants and members of conflict-affected communities in Colombia. Participants were asked to join heterogeneous groups and discuss their proposals for the future of Colombia. Those who were randomly assigned to a perspective-giving treatment protocol (where they were asked to refer to their personal experience and perspective) consistently improved their inter-group attitudes, and by a proportionally higher percentage than those taking part under argumentation and control conditions. The positive effect was strongest for attitudes held by community members toward ex-combatants.

INTRODUCTION

The three main conditions under which conflict antagonists can be reasonably expected to develop positive changes of attitude are having a *balanced discussion format* that is sanctioned by a *commonly accepted authority* and which focuses on a *common task* (Allport, 1979). Because of the positive potential inherent in direct contact, different interventions have been designed in order to bring together groups that were formerly divided. Some of these interventions have been successful in drawing antagonistic factions together (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006; Wright et al., 1997), but others have made things even worse (Sagy, Kaplan and Adwan, 2002; Vorauer and Sasaki, 2009). Why do some well-intentioned attempts end up doing more harm than good? What is it that makes things go awry in some cases and smoothly in others?

Here we contend that even when basic conditions are met for dialogue between groups, the dynamics of the discussion can push attitudes in one direction or another. In particular, how individuals participate in the discussion may contribute either to reinforcing existing biases and stereotypes or alternatively to providing a new perspective on the other's identity. Here, we examined a specific condition called perspective-giving, which has been tested in laboratory settings (Bruneau and Saxe 2012) and under which reconciliation might be facilitated. By means of a randomized, controlled experiment[2], we tested whether the opportunity to share one's own perspective and personal history with antagonists led to a more positive relationship across groups. We organized discussion groups consisting of ex-combatants, victims and members of communities affected by

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[2] We report the results of this study in accordance with the guidelines for experimental research recently drawn up by Gerber et al. (2014).

conflict in six Colombian municipalities, so as to examine the effects of perspective-giving on attitudinal change in a real-life setting.

Colombia is a fruitful context for our research. It has suffered from a long-term conflict between different non-state armed actors (guerrilla groups and paramilitaries) and the government. After a period of high-intensity conflict resulting in more than 1,000 battle deaths per year between the mid-1990s and 2005, government forces have succeeded in fighting back against the guerrilla groups, while the counterinsurgent paramilitary groups demobilized between 2003 and 2006. As the conflict has continued since then, so the Colombian government has experimented with several post-conflict policies (Rettberg 2012). More than 55,000 combatants, both collectively demobilized paramilitaries and guerrilla deserters, have demobilized since 2002, most of whom have since participated in a reintegration program carried out by the Colombian Reintegration Agency (ACR) (Nussio 2012). A set of laws passed between 2005 and 2011 has enabled conflict victims to be increasingly better organized, and has prepared the ground for large-scale reparations and the restitution of land to displaced persons (more than four million people have been forcibly displaced in the country). In addition to these post-conflict policies, in 2012 the government commenced negotiations with the two remaining guerrilla organizations, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN).

Although the armed conflict is still ongoing, typical post-conflict labels such as 'ex-combatants' and 'victims' have already come to dominate the public debate in Colombia. Similarly, reconciliation has become a buzzword, and is seen as a *conditio sine qua non* for the peace process with the remaining guerrilla groups. In

addition to the government's efforts to explain the benefits of peace to the general public, private sector representatives are leading nation-wide initiatives aimed at raising awareness of the importance of reconciliation which bring into the equation not only former combatants but also victims, members of affected communities, and ordinary citizens. In this context, ex-combatant and violence-affected populations play antagonistic roles.

The following section looks at literature on reconciliation and varying definitions of the word. We then go on to discuss how experimental treatment can affect attitude changes, after which we explain our experimental method in detail and report the results. Finally, we discuss the feasibility of promoting group discussion protocols as an evidence-based reconciliation instrument.

RECONCILIATION: A BRIEF DEFINITIONAL OVERVIEW

Reconciliation has been identified as a key ingredient of successful post-conflict societies. But by its very nature, the concept remains undefined, as reconciliation has been considered to be both an outcome and a process (Bloomfield, Barnes, and Huyse 2003; Lederach 1998). In most accounts, reconciliation focuses on the re-establishment of interaction between antagonists or different actors in a post-conflict era, or the restoration of previously existing harmonious relationships (Aiken 2010; Aquino, Tripp, and Bies 2006; Rushton 2006).

In psychological works, the term is usually described as a process of modulating or transforming cognitive functions, emotions and attitudes (Bar-Tal and Bennink 2004; Brounéus 2003), and in some cases, of undertaking personal and collective healing (Brounéus 2010), replacing emotional barriers to inter-

group understanding (Long 2003; Nadler, Malloy, and Fisher 2008), and generating mutual acceptance (Skaar, Gloppen, and Suhrke 2005; Staub 2006).

From a cultural point of view, it has been defined as a transformative process, as far as identities, ideological systems of beliefs and meanings are concerned, or even as the creation of new narratives to replace memories of violent confrontation (Long 2003; Moon 2006; Theidon 2006; Verdeja 2009) and the restoring of social fabrics (Halpern and Weinstein 2004; Millar 2012).

From a political perspective, reconciliation typically stresses the need to accommodate antagonistic groups that hold opposing views within one system or community in fair co-existence and even competition (Gibson 2007; Jones 2012; Kohen, Zanchelli, and Drake 2011; Siani-Davies and Katsikas 2009), while at the same time moving forward together toward a commonly built future (Rigby 2001; Hayner 2002; Schaap 2005).

And when viewed from a legal viewpoint, reconciliation is considered to be the ultimate and almost automatic goal of transitional justice mechanisms (Huyse and Salter 2008) such as truth-telling, confession, memory and forgiveness (Bloomfield 2006; Meierhenrich 2008), retributive and restorative justice measures (Szablowinski 2008; Theissen 2004), accountability (Encarnación 2008; Gellman 2008), and acknowledgement of the violence committed in the past (Hayner 2002; Verdeja 2009).

A full description of the many divergent reconciliation attributes that can be identified in peace and conflict studies would go beyond the scope of this section. Many works have linked the concept to a series of attributes related to temporal characteristics (i.e. reconciliation of past, present and future), levels of action (from state to individual), depth (from mutual recognition to affective bonding),

contexts (i.e. political transitions, armed conflict, genocide), and various mechanisms that link it to related terms like peace, trust, or forgiveness.

Instead of proposing yet another definition of the term 'reconciliation', our work departs from the core ideas that are present in most writings on the subject, namely that the establishment of relations between former conflict antagonists is key, and that the more we achieve mutual recognition and acceptance between former antagonists, the closer we are to a reconciled society. In the case of war antagonists, sitting down together in order to engage in a discussion might in itself be a step towards a re-establishment of relations, but the content of those relations might not necessarily develop in the desired direction of mutual recognition and acceptance. The next section describes how recent research has shed light on ways in which inter-group and interpersonal exchanges either foster or hinder the prospects of post-conflict reconciliation.

SITTING DOWN TOGETHER AFTER WAR: INTER-GROUP RECONCILIATION

Looking beyond the conceptual conundrum, recent scholarly work has investigated the conditions that are required for achieving post-conflict reconciliation. Macro-policies such as transitional justice measures, especially truth-seeking, are thought to contribute to a more reconciled society (Gibson 2004). At a lower level of analysis, certain types of direct interaction between antagonists have been identified as constituting a further promising avenue for achieving reconciliation, because they can reduce prejudice, overcome strong, conflict-related identities, and produce more trustful relationships (Samii 2013; Schiller 2011; Svensson and Brounéus 2013). These micro-level interventions are based on Allport's (1979) classical contact theory, which argues that increased

direct contact will lead to a reduction in prejudice, but only under appropriate conditions.

In line with Allport's thesis, peacebuilding practitioners have defended the idea of putting former conflict antagonists together, in an effort to trigger the positive reinforcement cycle that is necessary for sustaining a reconciliation process. Well-intentioned arrangements, however, do not necessarily guarantee the desired consequences. The contact hypothesis works only under certain conditions, namely a relatively balanced social and political status between groups, the directing of discussions toward common goals, and the presence of an external authority. Also, it usually works unevenly for the groups represented[3] (Bruneau and Saxe 2012; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006; Tropp and Pettigrew 2005).

Moreover, even common good-oriented, well-balanced discussion groups sanctioned by an authority can yield undesired results. Episodes of worsening attitudes and increasing hostility have been documented in previous experimental settings designed to facilitate exchanges between antagonist groups (Gastil, Black, and Moscovitz 2008; Hansen 2007; Hibbing 2002; Mendelberg and Oleske 2000; Wojcieszak and Price 2010).

How do we explain the relative success of contact experiences in some cases, and the negative effect that has been generated in others? A good number of works provide us with explanations of how predispositions, informational biases, emotions and group-think conspire against the inter-faction approach.

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[3] Marginalized groups tend to stick more to prejudice than empowered ones, and therefore the contact effect is weaker for them (Tropp and Pettigrew 2005). In the case of victims and perpetrators, Shnabel et al. (2008) suggest that intergroup relations improve only if each side sees its particular need fulfilled, namely empowerment in the case of the former, and social acceptance for the latter.

Individuals, for instance, may be clearly predisposed either to not change opinions (Petty et al., 1995) or to place value on the arguments of others (Cacioppo et al., 1996; Shestowsky et al., 1998). Biases, on the other hand, may originate in cultural or biological characteristics that form part of the human condition (Lodge and Taber, 2005; Lupia, 2002; Schroeder, 2002). As a result, participants might process information in a particularly one-sided way (Kunda, 1990), participate in discussions more or less frequently and with greater or lesser fervor (Dickson et al., 2008), or act upon unconsciously triggered stereotypes (Bargh, 1999).

When biases are rooted in identities, they could lead to exclusion and marginalization of those considered to be "the others", whose arguments are *ex ante* regarded as lacking validity (Huddy, 2003; Maalouf, 2000; Bar-Tal, 1990), or to a more rigid style of discussion (Druckman, 2001). The sharing of social and geographical spaces by victims and perpetrators, combined with a relatively weak group identity, should thus favor reconciliation efforts, as compared to contexts of segregation by space and identity (Brewer and Hayes 2013; Kiza, Rathgeber, and Rohne 2006; Samii 2013).

Give and take between rival factions can stir emotions in an unproductive way and drive contenders farther apart (MacKuen et al., 2010). Open-mindedness may be undermined, for example, by emotions such as hatred or fear (Marcus et al. 2000). People who have suffered traumatic experiences, such as war, may be particularly vulnerable to emotional stimuli. The risk of reinforcing stereotypes and heightening polarization is thus particularly acute in post-conflict settings. Certain past community interventions aimed at bridging differences between groups by sharing memories of past atrocities or bringing a common truth to the

surface have further weakened the bonds between those confronted (Brounéus 2010; Clark 2012; 2013).[4]

Lastly, group-think dynamics, where individuals abide by the apparent collective consensus, lead people to become more entrenched and radicalized in their own positions (Sunstein, 2002; Slothus, 2010; Schlaepter, 2010). Even though such dynamics may be expected to occur in conflictive settings, they may be more prominent when sensitive and controversial issues are discussed (Mendelberg, 2002; Lushkin, 2003).

These previous findings suggest that the content and dynamics of a given discussion can lead to undesirable outcomes, even in well-intentioned situations. Is there any way that interaction can be channeled in such a way that genuine changes of attitude to reconciliation are promoted? As a means of avoiding all these potential pitfalls, institutional design, particularly in terms of discussion rules, is a promising avenue for preventing negative cycles from being activated and fostering positive ones.

Previous works have shown the positive effect of promoting cross-group self-disclosure (Turner et al., 2007) and enabling social ritual interactions (Rimé et al., 2011) in people's perceptions and emotions. Existing experimental approaches which have appealed to the use of experimentally controlled empathy-generating expressions –e.g. apology, repentance, empowerment, acceptance, etc.- between one adversarial group and another have produced mixed results, depending on trust and proximity levels (Shnabel et al., 2009; Nadler and Liviatan, 2006; Philpot and Hornsey, 2008). Some of these approaches intentionally attempt to generate new forms of intergroup relationships, just as the above-mentioned contact theory

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[4] Vollhardt et al. (2014) report a positive effect of acknowledging past wrongdoings on inter-group attitudes, although such an intervention did not involve any interpersonal, face-to-face interaction.

studies do, while others aim to produce a re-categorization of group identities and stereotypes (Kriesberg, 2007; Iyer, Schmader and Lickel, 2007; Nadler, 2012).

In some experiments, researchers have asked participants to *adopt* the rival faction's perspective rather than express their own, which has led to better results in terms of attitude change by members of the more empowered side. However, many perspective-taking approaches, in which participants in inter-group contact 'step in the others' shoes', have proved problematic, since such behavior does not tend to occur spontaneously (Gallinsky et al. 2006), and when instructing people to do so, they sometimes react negatively (Sagy, Kaplan and Adwan, 2002; Vorauer and Sasaki, 2009).

One promising way to promote the emission of such empathy-generating messages comes from perspective-*giving* protocols. They have proved to be effective in both allowing individuals a unique chance to deliver their own narrative, and also to receive feedback messages from the out-group members containing empowerment and/or acceptance messages. In a laboratory setting, Bruneau and Saxe (2012) arranged a series of computer-assisted, simulated one-to-one personal interactions between members of antagonist groups (e.g. Israelis and Palestinians, white protestant Americans and Mexican immigrants), and these resulted in a beneficial short-term effect on inter-group attitudes, but with the exactly opposite outcome to that found in previous studies: the *less* empowered side showed a more consistent positive change.

To sum up, all the cited works suggest that non-cognitive elements in a discussion could potentially explain the difference between successful and failed reconciliation experiences. If interaction dynamics could therefore be directed toward creating empathy and emotional proximity, psychological barriers to inter-

group reconciliation might be prevented. As Morrell (2010) explains, the transformation of preferences, views and opinions in divisive settings pervaded by negative biases and stereotypes occurs when there is empathy and not merely as a result of a cognitive process.

A major problem with these approaches is that only with difficulty can they be transferred into ordinary life. Laboratory designs allow researchers to artificially introduce messages signaling empathy, or to isolate the effect of expressing one's perspective on a conflict issue from the effect of hearing the other side's story. However, would such interventions have the same beneficial effect in face-to-face encounters involving spontaneous and sequential give-and-take interactions?

In an attempt to transfer the above-mentioned laboratory findings to a real world context, we hypothesize that a discussion protocol, which explicitly encourages participants to center their attention on discourses facilitating mutual empathy produces the positive kind of interaction that is required for reconciliation. Our null hypothesis is therefore the following:

H_0: Average attitude change among participants under perspective-giving protocols shall be statistically the same as among participants under other conditions.

In line with our hypothesis, Nadler and Liviatan (2006) highlight how expressions of understanding the perspective of the other help to fulfill the discussants' emotional needs and create the inter-personal linkage necessary for an attitude change.

This paper will thus examine the effect of an empathy-stimulating discussion protocol, which we call perspective-giving (the exact treatment is described below). We test this protocol against a discussion protocol that appeals to the cognitive channel of attitude change, which we call argumentation, and against a control condition that does not include any specific discussion rules. The following section describes the research design and protocol administration in detail.

METHODS

In line with the experiment paradigm, we used a random assignment of participants to different discussion groups in order to create almost identical worlds in which both the observable and the non-observable characteristics of individuals would be randomly distributed. Then, by using a random assignment of treatment to each of the groups (treatment, in our case, meaning discussion protocols), we ensured that the probability of each group being administered either a perspective-giving, an argumentation or a control condition treatment was the same (protocols are described below). This research design enabled us to confidently attribute systematic differences to the different treatments. Crucial to this design is that baseline measures of observable characteristics, particularly our dependent variable, are statistically the same in each experiment condition (this assumption is corroborated in Table 3, in Appendix A).

Our experiment design was implemented in Colombia, where ex-combatants, victims and members of conflict-affected communities tend to settle in the same marginalized neighborhoods (Prieto 2012). But while a certain degree of rapport and common social identity as 'marginalized communities' timidly emerges among them, strong ideological and conflict-related labels remain as inter-group barriers

and as sources of stereotyping and stigmatization. Ex-combatants and violence-affected communities alike felt stigmatized by some people as unworthy of trust (Ibáñez and Velásquez 2009; Nussio 2011). An internal ACR report revealed that 41% of members of receiving communities are afraid of ex-combatants, and 82% distrust them (CNC 2011).[5]

In 2013 and 2014, nine municipalities covering every major region in the country were chosen by the Colombian Agency for Reintegration (ACR) to take part in an innovative, state-sponsored program designed specifically to bring together ex-combatants and members of conflict-affected and marginalized communities. This is the most ambitious official effort to date to bridge the gap between the two sides: while the former accuse communities of marginalizing them, the latter point fingers at ex-combatants and claim they are dangerous and a source of social unrest.[6]

Our discussion groups were part of this larger, state-sponsored program. Between November and February, our research team visited six of the nine municipalities where inter-segment meetings took place.[7] We relied on NGO field contractors to pass an invitation to join our discussion groups to about 900 people (the target population of the ACR-sponsored program in those places).[8] This invitation was made about one month after the planned one-year-long community program commenced, and our discussion group sessions, each a one-time meeting,

[5] Ex-combatants also remain divided along leftist-rightist ideological lines long after demobilization (Ugarriza 2009; Ugarriza and Craig 2013), in spite of sharing a common identity when confronted with other social segments.

[6] This was a constant theme in interviews conducted by the authors with Colombian ex-combatants between 2007 and 2014.

[7] The municipalities were Cali, Tierralta, Valencia, Villavicencio, Florencia and Cúcuta. In three additional municipalities where the ACR program was active (Palmira, La Dorada and Pereira), encounters between ex-combatants and community members had not taken place by the time our research was conducted.

[8] These NGOs were previously contracted and trained by ACR representatives to conduct a one-year-long community program aimed at integrating ex-combatants and other community members.

were included in the regular schedule of activities for the overall, state-sponsored program, although potential participants could refuse to take part.

429 of the 900 persons invited to attend our discussion group sessions did so, and these formed the pool of potential participants in our experiment. In the biggest towns – Cali, Florencia and Cúcuta -, slightly less than half the potential participants were ex-combatants, while in the remaining places they constituted less than a third, approximately. Once in the field, we applied a stratified, random system for assigning participants to the discussion groups, in order to ensure that we obtained balanced groups: using attendance lists drawn up and reviewed on-site by the field contractors, we were able to randomly assign a balanced number of ex-combatants and community members to the experiment groups.[9] The field contractors noted on the attendance lists which of the participants were ex-combatants and which were ordinary members of the community (participants themselves did not have this information). A total of 174 individuals were randomly drawn from our pool of potential participants (82 ex-combatants and 92 community members)[10], and then randomly assigned to treatment and control conditions in 21 almost perfectly balanced groups. Remaining individuals from the pool of potential participants were assigned to non-experiment discussion groups, which are not included in the present analysis. We then randomly assigned different conditions (perspective-giving, argumentation, and control condition

[9] Underage participants were not assigned to experiment or control groups. The perfect observation assumption was violated after two participants decided to walk away during discussions, resulting in an attrition rate of 1.13 per cent. Thirteen more people decided not to join the discussion groups before discussions commenced, but after completing the pre-test.
[10] About 70 per cent of both ex-combatants and community members ticked the victim box in the pre-test survey. As expected, the victim/perpetrator divide reflects, at least in the self-perception of respondents, a complex and large grey area (Orozco 2002), in contrast to active participation or non-participation in armed groups.

protocols) to each experiment group (an overview of the assignment procedure is provided in the Consort flow diagram in Appendix C).

Meeting places were rooms in local community centers and schools where participants usually attended integration activities under the ACR-sponsored program. Once the discussion groups had been formed, researchers welcomed participants and asked them to sign a consent form. The purpose of the discussion was then explained, focusing mainly on our interest in their proposals for peace in Colombia. Participants were aware at all times that among them were ex-combatants, and that all of them were members of the same local community. After everyone had finished a pre-test questionnaire, basic rules were explained: there would be audio-only recording, no one would have to identify himself or herself while speaking, and physical or verbal violence would not be tolerated and would lead to termination of the discussion. At this point, the specific treatment instructions were given (see below), and the main discussion question for all groups was re-stated: "What do you propose, so that in the future there can be peace and coexistence in Colombia between those coming from the various armed groups and people in the community, and so that violence is not repeated?"[11] From then, discussion flowed spontaneously without moderation.

In no case was any discussion terminated due to violent behavior, and in all cases participants agreed to complete the full experiment and control protocols.

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[11] All peacebuilding proposals that were put forward during the 45-minute exercises were compiled into a document that would be handed to the Colombian Agency for Reintegration (ACR) and the United Nations Development Program. This document has already been drawn up and distributed. Proposals in all the discussion groups referred to twelve distinct topics: support for vulnerable populations such as ex-combatants, victims, farmers and the elderly; progress on institutional reforms; promoting a culture of peace and reconciliation; fostering human and family values; improving the quality of basic and further education; developing employment strategies; establishing citizen participation forums; drawing up security strategies; providing social welfare services; economic fairness advocacy; preventing recruitment by illegal groups; attention to drug-related health issues; establishing housing programs; and protecting the environment.

After the discussion, participants completed a post-test questionnaire and were invited to a snack.

We randomly assigned either a perspective-giving treatment (7 groups, N= 59), an argumentation treatment (7 groups, N= 57), or a no-treatment control condition (7 groups, N= 58) to the 21 groups. Every group consisted of an average of eight participants, with an average ex-combatant vs. community member ratio of 0.908.[12]

Perspective-giving treatment was established in instructions that were both read out aloud and handed individually to all participants on small pieces of paper, and exhorted them to make references to their own personal perspective and history when justifying their proposals.[13] This instruction was absent for the argumentation and control conditions. Argumentation treatment was established, again, in instructions that were read aloud and written on pieces of paper, asking participants to behave according to classic democratic deliberation standards, namely to not dominate discussions, to treat others with respect, to justify their proposals, and to appeal to the common good.[14] Instructions were repeated at two different points during the session, while paper instructions remained in the hands of participants at all times. Perspective-giving and argumentation instructions were absent from control condition protocols. Experiment sessions were held

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[12] All groups had either a perfectly balanced composition or a one-person difference between segments. An exception was the set of Cúcuta groups, where field constraints led to a two-person difference between segments.

[13] The wording was: "Por favor hagan referencia a su experiencia personal, para poder entender su perspectiva sobre el tema." ("Please refer to your personal experience so we can understand your perspective on the subject.")

[14] The wording was: "Por favor, les pedimos que no monopolicen la palabra; que escuchen con respeto a los demás; que argumenten el por qué de sus propuestas; y que traten de pensar siempre en el bien común, y no en el personal." ("Please, we ask you not to monopolize the discussion, to listen respectfully to others, to justify your proposals, and to think in terms of the common good, rather than self-interest").

simultaneously at every location, thereby ensuring that no participant could be aware of different on-going treatment conditions.

We made sure all three assignments in the experiment (the two treatments and control) were enforced in each of the six municipalities, so that we could control for the potentially confounding effect of cultural or geographical differences between the municipalities visited. We likewise ensured that differences between groups governed by the perspective-giving condition and by either the argumentation or the control conditions, in terms of observable variables, could be put down to chance by regressing the assignment of perspective treatment on measurements of urban/rural setting (β= -0.326, ρ= 0.370), age (β= 0.003, ρ= 0.799), gender (β= 0.221, ρ= 0.492), education (β= 0.003, ρ= 0.944), segment (ex-combatant or not, β= 0.020, ρ= 0.950), and authenticity perceptions[15] (β= 0.054, ρ= 0.424).

Participants were given a pre-test questionnaire immediately before the discussion exercise, and a post-test one immediately after it.[16] Pre-test items consisted of basic demographic information (e.g. age, gender, education level, and whether they considered themselves conflict victims), five Likert-type items on perceptions of others' authenticity [17] in previous day-to-day discussion experiences, and one item on the level of trust in their community.

Our main dependent variable is attitude change. Our understanding of reconciliation requires that former antagonists meet and change their attitudes for

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[15] Perception scores are based on five pre-test Likert-type items which asked participants about their perceptions of people's overall levels of authenticity when engaging in political discussions.
[16] Original pre- and post-test questionnaires are included in Appendix B, questions referring to attitudes are translated into English at the end of Appendix B. All respondents received the same questionnaire since the identity of respondents with respect to their group belonging was blinded to the confederates distributing the questionnaires.
[17] Authenticity survey items aim to capture perceptions of truthfulness in what others say, and of other discussants' openness and trustworthiness.

the better, towards a greater appreciation, recognition and acceptance of the other. In the pre-test questionnaire, twelve interspersed Likert-type items were used for measuring attitudes to community members (six items, alpha 0.6) and to ex-combatants (six items, alpha 0.7). In each case, half of the sentences were worded in positive terms and the other half in a more negative tone.[18] Sentences aimed to capture biases in terms of who is to blame for political, economic, social and security problems, and who is contributing to solving them. Items on attitudes to community members, on the one hand, and to ex-combatants, on the other, were aggregated in order to estimate scores on a scale from minus 6 to plus 6. As these same items were included in the post-test questionnaire, we were able to estimate attitudinal changes.

In addition to attitudes, the post-test questionnaire also measured discussion quality perceptions (five Likert-type items asking people about levels of participation, freedom, respect, argumentation, and common-good orientation); fellow-discussant authenticity perceptions (five ordinal items asking about levels of truthfulness in what others said); overall trust in participants (one ordinal item), and overall trust in their community (one ordinal item). This latter measure enabled us to estimate short-term changes in community trust. Participants were informed in advance that some items in the post-test might have been repeated from the pre-test, but were told that they should respond as they felt at the time, regardless of previous answers. No participant expressed any suspicion of the procedure.

In order to prevent attrition-related measurement bias, the protocols included an explicit exhortation that participants should answer all questions,

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[18] Thus, some items were reverse-scored before aggregation.

explaining that it was important for us that they should express their opinions. Researchers also ensured that all participants completed every item on the questionnaires before they were collected. In cases where answers were not given, participants were asked to provide them, or were given clarification, as and where needed.

RESULTS

In this section, we first provide overall attitude changes by segments (ex-combatants/community), by experimental condition (perspective-giving, argumentation, control), and then combining segments and conditions showing both average changes in attitudes and the percentage of participants who changed their attitude. After these descriptive results, we introduce within-subject and between-subject analyses to identify whether the observed differences are significant. We also present a matching analysis including several covariates and further evaluate the effects in different geograpical contexts.

Examining changes by group, we see that ex-combatants' average attitude change toward community members and victims across all conditions is minus 0.2 (sd=2.780), within a range between minus 8 and plus 6. Conversely, community members and victims' average attitude change toward ex-combatants across all conditions is 0.3 (sd=2.403), within a range between minus 6 and plus 6. Examining changes by condition, we observe that average change in attitudes toward ex-combatants was 1.508 (sd= 2.188) under perspective; 0.210 (sd=2.201) under argumentation; and 0.413 (sd= 2.784) under control condition. Average changes in attitudes toward community members and victims was minus 0.017

(sd= 2.489) under perspective; minus 0.842 (sd=2.730) under argumentation; and 0.327 (sd= 2.171) under control condition.

Table 1 shows mean attitude scores (on a scale from minus 6 to plus 6), measured before and after discussions for each condition in the experiment and discriminated by segment. Also, mean attitude changes per condition are reported.

TABLE 1. MEAN ATTITUDES PRE- AND POST-INTERVENTION

	Perspective-giving		Argumentation		Control	
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.
Pre-attitude of ex-combatants toward community	-0.428	2.544	1.629	2.691	-1.185	2.689
Pre-attitude of community toward ex-combatants	0.322	2.797	-0.566	2.824	0.677	3.300
Post-attitude of ex-combatants toward community	0.153	2.708	0.037	2.139	-0.777	2.708
Post-attitude of community toward ex-combatants	1.903	2.586	-0.066	3.016	1.612	2.788
Average change of ex-comb. toward community[*]	0.615	2.483	-1.592	2.977	0.407	2.373
Average change of community toward ex-combatants[**]	1.580	2.500	0.500	1.889	0.935	2.909

Note: Variables are constructed based on six survey items. For each item, respondents can agree/agree strongly (=1), neither/I don't know (0), and disagree/disagree strongly (=-1). The aggregation of these items leads to a scale of means ranging from minus 6 to plus 6 (a 13 points scale).

[*] Observed changes fall in a range between minus 4 to plus 6 scale points under perspective condition; minus 8 to plus 6 under argumentation condition; and minus 4 to plus 4 under control condition.
[**] Observed changes fall in a range between minus 3 to plus 7 scale points under perspective condition; minus 3 to plus 6 under argumentation condition; and minus 5 to plus 8 under control condition.

The final two rows in Table 1 show a positive mean change in every set of experiment groups, except for ex-combatants' attitudes toward community members under the argumentation condition. The perspective-giving treatment did better in improving mean attitudes toward the out-group than any other

condition. There was a slight, albeit positive, change in ex-combatants' mean attitudes in perspective-giving (mean change 0.615) and control groups (mean change 0.407), but a negative change in argumentation groups (mean change -1.592). Conversely, community members' attitudes toward ex-combatants showed a bigger positive change under perspective-giving rules (mean change 1.580) than under argumentation (mean change 0.500) or control (mean change 0.935) rules.

Table 2 crosstabs the percentage of participants whose attitudes improved or worsened, and the respective assignment in the experiment.

TABLE 2: ATTITUDE CHANGE FREQUENCY (PERCENTAGE) BY SEGMENT

	Perspective-giving	*Argumentation*	*Control*
Community members that improved attitude toward ex-combatants	58.06	46.67	54.84
Community members that worsened attitude toward ex-combatants	19.35	30.00	32.26
Ex-combatants that improved attitude toward community	46.15	14.81	44.44
Ex-combatants that worsened attitude toward community	30.77	74.07	25.93

Results in Table 2 suggest that the perspective-giving treatment favors a bigger improvement in the attitudes of community members to ex-combatants and vice versa than any other type of treatment. The random assignment of treatment that we applied, coupled to the statistical equivalence of discussion groups enable us to attribute the differences observed to the administration of different treatment conditions. But is this apparent effect significant?

Within-subject analysis (comparing attitudes before and after the experiment) confirms the significance of overall changes in attitude to ex-combatants among community members (paired t-test t= 3.898, ρ= 0.000, df= 91). However, overall changes in ex-combatants' attitude toward community members are not statistically significant (paired t-test t= -0.643, ρ= 0.521, df= 79).

Between-subject analysis (comparing attitudes across groups) points to similar patterns, although figures for the sub-sample of community members are affected by the small number of valid observations available: perspective vs. argument condition, independent t-test t= -1.899, ρ= 0.062, df= 59.[19]

Although the experimental design allows us to not make use of covariates in the statistical analysis, we nevertheless include basic demographic data in a multivariate propensity score matching analysis. This analysis, using a propensity score controlling for age, gender and education, corroborates the significance of the average perspective-giving treatment effect on attitudes toward ex-combatants (ATT= 0.982, s.e= 0.483, T= 2.03, ρ= 0.043, df=170).

Conversely, the perspective-giving effect does not significantly explain changes in overall participants' attitudes toward community members when compared to the argumentation assignment (independent t-test t= -1.684, ρ= 0.094, df=112) or to the control condition (independent t-test t= 0.792, ρ= 0.429, df=113). Neither one of the results are significant for the sub-sample of ex-combatants.

Overall improvements in ex-combatants' attitudes to community members were slightly greater in urban areas (36.67%), namely Cali, Villavicencio, Cúcuta and Florencia, than in the rural areas of Tierralta and Valencia (30.00%). On the

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[19] For the whole sample of community, victims and ex-combatants: perspective vs. argument condition, independent t-test t= -3.157, ρ= 0.002, df= 112.

other hand, improvements in community members' attitudes toward ex-combatants were greater in rural areas (65.22%) than in urban areas (49.28). However, overall attitude changes toward community members were not significantly related to municipality (anova F= 1.62, ρ= 0.157, df=5) or to the urban/rural divide (independent t-test t= -1.659, ρ= 0.099, df=170), nor were changes toward ex-combatants (by municipality, anova F= 1.86, ρ= 0.103, df=5; by urban/rural, independent t-test t= 1.909, ρ= 0.057, df=170).

Multivariate analysis of attitude changes

No demographic variable is significantly related to changes in attitudes toward ex-combatants. Conversely, some measurements of trust included in our pre- and post-tests can be seen as potentially mediating or predicting variables. Mean attitude change among those who, in the post-test, stated that they trusted their fellow discussants was about four times greater than among those who gave an ambivalent response or perceived the others to be non-authentic (independent t-test t= -2.115, ρ= 0.035, df=170). Likewise, trust in community levels, as measured in the post-test, was related to changes in attitudes toward ex-combatants. Mean change among those who stated that they trusted people in their community was, again, about four times greater than among those who were ambivalent or openly distrusted their fellow community members (independent t-test t= -2.082, ρ= 0.038, df= 170).

Although we are not interested in elaborating predictive models, we here rely on Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) in order to test the robustness of bivariate results in a multivariate fashion. The best-fitting OLS model for predicting changes in attitudes toward ex-combatants includes only the perspective-treatment

variable (β= 1.957, ρ= 0.002). Although the post-test variables 'community trust' and 'trust in participants' are correlated to changes, this does not increase in a significant way the extent to which the model fits.[20] The best-fitting Maximum Likelihood Estimation model for predicting the probability of finding an improvement in attitudes toward ex-combatants nevertheless incorporates the community trust levels (β= 0.779, ρ= 0.015) and the perspective-giving treatment variable (β= 0.864, ρ= 0.011).

With regard to changes in attitudes to community members, we did not find any significant relationships, and therefore no conclusion is drawn. A further discussion on why these attitudes did not change significantly will be found in the following sections.

Mechanisms and measurement validity

What happened in the perspective-giving groups? As a complementary analysis, here we present an exploratory qualitative examination in order to provide a deeper insight into potential attitude change mechanisms.

The way the treatment was administered altered both discussion dynamics and how participants perceived others during the exercise. As a way to compare the level of discourse activity in the groups, we measured the number of interventions per minute in each one. Perspective-giving groups averaged 1.89 speech acts per minute, significantly fewer than the 2.47 seen under the argumentation condition, or 5.66 in the case of control.[21] In contrast to the

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[20] Coefficients for these two variables in an OLS model including the treatment indicator are β= 0.730, ρ= 0.048 for community trust, and β= 0.752, ρ= 0.042 for trust in participants.

[21] Speech act is understood here as every utterance delivered by a participant in a given moment during a discussion. Discourse is understood as an aggregation of an individual's speech acts during a given discussion.

dynamics under other conditions, perspective-giving participants tended to participate only a few times during the discussion (about ten times on average, as against 14 and 31 under argumentation and control conditions, respectively), although overall length of discussions were statistically the same. This is corroborated by the insignificant difference between the word count average under perspective-giving (38,886 words uttered in total) and other conditions (vs. control condition (50,746 words), independent t-test t= 1.145, ρ= 0.254, df= 115; vs. control and argumentation conditions (50,746 plus 35,376 words), independent t-test t= 0.582, ρ= 0.561, df=172). Perspective-giving participants delivered discourses of the same length as participants in other conditions, but in fewer lengthier interventions.

While this particular discussion dynamic differed across protocols, we did not find significant differences in communication styles. Participants in all groups appealed to a diverse repertoire of proposals and justifications, including illustrations, narratives and reasoned logic. Nor did we detect important content differences in each protocol set, as most of the above-mentioned topics were put on the table in every case.

A closer examination of the content of group session discussions hints at possible explanations for such perceptions, and ultimately for more prominent changes in attitudes. Perspective-giving discussions were noticeable for how ex-combatants related personal stories and reflected on their past war experiences, and the way they viewed themselves in the future as potential peace-builders (15

references).[22] This type of intervention was less common under argumentation (2) and control conditions (6).

Internal validity claims for the effects of our treatment need to take into consideration potential pre-treatment effects and self-selection. However, the random assignment of treatment that was used with groups in every municipality provides sufficient control with regard to the possible divergent effects of pre-treatment, which could, for instance, be a product of prior involvement by both community members and ex-combatants in local institutional programs.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Inducing a perspective-giving focus, while keeping discussion centered around a common future rather than a violent past, leads participants more efficiently toward reconciliation than a control condition that relies only on the effect generated by the presence of an authority, the common task, and the representational balance, which are conditions for favorable exchanges in Allport's contact theory. In contrast, the argumentation protocol moves people's attention away from the empathy stimuli that lead to the desired changes in attitudes.

Our data suggest that when people are encouraged to not just exchange arguments or talk but rather to pay attention to personal experiences, a particular psychological disposition to change attitudes is activated. Whether discussion dynamics and content are mediating factors between instructions and

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[22] These correspond to identity and relational messages as explained in an earlier section. An example of this kind of empathy-generating messages comes from one ex-combatants who stated that "I was a perpetrator (...) and lived situations that I should have not". Another ex-combatant expressed that "many of us have made mistakes (...) We have caused harm, and may have not had the chance to ask for forgiveness". Another considered that "these spaces where we are brought together with the community are good (...) We can contribute a little to those people's tranquillity", and another one asked for "a process in which we are face to face with the community (...)," as a way to promote reconciliation.

psychological dispositions, or an observable consequence of the latter, remains to be explored. These are two clear avenues of further research. Equally, the correlation that was observed between inter-personal trust measures and favorable attitude change leaves open the question of whether we are looking at a mediating factor or at a reflection of the overall disposition. Also, in future research, more complex psychological or even neurological measurements may help to clarify what happens first in the individual's changing mind.

Intriguingly, though not surprisingly, beneficial effects are not evenly distributed among groups. In our experimental setting, ex-combatants' attitudes proved to be more resistant to positive change, although tendencies toward polarization seem to have been contained. Ex-combatants' attitudes were thus generally less susceptible to change than attitudes of community members. It is hard to establish whether community members or ex-combatants should be considered the more empowered side, since we dealt with generally marginalized populations. However, ex-combatants are targeted in a more systematic way by institutional welfare services (through the ACR reintegration program) than generally impoverished community members. They also demonstrated a clearly superior level of literacy and education to members of their receiving communities.[23] It is therefore possible that they may have had the upper hand when it came to getting their own stories across in a more expansive, sophisticated and persuasive manner.[24] Alternatively, experimental contexts such as ours may provide the more disadvantaged group with an extraordinary opportunity to voice its opinions. Our discussion groups may thus have better addressed the victimized

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[23] The average education level difference is significant between the two groups, F= 12.79, p=0.000.
[24] In fact, the word average among ex-combatants was 934, way above the 525 registered by community members. The mean difference is significant, F=8.18, p=0.004.

community's need for empowerment than the ex-combatants' need for social acceptance. The heavier burden of prejudice affecting ex-combatants, as existing literature predicts, would make the attitude improvement effect weaker for this group.

Similarly, a contextually situated explanation of the minor effect on ex-combatants' attitudes may relate to previous experiences. Prior to our experiment, ex-combatants had participated more often in discussions with community members than community members with ex-combatants. [25] Ex-combatants' repeated interaction with community members, probably in the context of their reintegration process, may have contributed to a firmer opinion about them. Following this line of reasoning, we hypothesize that the marginal positive effect of interaction on attitudes decreases with every additional interaction. Such a hypothesis should be systematically explored in future studies for the context of post-conflict reconciliation.

The design of our experimental research is arguably strong enough for conclusions to be drawn on treatment effects, but it might fall short of providing a more fine-grained, mechanism-based explanation of what goes on in people's minds in order to produce the attitude changes we observed. Group discussions imply that people have the chance to both hear and speak, so we cannot specify the marginal bearing that each of these two tasks has on attitudinal change. Hence, what we observe is a combined effect. Our results are nevertheless consistent with previous laboratory research where such effects could be separated and where, as

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[25] Only about 20 per cent of community participants reported having had previous experience of discussion with ex-combatants, while the figure for ex-combatants was about 42 per cent. However, figures are too small as to conduct a proper systematic analysis of the effects of prior participation in cross-group discussions.

in our study, the less empowered side experienced more positive attitude changes (Bruneau and Saxe 2012).

Based on time-lapse measurements in preceding works, we do not expect the positive changes encountered in our discussion groups to be lasting. In the absence of repeated stimuli, short-term conditions tend to wane. As a result, policy-makers should not expect to achieve inter-group reconciliation as a result of a one-time meeting. However, repeated exposure to positive environments that foster a favorable disposition should yield more lasting effects on the individual's attitudes.

Reasonable doubt exists with regard to external validity and the question of whether to expect that results can be replicated in population groups not part of our pool. While a new pool of participants willing to participate in such inter-group discussions might behave similarly, for those who systematically refuse to participate, we would not necessarily expect to obtain the results presented here.

In our study, we tested the possibilities of a politically-oriented, individually-based, inter-group form of reconciliation. While such specificity enabled us to draw robust conclusions, it does not preclude the need to pursue research into other dimensions of the problem, at various analysis levels and using different strategies. Evidence-based public policy in post-conflict environments will benefit from complementary approaches that could come up with an array of options capable of being adapted to local needs.

Our contribution conveys a vision in which reconciliation can be promoted in a direct way, rather than as a result of the successful implementation of macro-policies in the context of transitional justice, such as punishment, truth-seeking or reparations. In the absence of clear evidence that reconciliation derives from any of these, we advocate parallel or sequential micro-level, inter-group interaction

procedures focusing on improving relationships between persons from different social groups and macro-level policies which address broader societal needs in the aftermath of conflict.

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APPENDIX A: BASELINE MEANS AND S.D.

TABLE 3. EXCOMBATANTS' BASELINE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS BY EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

	Perspective-giving		Argumentation		Control	
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.
Age (19-60)	34.642	10.428	35.555	8.391	37.222	11.875
Gender	0.285	0.460	0.333	0.480	0.259	0.446
Education (range: 1-15 years)	9.142	3.352	8.481	3.214	7.370	2.747
Victim (1=yes; 0= no)	0.750	0.440	0.777	0.423	0.77	0.423
Authenticity perceptions (minus 5 to plus 5 Likert scale)	-0.535	2.728	-0.740	1.872	-1.111	2.224
Pluralism (1=plural stance; 0=other)	0.285	0.460	0.259	0.446	0.222	0.423

TABLE 4. COMMUNITY'S BASELINE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS BY EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

	Perspective-giving		Argumentation		Control	
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.
Age (15-74)	36.548	13.935	35.400	15.769	32.580	17.054
Gender	0.806	0.401	0.633	0.490	0.741	0.444
Education (0-15 years)	7.354	3.647	8.600	3.944	8.161	3.406
Victim (1=yes; 0= no)	0.677	0.475	0.733	0.449	0.516	0.508
Authenticity perceptions (minus 5 to plus 5 Likert scale)	-0.935	2.827	-0.666	2.720	-0.612	2.728
Pluralism (1=plural stance; 0=other)	0.193	0.401	0.066	0.253	0.193	0.401

APPENDIX B: ORIGINAL SURVEY ITEMS

CUESTIONARIO 1

1. Edad:_____

2. Hombre_____   Mujer_____

3. ¿Hasta qué curso escolar hizo?_____

4. En caso de que haya sido miembro de un grupo armado, ¿en qué año lo dejó? _____ ¿Qué grupo? _____

5. ¿Se considera usted o su familia víctima de los grupos armados o del Estado?   SÍ____   NO____

   ¿De cuáles grupos?   Guerrilla____   Paramilitares____   Policía, Ejército, etc. ____   Otro___

6. Por favor, marque una X en el lugar que refleje su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo:

	Muy de acuerdo	*De acuerdo*	*Ni de acuerdo ni desacuerdo*	*En desacuerdo*	*Muy en desacuerdo*
(a) Cuando hablo de política con otra gente, generalmente ellos expresan lo que de verdad tienen en mente					
(b) Cuando hablo de política con otra gente, generalmente ellos esconden sus verdaderas opiniones en la discusión					
(c) Cuando hablo de política con otra gente, generalmente siento que puedo confiar en la palabra de ellos					
(d) Cuando hablo de política con otra gente, generalmente ellos usan argumentos sólo para ocultar sus verdaderos intereses y posiciones					
(e) Cuando hablo de política con otra gente, generalmente no expongo algunas de mis ideas por miedo de ser ridiculizado o señalado					

7. Usted diría que la gente que vive en su comunidad es en general… (marque una opción):
   a. Muy confiable _____
   b. Algo confiable _____
   c. Poco confiable _____
   d. Nada confiable _____
   e. No puedo elegir _____

8. ¿Con cuál opinión está más de acuerdo?

   a. Es bueno que la gente se diferencie por sus tendencias políticas _____
   b. Es bueno que no hayan diferencias políticas_____
   c. No puedo elegir_____

9. Por favor, marque una X en el lugar que refleje su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo:

	Muy de acuerdo	*De acuerdo*	*Ni de acuerdo ni desacuerdo*	*En desacuerdo*	*Muy en desacuerdo*
(a) Quienes no han estado en grupos armados ahora acusan a los ex combatientes de cosas sin razón					
(b) Quienes estuvieron antes en grupos armados ahora incrementan la inseguridad					
(c) Quienes no han estado en grupos armados sí le dan nuevas oportunidades a los ex combatientes					
(d) Quienes estuvieron antes en grupos armados ahora contribuyen al bienestar de mi comunidad					
(e) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados ahora le niegan espacios políticos a los ex combatientes					
(f) Quienes estuvieron antes en grupos armados ahora le roban espacios políticos al resto de la sociedad					

10. ¿Ha estado antes en discusiones grupales con gente de la comunidad y excombatientes?

SÍ__ NO__

Si responde que SÍ, ¿cómo le han parecido? Positivas___ Ni positivas ni negativas ___ Negativas __

11. Por favor, marque una X en el lugar que refleje su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo:

	Muy de acuerdo	*De acuerdo*	*Ni de acuerdo ni desacuerdo*	*En desacuerdo*	*Muy en desacuerdo*
(g) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados son gente abierta a escuchar a los ex combatientes					
(h) Quienes estuvieron antes en grupos armados son gente abierta a escuchar a la comunidad					
(i) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados le niegan derechos económicos a los ex combatientes					
(j) El gobierno gasta demasiados recursos en quienes estuvieron antes en los grupos armados					
(k) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados están contribuyendo a la paz de Colombia					
(l) Quienes estuvieron antes en los grupos armados están contribuyendo a la paz de Colombia					

CUESTIONARIO 2

1. Por favor, marque una X en el lugar que refleje su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo:

	Muy de acuerdo	De acuerdo	Ni de acuerdo ni desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Muy en desacuerdo
(i) En la discusión, la gente expresó lo que de verdad tenía en mente					
(ii) Muchos participantes escondían sus verdaderas opiniones en la discusión					
(iii) Siento que puedo confiar en la palabra de los demás participantes					
(iv) La gente usaba argumentos y razones sólo para ocultar sus intenciones					
(v) No expresé algunas de mis opiniones por miedo a ser ridiculizado o señalado					

2. Por favor, marque una X en el lugar que refleje su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo:

	Muy de acuerdo	De acuerdo	Ni de acuerdo ni desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Muy en desacuerdo
(a) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados ahora acusan a los ex combatientes de cosas sin razón					
(b) Quienes estuvieron antes en grupos armados ahora incrementan la inseguridad					
(c) Quienes no han estado en grupos armados sí le dan nuevas oportunidades a los ex combatientes					
(d) Quienes estuvieron antes en grupos armados ahora contribuyen al bienestar de mi comunidad					
(e) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados ahora le niegan espacios políticos a los ex combatientes					
(f) Quienes estuvieron antes en grupos armados ahora le roban espacios políticos al resto de la sociedad					

3a. Usted diría que la gente que vive en su comunidad es en general… (marque una opción):

- a. Muy confiable _____
- b. Algo confiable _____
- c. Poco confiable _____
- d. Nada confiable _____
- e. No puedo elegir _____

3b. Usted diría que la gente que participó en la discusión es en general… (marque una opción):

- a. Muy confiable _____
- b. Algo confiable _____
- c. Poco confiable _____
- d. Nada confiable _____
- e. No puedo elegir _____

4. Por favor, marque una X en el lugar que refleje su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo:

	Muy de acuerdo	*De acuerdo*	*Ni de acuerdo ni desacuerdo*	*En desacuerdo*	*Muy en desacuerdo*
(g) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados son gente abierta a escuchar a los ex combatientes					
(h) Quienes estuvieron antes en grupos armados son gente abierta a escuchar a la comunidad					
(i) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados le niegan derechos económicos a los ex combatientes					
(j) El gobierno gasta demasiados recursos en quienes estuvieron antes en los grupos armados					
(k) Quienes no han estado en los grupos armados están contribuyendo a la paz de Colombia					
(l) Quienes estuvieron antes en los grupos armados están contribuyendo a la paz de Colombia					

5. Por favor, marque una X en el lugar que refleje su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo:

OPINIONES SOBRE EL EJERCICIO	*Muy de acuerdo*	*De acuerdo*	*Ni de acuerdo ni desacuerdo*	*En desacuerdo*	*Muy en desacuerdo*
(a) Algunos monopolizaron la palabra					
(b) Algunos no opinaron, para evitar problemas					
(c) Algunos no mostraron respeto a los demás					
(d) La gente no se esforzó en dar argumentos					
(e) La gente no tuvo en cuenta el bien común					

TRANSLATED ATTITUDE ITEMS

Answer options for all questions: disagree strongly, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, agree strongly

Attitudes toward victims and communities
Questionnaire 1, Question Block 9 and Questionnaire 2, Question block 2
(a) Communities accuse ex-combatants for no reason.
(c) Communities give opportunities to ex-combatants.
(e) Communities deny political space for ex-combatants.
Questionnaire 1, Question Block 11 and Questionnaire 2, Question block 4
(g) Communities are open to hear what ex-combatants have to say.
(i) Communities deny economic rights to ex-combatants.
(k) Communities are contributing to the peace of Colombia.

Attitudes toward ex-combatants
Questionnaire 1, Question Block 9 and Questionnaire 2, Question block 2
(b) Ex-combatants increase crime rates.
(d) Ex-combatants are generally good for my community.
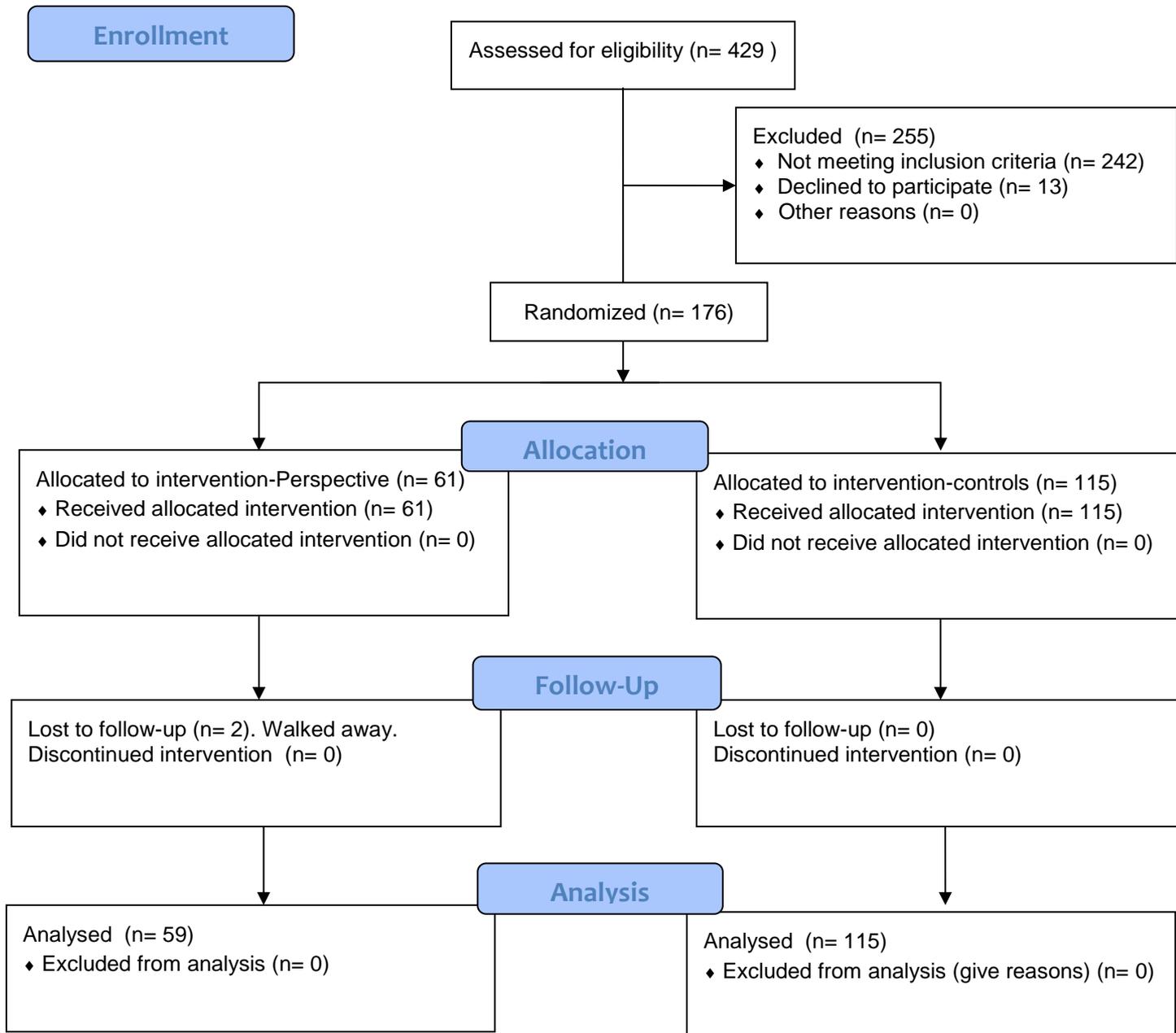(f) Ex-combatants take away political space from the community.
Questionnaire 1, Question Block 11 and Questionnaire 2, Question block 4
(h) Ex-combatants are open to hear what the community has to say.
(j) Government spends too much money assisting ex-combatants.
(l) Ex-combatants are contributing to the peace of Colombia.

CONSORT Flow Diagram

Enrollment

Assessed for eligibility (n= 429)

Excluded (n= 255)
- ◆ Not meeting inclusion criteria (n= 242)
- ◆ Declined to participate (n= 13)
- ◆ Other reasons (n= 0)

Randomized (n= 176)

Allocation

Allocated to intervention-Perspective (n= 61)
- ◆ Received allocated intervention (n= 61)
- ◆ Did not receive allocated intervention (n= 0)

Allocated to intervention-controls (n= 115)
- ◆ Received allocated intervention (n= 115)
- ◆ Did not receive allocated intervention (n= 0)

Follow-Up

Lost to follow-up (n= 2). Walked away.
Discontinued intervention (n= 0)

Lost to follow-up (n= 0)
Discontinued intervention (n= 0)

Analysis

Analysed (n= 59)
- ◆ Excluded from analysis (n= 0)

Analysed (n= 115)
- ◆ Excluded from analysis (give reasons) (n= 0)

- Number of subjects initially assessed for eligibility for the study= 429
- Exclusions prior to random assignment: 242, due to matching criteria, and 13 due to refusals to participate.
- Number of subjects initially assigned to each experimental group: 61 to perspective-giving, 115 to controls (57 to deliberation groups, 58 to control groups).

- Proportion of each group that received its allocated intervention: 96.72% in perspective-giving groups -two people walked away after pre-test. 100% in deliberation and control groups.
- Number of subjects in each group that dropped out or for other reasons do not have outcome data: 2 people walked away in perspective-giving groups after pretest.
- Number of subjects in each group that are included in the statistical analysis: 59 in perspective-giving groups, 57 in deliberation groups, and 58 in control groups. No exclusions were made during the analysis.