



→ Every day, John Monroy starts work at 3:30 a.m. by milking the cows belonging to Fernando Martínez and Sandra Ruiz. He has to finish before 6:00 a.m. when the milk truck passes and he does it all over again at 1:30 p.m.









→ The Institutional Educational Project at the Jácome School, in Gramalote, cares for the environment in favor of food security.



## CHAPTER 7

# PARTICIPATION AND AID IN COLOMBIA: SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR THROUGH THE LENS OF ELCA

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→ Luis Eduardo Palacios, 46 years old, has seven children and two grandchildren. He works in informal jobs in Barranca and his salary is divided between two households.

### → 7.1. INTRODUCTION

The analyses carried out over the waves of the ELCA allow us to describe, for the first time in this country, the dynamic of Colombian households' participation in civic life and their propensity to help others between 2010 and 2013. In the first place, during those three years, a general increase was observed in the activities associated with help given to others by rural and urban households. Similarly, there was an increase in participation in social organizations, especially in the case of religious and union-related organizations with respect to the measurements taken in 2010. In contrast, the reported levels of help given to others and to community projects, in terms of the use of time, continue to be very low even though a slight improvement can be noted. These two measurements (participation in organizations and pro-social actions) are also interrelated. Those who participate show a greater propensity to act for the benefit of others. Nevertheless, this increase in the participation has been characterized by an important mobility, with a considerable quantity of new households that have started participating in social organizations. However, at the same time, there is a considerable number that have abandoned them, reflecting a construction, albeit precarious, of civic

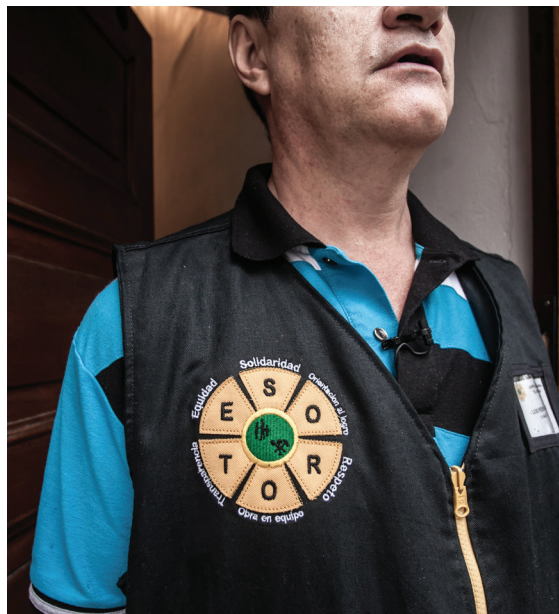


social capital. On the one hand, we found that participation in the leadership of these organizations decreased as a percentage of member households. In other words, the total number of members increased but not their participation in the leadership of the organizations. Furthermore, it was found that levels of interpersonal trust are relatively low. Even though households agree on the importance of solidarity and helping others, very few report having strong ties with their neighbors in terms of social networks and unconditional help. Surprisingly, community leaders, in contrast to the surveyed households, report a fall in the levels of trust and mutual help between neighbors.

It is the first time that a study is carried out in Colombia which follows up on the dynamics of a household's participation in social organizations and its prosocial actions or help to others. These dimensions have been related to the concept of "social capital" and recognized as fundamental for the comprehensive development of a society.

The information is derived from various questions linked to actions, perceptions and attitudes reported by the household heads and their spouses on their activities of "associativity" with their neighbors and social organizations. It also delves into their trust and reciprocity with the rest of society or concrete work carried out to help others. Interviews with neighborhood and rural settlement leaders where the surveyed households are located were also carried out.

Thanks in part to a number of the questions found in the 2010 and 2013 questionnaires, it was possible to carry out a dynamic analysis to evaluate, in the same households, the changes observed in these two dimensions of participation in social organizations and of helping and trusting others. In 2013, new questions were included. Some of these were taken from the political module that Leopoldo Fergusson and Juan Felipe Riaño analyzed in Chapter 6 of this book.



→ Luis Fernando Moreno works from 9:00 p.m. to 6 a.m. in the Noel Cookie and Cracker Plant. He sleeps until 1:00 p.m. and in the afternoon helps out in the Community Action Board (JAC) in his neighborhood in Envigado.

Below are some of the answers to the question regarding the level of "associativity" and prosocial actions taken by the Colombian households over the last few years. By "associativity" we understand the participation of households in free civic society associations that provide some kind of public good for the service of the group or of the society as a whole. Traditional Community Action Boards, school Parent Associations, and religious and union organizations, all make up part of the spaces in which civil society participates to resolve problems related to collective action and provide goods and services that benefit each household, other households in the neighborhood and even the common good, as is the case with ecological groups. Furthermore, we study "pro-sociality", understood as actions and attitudes of individuals towards others and, in particular, those that imply assuming a personal cost to help others. Tomasello (2010) refers to cooperation through three concrete actions: help, inform and share. While helping, they participate in a process with others —usually through work— to achieve a goal that improves their own well-being and that of others. When they inform, they provide information to others to help them achieve their goals. When they share, they sacrifice their own resources to transfer them to others. In any of these instances, individual and social benefits are fostered.



A number of these dimensions have been studied within the concept of social capital but there is a wide array of conceptions about its meaning in accordance with the disciplinary focus of the case. This creates much controversy (Bowles and Gintis, 2002). Another way of explaining these communitarian processes is through the concept of 'collective efficacy' (Sampson *et al.*, 1997) defined as the "connection of shared trust and availability to intervene in the common good."

In Colombia, the use of the concept of social capital began with the work of John Sudarski (1999) and Barcas (barometer of social capital in Colombia). Among the dimensions of Barcas, social capital is measured through questions about the first three (1. Solidarity and mutuality. 2. Hierarchy or vertical articulation. 3. Horizontal relations) closely related to this analysis. In his definition, Sudarski includes ten dimensions, a number of which are not included in the ELCA analysis.<sup>1</sup>

The economic importance of investing in these social and community relations has been documented both nationally and internationally. Polonia (2005) has studied the relationship between horizontal social capital in the urban households and income through household surveys applied in Colombia. On the international scene, Knack and Keefer (1997) had already shown, using data from the World Values Survey, the positive relationship between the social norms and trust and economic

performance indicators in a sample of twenty-nine countries. For the case of interpersonal trust, Zak and Knack (2001) show similar results in a general equilibrium growth model supported by empirical evidence also for a sample of countries.

Below, we present the most important patterns of these variables for ELCA, pointing out some important differences by region and by urban and rural populations. The availability of data from the same households in the two waves of the survey allows us to, first, analyze the dynamic of entering and leaving social organizations, and then to present an outline of a discussion on some of the linkages between these variables. This, in turn, allows certain conclusions or conjectures on the importance of these dimensions in the daily life of the Colombian households.

## 7.2. ASSOCIATIVITY: TO WHAT EXTENT DO COLOMBIANS PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS?

Latin America has traditionally had low levels of social capital given the weakness of its civic organizations in representing our concerns as workers, neighbors, beneficiaries of a clean environment, consumers, or as voters. Even though the recent dynamic of social movements in Latin America has been marked by a multitude of mobilization pro-

cesses based on identity such as the indigenous peoples or the farmers' processes, and the union movements in past decades (Yasher, 2005), the pertinence and participation of the region's inhabitants in regular spaces of social organizations is relatively low when compared with other latitudes. In accordance with the Latinobarometer survey (Cruz, 2009), Colombia appears among the countries with the lowest participation by its citizens in Parent Association meetings with only 19.9%, whereas in countries such as Perú, Ecuador and Bolivia, current percentages are between 26 and 28%.

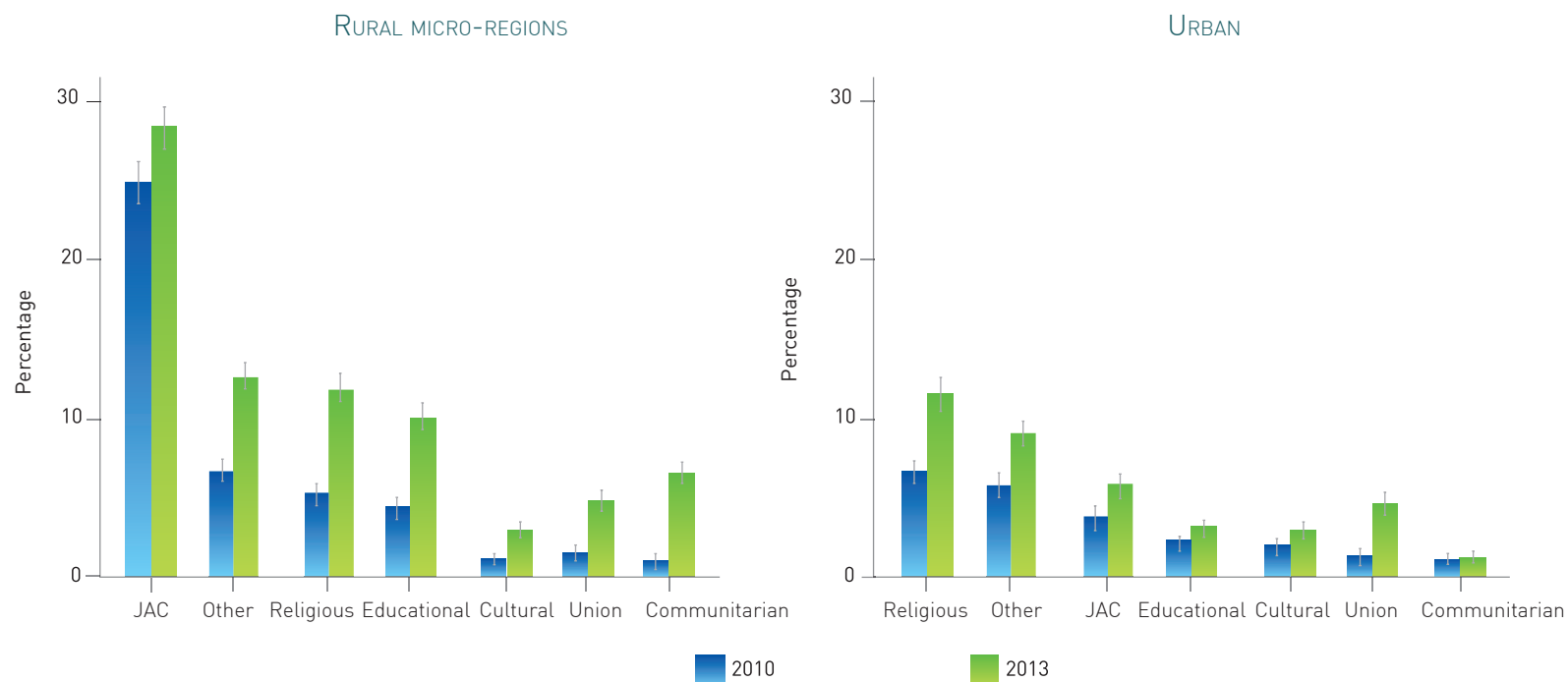
The ELCA outlines that from 2010 to 2013, the percentage of memberships in social organizations increased substantially from 16.3% to 27.7% in the rural case and from 35.5% to 47.5% in the urban sample. Figure 7.1 shows that this increase was produced to a large extent by greater participation in religious organizations in the urban and rural areas. We can also see that rural Community Action Boards accumulate the greatest percentage of participation, while, in the urban area, the greatest increase can be seen in the religious organizations. Also in the urban area, we can see that there is an important increase in the participation of the households in unions and associations, whereas the rural area presents a notable increase in collaboration in educational and community organizations, among others.<sup>2</sup>

1. The dimensions of Barcas are: 1. Solidarity and mutuality. 2. Hierarchy or vertical articulation. 3. Horizontal relations. 4. Social control. 5. Institutional trust. 6. Civic participation. 7. Political participation. 8. Media. 9. Civic republicanism and 10. Information and transparency. For Sudarski, the first three make up the concept of social capital.

2. In 'others' we add charitable, State, ethnic, cultural and sport organizations as well as movements and political parties, building boards, and others.



**FIGURE 7.1.**  
HOUSEHOLDS' PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS).



Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

Household participation refers to when the household head or the spouse has participated in some organization. The classification other contains charity, State, ethnic, cultural and sport organizations, political movements and parties, and buildings' boards of co-owners, among others. In the unions category, it is important to highlight that, in 2010, there was only one classification for participating in unions or in work cooperatives or farming organizations, while in the 2013 survey, it was separated into two categories: on the one hand, unions and, on the other, the work cooperatives or farming organizations. Thus, the calculations were made by bringing together both categories to maintain the comparability of the two waves. The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.





→ Adriana Díaz is a fervent Catholic. She conducts prayer and Bible study groups four days a week in her neighborhood church, in Armenia.

As we can see from the data collected in 2006 by Chong, Ñopo and Cárdenas (2013), these percentages of participation in social organizations are also low for the capital cities of the Latin American region. In that study, Bogotá (45.3%) showed membership levels, which were slightly higher than capitals such as Lima (33.5%), Montevideo (38%), San José (42.1%), and Caracas (44.6%), although it came in below Buenos Aires (47%). With respect to the percentage of attendance to meetings, the figures drop considerably to an average of 38.3% for the abovementioned capitals, and the average participation in decision-making decreases even more, to an average of 28.6%.

The social capital of a society produces returns only while these are being used and, therefore, as proposed by Bowles and Gintis (2002), this should only be viewed as a process and not as a tradition. One of the great advantages of ELCA is that in addition to allowing a view of two photos in time, it also allows us to put together a video of the same families to explore the community processes of social organization. The data at hand displays a rather unstable activity of households' investment in social organizations, providing evidence of the fragility of attempting to build social capital. Figure 7.2 shows the dynamic of households' participation in social organizations in 2010 and 2013.<sup>3</sup> In the rural area,

of the 37% of households that were participating in social organizations in 2010, only 25% continued participating in 2013. Thus, of the 46% of the participants in 2013, 21% were new participants, meaning that this 21% did not participate in 2010, and only began participating in 2013.

These changes are similar in the urban area whereby of the 20% of the households that participated in 2010, only 11% continued participating in 2013. Thus, of the 29% of participating households in 2013, 18% were new participants. The net balance is encouraging to the degree that the percentage of households that began participating is substantially higher than the percentage of households that stopped participating; particularly, the religious organizations, unions and guilds deserve focused attention. In the rural area, 8.5% of the households that in 2010 did not belong to religious organizations began to participate in these; whereas the figure for participation in unions was 5.25%. In the urban area, these figures were 9% and 4.3% respectively. These figures are comparatively high with respect to the households which stopped participating in these organizations. In the rural area, those that stopped participating in religious organizations were 2.9%, and 1.2% in unions; in the urban area, the figures were 3.9% and 1%, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

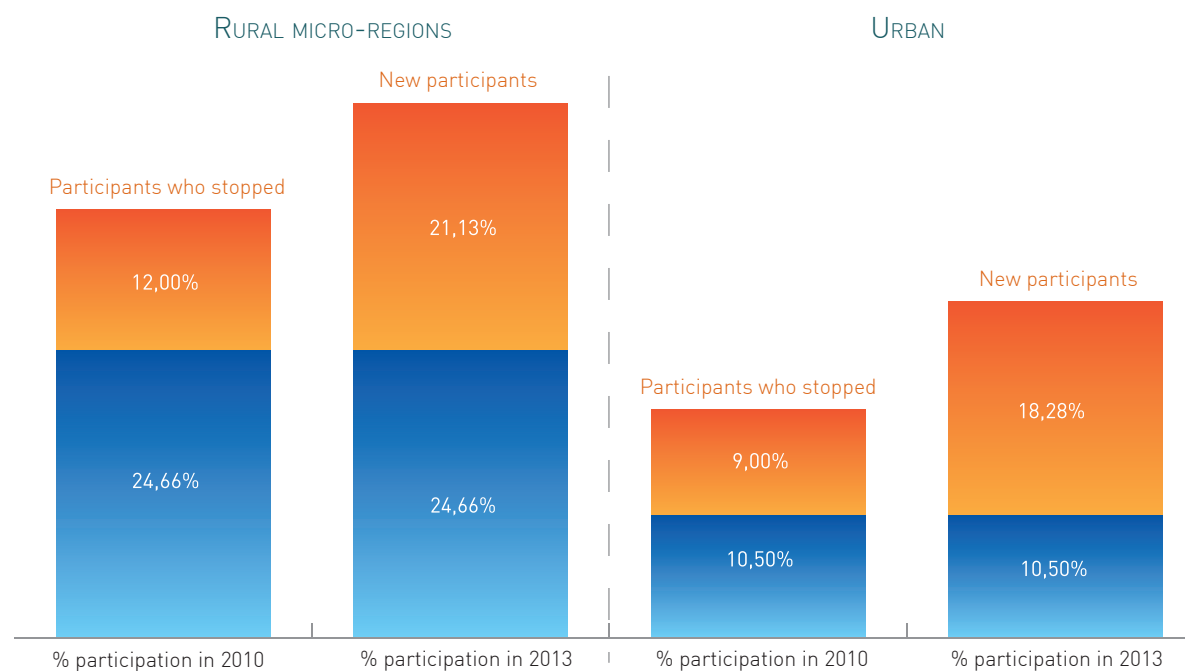
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3. The calculations of global participation in organizations were undertaken after including the expansion factors of our sample and only considering the households surveyed both in 2010 and 2013. Nevertheless, the broken down calculations by type of organization were not undertaken with these expansion factors and include all of the surveyed households in each wave by which it is possible that the percentage sums do not coincide with precision.
4. With respect to the category of unions it is important to highlight that in 2010, there was only one classification for participating in unions or in work cooperatives or farming organizations, while in the 2013 survey, it was separated into two categories: on the one hand, the unions and on the other, the work cooperatives or farming organizations in such a way that the calculations were undertaken by bringing together both categories to maintain the comparability of the two rounds.



**FIGURE 7.2.**

DYNAMIC OF HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS).



Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

Household participation" refers to when the household head or the spouse has participated in some organization. In the Figure, the first bar represents the percentage of households that participated in organizations in 2010. The upper part of the bar indicates the percentage of households that participated in organizations in 2010 but stopped doing so in 2013. The lower part of the bar shows those that were participating in 2010 and who continued to participate in 2013. The second bar indicates the percentage of households that participated in organizations in 2013, where the upper part of the bar represents the percentage of new participating households, implying that they did not participate in 2010 but did so in 2013. The same can be observed in the urban area. The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions.



While the percentage of households that are leaders in social organizations increased slightly in both areas, the percentage of households that were leaders over the total of households that participated in organizations decreased significantly.

Additionally, ELCA gathers information about the social capital formed and in formation. In this sense, it is key to analyze the typologies of participation in social organizations, not only from the point of view of being a member of one, but also analyzing how active these individuals are in these organizations. To do this, in addition to collecting information on memberships, participants were asked questions regarding their attendance to meetings and their leadership in the organizations. Figure 7.3 shows the change in the percentage of households that are leaders in social organizations for both areas.

In general terms, the households in the rural area present a more active participation than those in the urban area. The rural percentages for membership, attendance to meetings and leadership in the organizations are substantially higher than those presented in the urban area, both in 2010 as

in 2013, when rural households' participation in organizations extends to almost half the total rural households. However, in both areas, important increases are seen in the three forms of participation described.<sup>5</sup>

In the same vein, while the percentage of households that are leaders in social organizations increased slightly in both areas, the percentage of households that were leaders over the total of households that participated in organizations decreased significantly (see Figure 7.3). This may be related to the data shown in Figure 7.2, where a large percentage of those participating in 2013 were new participants. The latter once again reflects the absence of stability and consistency in the social capital formation process, which despite the encouraging figures on membership in organizations, does not consolidate over time.

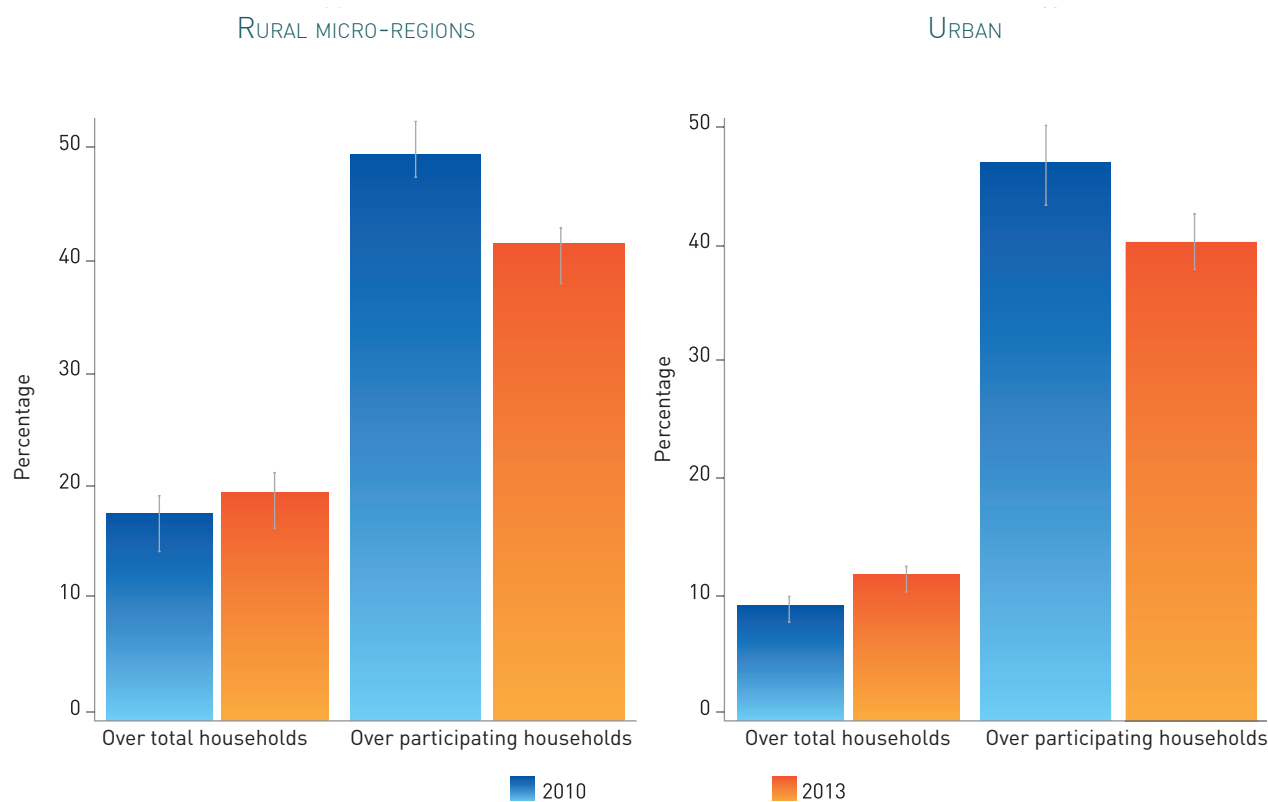


→ Antonio Franco grows corn on his farm in Ciénaga de Oro (Córdoba). "When others do the planting, it doesn't go so well. Antonio has a green thumb," says his wife.

5. The data on attendance to organizations reports percentages that are very similar to those related to participation in organizations.



**FIGURE 7.3.**  
HOUSEHOLDS' LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS).



Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

Leadership is defined as the household head or the spouse being leaders within an organization of which they are members. In the first two bars of each figure, the percentage of households that are leaders within the social organizations of which they are members is shown over the total of households, which include those that are not leaders because they do not even participate in any organization. The second two bars of each figure show the percentage of households that are leaders over the total number of households that participate in some kind of social organization. The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.

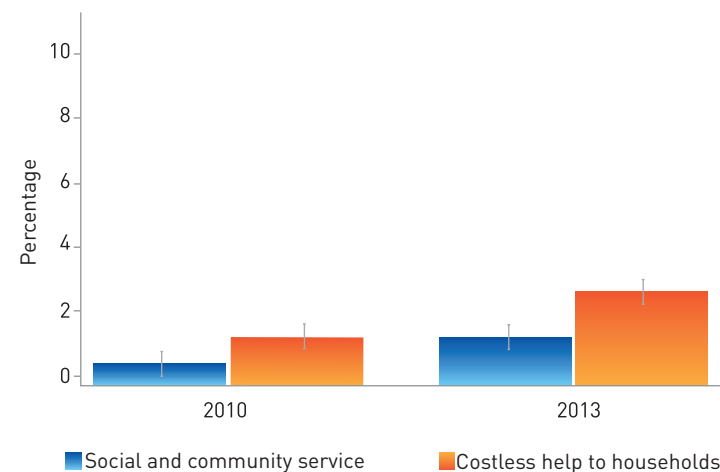
### 7.3. PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR: TO WHAT EXTENT DO COLOMBIANS HELP ONE ANOTHER?

A second dimension looks at what we call 'pro-social behavior.' In addition to belonging to social organizations, the households dedicate efforts to contributing to their communities through work or other forms of transference to community and neighborhood projects or to the people closest to them. The ELCA shows that in Colombia, citizens sometimes resort to informal mechanisms of mutual support through relations based on exchanges, loans and gifts with people they know and outside the formal private or state system. These calculations are based on the survey's use of time module, from where we extract the time spent helping others freely and helping out with social and community projects.

It is clearly evident that this dimension of social capital is the most discouraging. Despite there being an increase in the percentage of rural households that dedicate time to social service or to the community or to helping other households for free, these percentages continue to be extremely low. Moreover, by observing the changes in these types of behavior by regions, we can see that the increase is marked in the mid-Atlantic and Center-East regions, given that in the Cundiboyacá and Coffee regions, the percentage for this type of activity actually decreased (see Figure 7.5).

**FIGURE 7.4.**

HOUSEHOLDS THAT DEDICATE TIME TO PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES: SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE OR COSTLESS HELP TO HOUSEHOLDS IN THE RURAL AREA (PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEHOLDS).



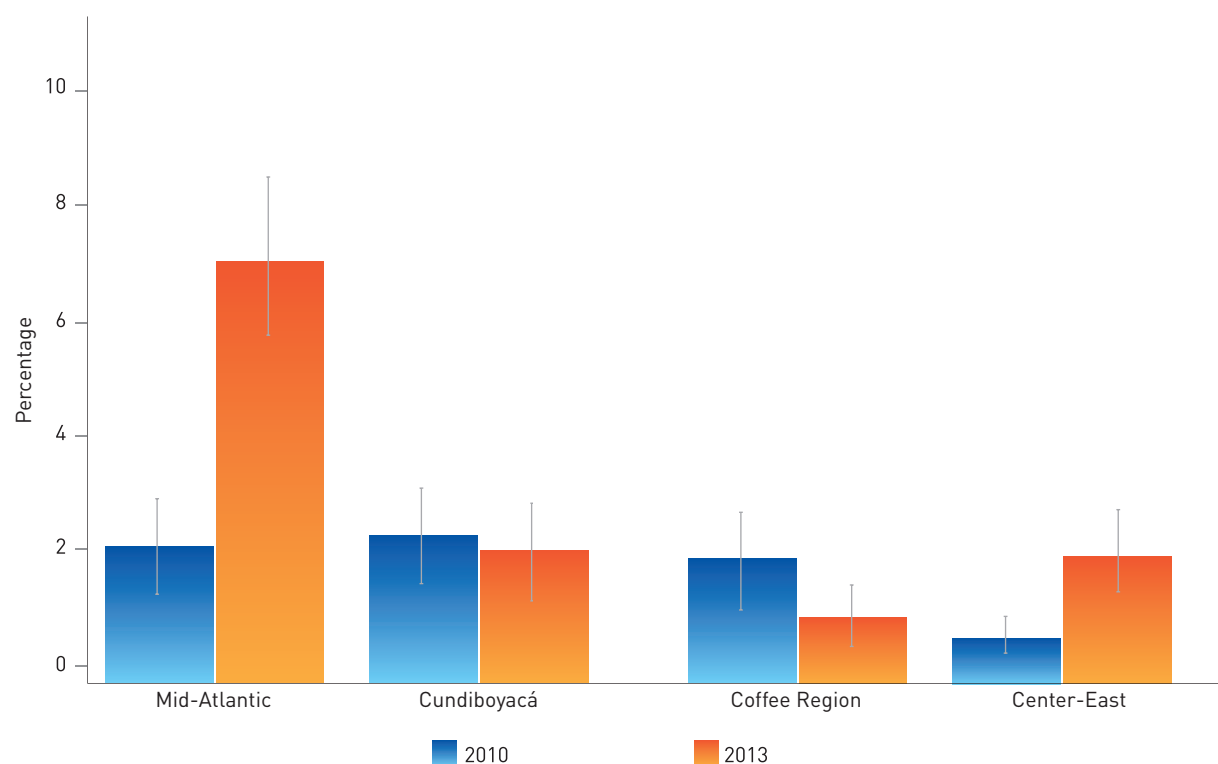
Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

The figure shows the percentage of households that affirm that they dedicate time to social or community service (blue bars) and those that state that they offer costless help to other households (red bars) both for 2010 and 2013. Dedicating time is defined as the household head or the spouse affirming they spend time doing these activities. These data are only available for the rural sample, which is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.



**FIGURE 7.5.**

HOUSEHOLDS THAT DEDICATE TIME TO PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE RURAL AREA BY REGION (PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS).



Source: Authors' calculations based on ELCA 2010 and 2013

However, even though the figures suggest a discouraging panorama, Figure 7.6 displays a more motivating aspect of the situation.

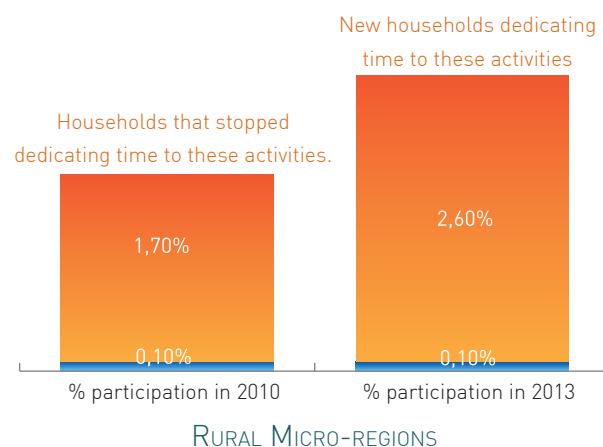
In the rural area, 2.6% of the households which in 2010 did not dedicate time to these activities did so in 2013. This percentage is higher than the 1.7%

The figure shows the percentage of households that affirm that they dedicate time to social or community service (blue bars) and those that state that they offer costless help to other households (red bars) both for 2010 and 2013. Dedicating time is defined as the household head or the spouse affirming they spend time doing these activities. These data are only available for the rural sample, which is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.

who dedicated time to these activities in 2010 but stopped doing so in 2013.

**FIGURE 7.6.**

DYNAMIC OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT DEDICATE TIME TO PROSOCIAL ACTIVITIES:  
SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE OR COSTLESS HELP TO HOUSEHOLDS IN THE RURAL AREA  
(PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS).



Source: Authors' calculations based on ELCA 2010 and 2013

As we can see in the participants' responses to the question regarding helping those who help us, the figures above contrast enormously with those related to their responses regarding their opinion on

altruistic reciprocity, (see Figure 7.7). In addition to the fact that these manifestations express greater prosocial behavior in opinion than in action, the only aspect to highlight is that it would appear that

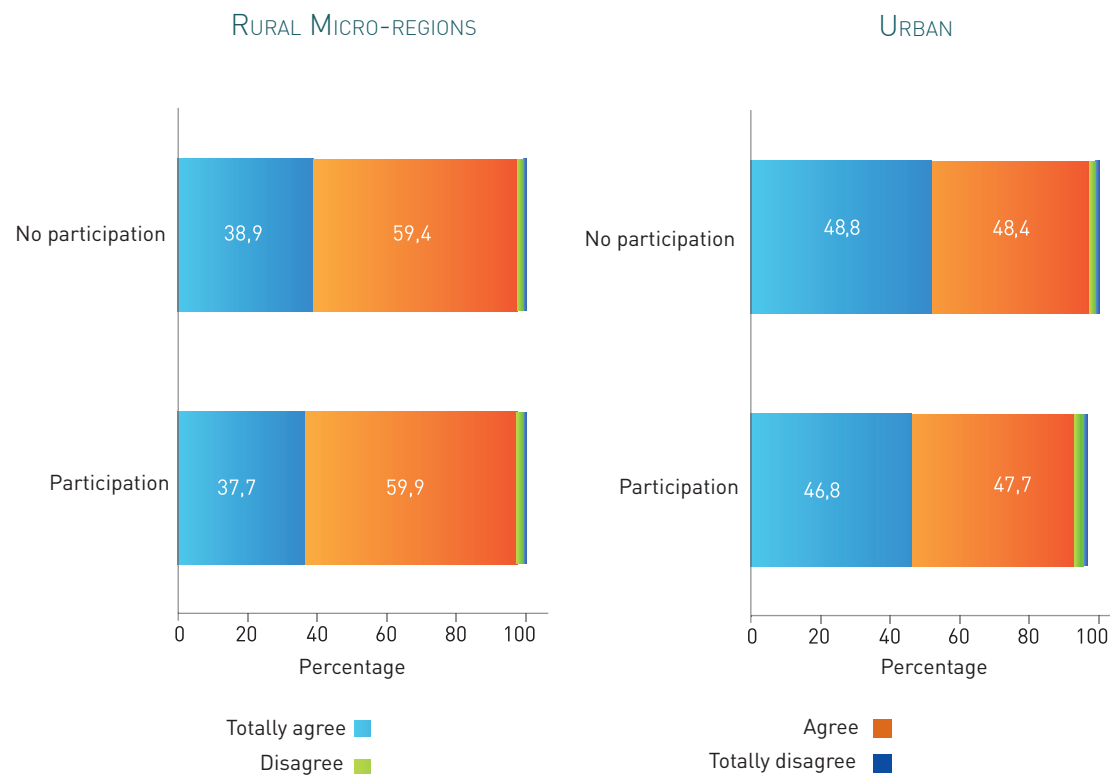
in this question, fewer surveyed people in the rural areas are in full agreement than their urban counterparts. This contrasts with greater rural participation in social organizations.<sup>6</sup>

6. There are potential difficulties in making this comparison due to the fact that the responses from the surveyed participants can reflect differences in how the individuals in distinct zones show themselves to be more or less inclined to express strong opinions.

In the figure, the first bar shows the percentage of households that affirmed that they dedicated time to social or community service and those that affirmed that they offered costless help to other households in 2010. Dedicating time is defined as the household head or the spouse affirming they spend time doing these activities. The upper part of the bar indicates the percentage of households that stopped dedicating time to these activities (i.e., that in 2010 they engaged in the activities and in 2013, they no longer did). In the lower part of the bar, it is possible to observe the percentage of households that dedicated time to these activities in 2010 and continued doing so in 2013. The second bar indicates the number of households that affirmed dedicating time to these activities in 2013. The upper part of this bar indicates the percentage of households that started dedicating time to these activities (i.e., that they did not engage in such activities in 2010, but did so in 2013). These data are only available for the rural sample that is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions.



**FIGURE 7.7.**  
PARTICIPATION IN ORGANIZATIONS AND RECIPROCITY BY AREA  
(PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS).



Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

The figure shows the percentage of people who respond "Totally agree", "Agree", "Disagree" or "Totally disagree" to the affirmation: "You should always help those who help you." These data are only available for the rural sample that is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions.

Upon observing the opinions of the ELCA households and comparing these with those reported by Chong, Ñopo and Cardenas (2013), it is interesting to note that there is a high percentage of opinions in favor of some prosocial attitudes. For example, on average 90.4% of the surveyed participants—in the same Latin American Capitals as mentioned in the previous section—affirm that they agree with the idea that "people should worry about the well-being of other people" and an average of 70.6% agree with the idea that "people have the moral obligation to share part of their resources with people less fortunate."

Now, the informal mechanisms of mutual support on the inside of community and social networks are a fundamental component for the well-being of the households, particularly in developing countries (Baird and Gray, 2014). One of the questions asked in the 2013 survey was as follows: "Supposing that each one of your neighbors in this community or neighborhood have \$50.000 Colombian Pesos in their pockets, how many of them would immediately loan you the \$50.000 to cover the expenses of a medical emergency with the simple commitment that you will pay them back whenever you can?"

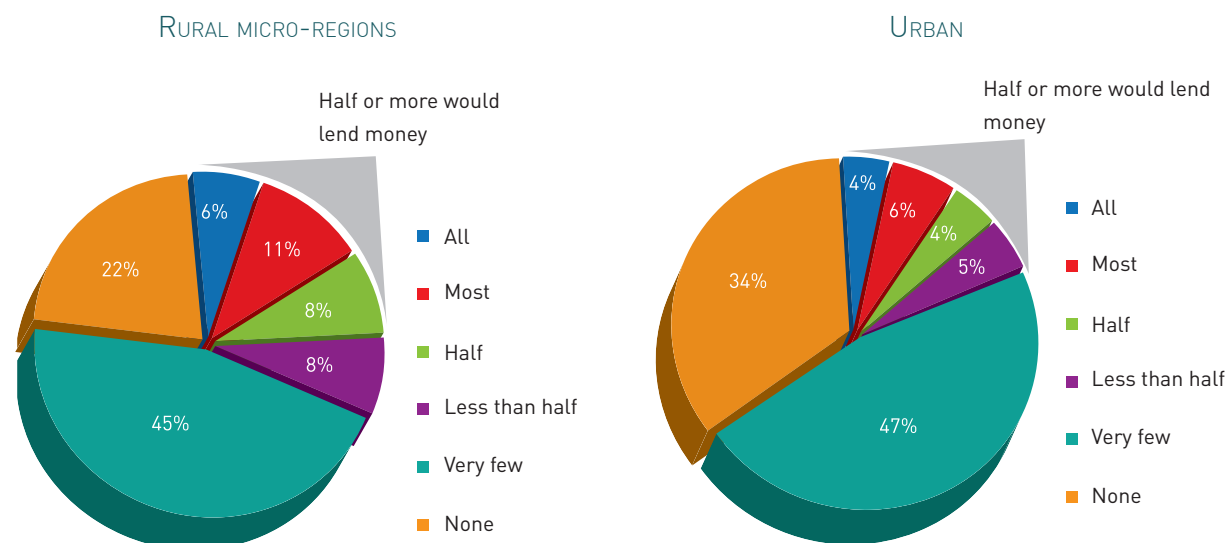
In Colombia, people tend to resort to friends and relatives when they need credit, for example. This group makes up the second most important source of financing in the country after banks and financial institutions. Of the 51% of urban households that currently have some type of credit, 20% report having them with friends and relatives. In the rural area,

this is even more important: 31% of the households with credit reported having been loaned the money from friends and relatives. Nevertheless, in the urban area, the percentage of individuals that claim no one would lend them money is relatively high even though this fraction decreases in the rural area from 34.8% to 22% respectively (see Figure 7.8). In both areas, the majority of individuals affirm that very few people would unconditionally lend them money. These data corroborate the measurements of interpersonal

In Colombia, people tend to resort to friends and relatives when they need credit, for example. This group makes up the second most important source of financing in the country, after banks and financial institutions.

**FIGURE 7.8.**

NETWORK OF TRUST BETWEEN NEIGHBORS: LOANS FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES, BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE).



Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

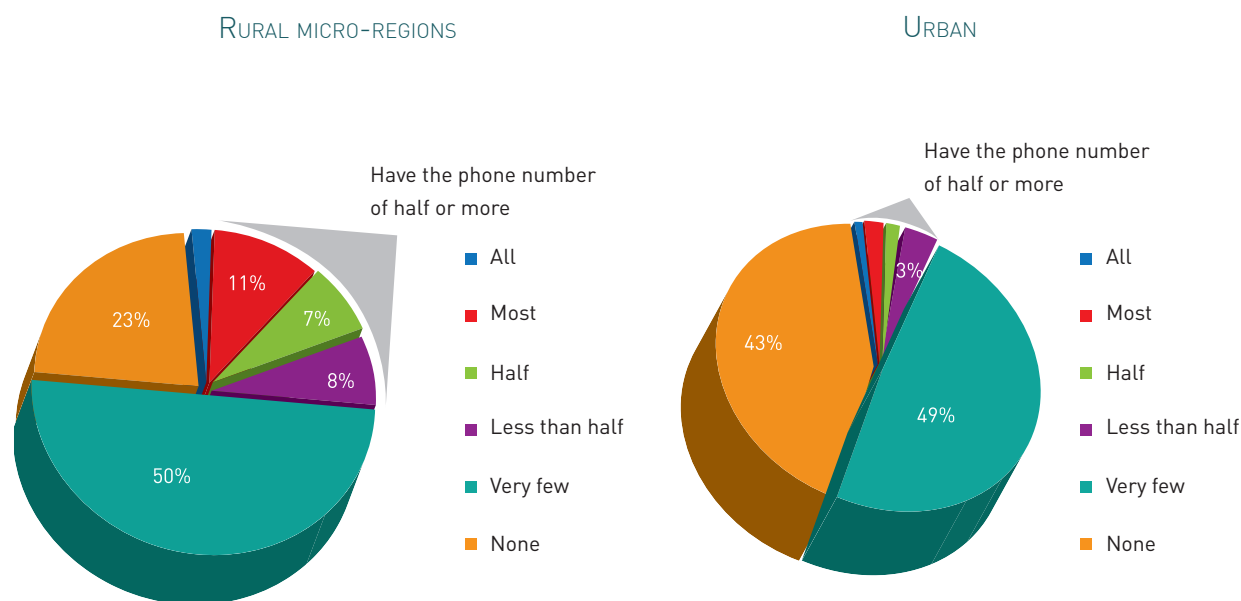
The figure shows the percentage of people who respond "All," "Most," "Half," "Less than half," "Very few," or "None" to the question: "Supposing that each one of your neighbors in this community or neighborhood have \$50,000 Colombian pesos in their pockets, how many of them would immediately loan you the \$50,000 to cover the expenses of a medical emergency with the simple commitment that you will pay them back whenever you can?" These data are only available for the rural sample that is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.



trust made in the country by the World Survey of Values and some experimental studies (Chong, Ñopo and Cárdenas, 2008), showing that levels of interpersonal trust are rather low.

Additionally, one of the key factors to building trust and long-term relationships in a society is the establishment of communication networks between neighbors. In 2013, the ELCA asked the surveyed individuals how many of their neighbors had their phone number written down in case they needed to call them in an emergency; in the urban area, a substantially high percentage of the individuals affirmed not having the phone numbers of any of their neighbors at hand (44%), even though in the rural area this percentage was much lower, at 23%. Nevertheless, the majority of individuals in both areas reported having the cell phone number of very few of their neighbors (see Figure 7.9). Even though there are no available statistics to compare, there are reasons to believe that these percentages are low. The differences between the opinion questions regarding the importance of helping others and the concrete actions taken to carry through with this, confirm the need to follow-up on the dynamics of prosocial behavior in the households through different questions.<sup>7</sup>

**FIGURE 7.9.**  
TRUST NETWORKS BETWEEN NEIGHBORS: COMMUNICATION IN CASE OF EMERGENCY BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE).



Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

The figure shows the percentage of people who responded "All," "Most," "Half," "Less than half," "Very few," or "None" to the question: "How many phone numbers of your neighbors do you have at hand in case you need to call them in an emergency?" These data are only available for the rural sample that is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions.

7. The correlation between reporting "totally in agreement" to the affirmation "we must always help those who help us" and dedicating time to prosocial activities (offering costless help to households or dedicating time to social or communitarian service) is positive (0,0112) and significant at 5%.

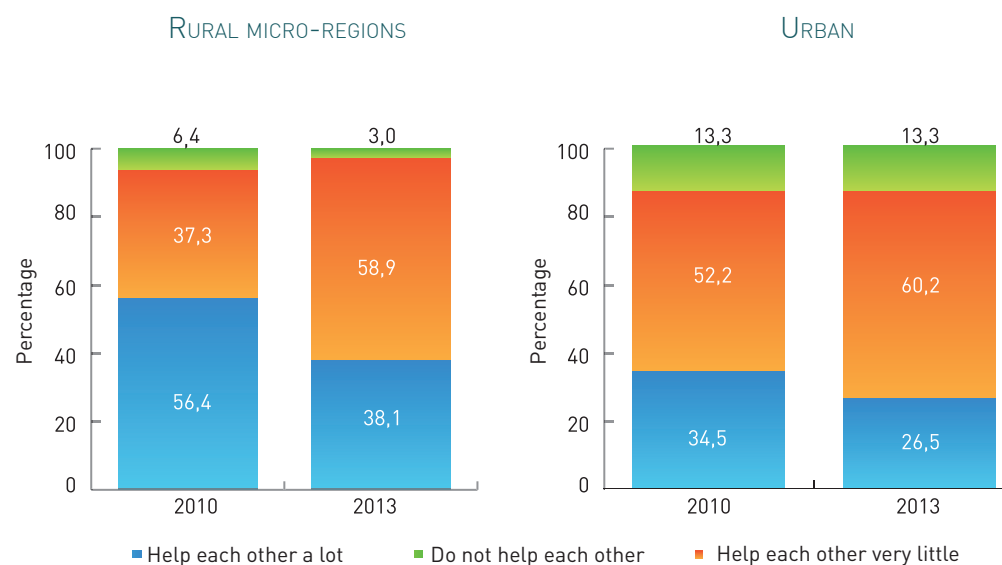
## 7.4. WHAT DO THE COMMUNITY LEADERS HAVE TO SAY?

Another module of the survey was applied to hundreds of community leaders of the rural and urban samples. The responses of these leaders contrast with those of the households regarding the dynamics of collective action in the neighborhood or the rural settlement. Figure 7.10 presents the change in the perception of the leaders from 2010 to 2013. In the rural area, we can see a significant negative change perceived by the leaders, given that in 2010, 56% of them responded that the inhabitants of the rural settlement “help each other a lot,” while this percentage fell to 38% in 2013. The percentage of those who said “they help each other a little” increased from 37% to 59%. This contrasts with the increase reported in previous sections of the percentage of households that stated they were dedicating time to activities such as social and community service, and to helping other households.

Negative changes appear also in the urban area, but to a lesser extent, where the percentage of community leaders that affirmed the inhabitants of their neighborhoods “help each other a lot”, fell eight percentage points between 2010 and 2013, whereas, the percentage that reported that their neighbors “help each other a little” increased by the same amount.

**FIGURE 7.10.**

HOW MUCH DO THE INHABITANTS OF YOUR COMMUNITY HELP EACH OTHER?  
COMMUNITY SURVEY BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF COMMUNITIES).



Source: Authors' calculations based on ELCA 2010 and 2013

The figure shows the percentage of community leaders that responded that, in their opinion, the inhabitants of their rural settlement “help each other a lot,” “help each other a little” or “do not help each other.” The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions.

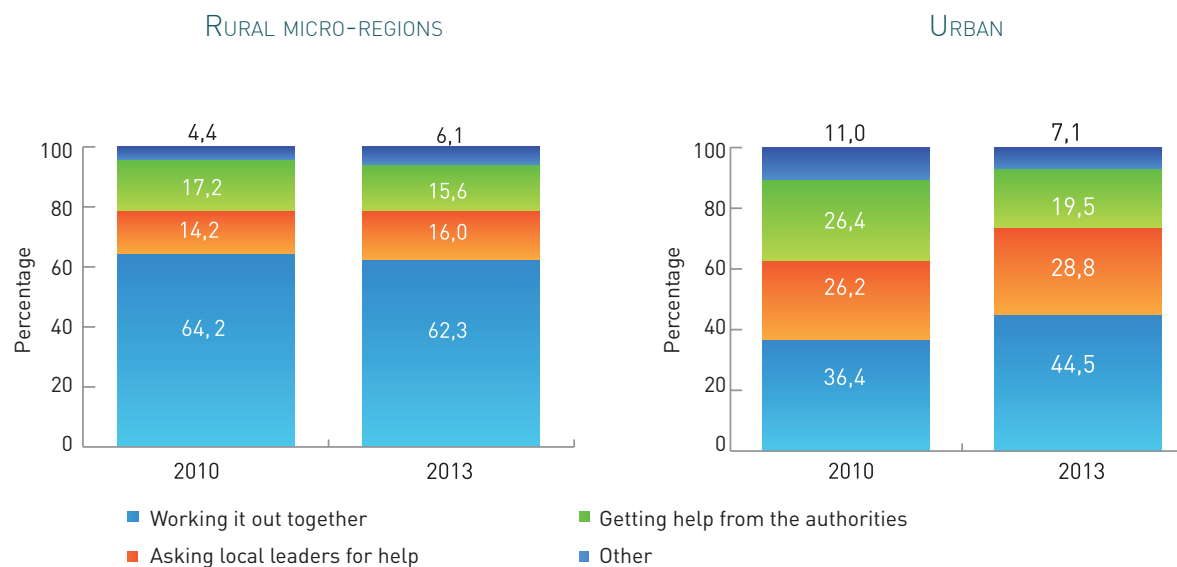


The leaders' perceived reduction of how much the community members and neighbors helped one another between 2010 and 2013 is not reflected in their perception of their ability to resolve conflicts. The way in which conflicts are resolved remains stable between the two waves of the survey, but the differences between the urban and rural populations are significant (see Figure 7.11). According to the leaders, in comparison to the urban areas, the rural ones show almost double the percentage of the population resolving their conflicts by working together.

One possible explanation, which would require more research, regarding the greater percentage of households in the urban area that resort to the authorities and to community leaders, is that the State mechanisms set in place for conflict resolution could be more effective or be more available to the households in the urban areas than in the rural areas. Additionally, despite the fact that the leaders report less solidarity amongst neighbors in the urban sample, the percentage of conflicts that they resolve by working together increased from 36% to 44.5% and the need to ask the authorities for help decreased from 26.4% to 19.5%. This would confirm the observed trend in the prosocial behaviors of the urban households.

**FIGURE 7.11.**

HOW DO NEIGHBORS MAINLY RESOLVE NON-CRIMINAL CONFLICTS?  
COMMUNITY SURVEYS BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF COMMUNITIES).



Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

The Figure shows the percentage of community leaders who responded to the question on how neighbors in their rural settlements resolve conflicts that do not involve crimes. The category of other includes asking other neighbors for help, asking armed groups for help, asking friends and relatives that live elsewhere for help, asking religious leaders for help or other forms of asking for help. The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions.

## 7.5. INTERPRETATIONS OF THE DYNAMICS OF ASSOCIATION AND AID

### 7.5.1. IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARTICIPATION IN ORGANIZATIONS AND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR?

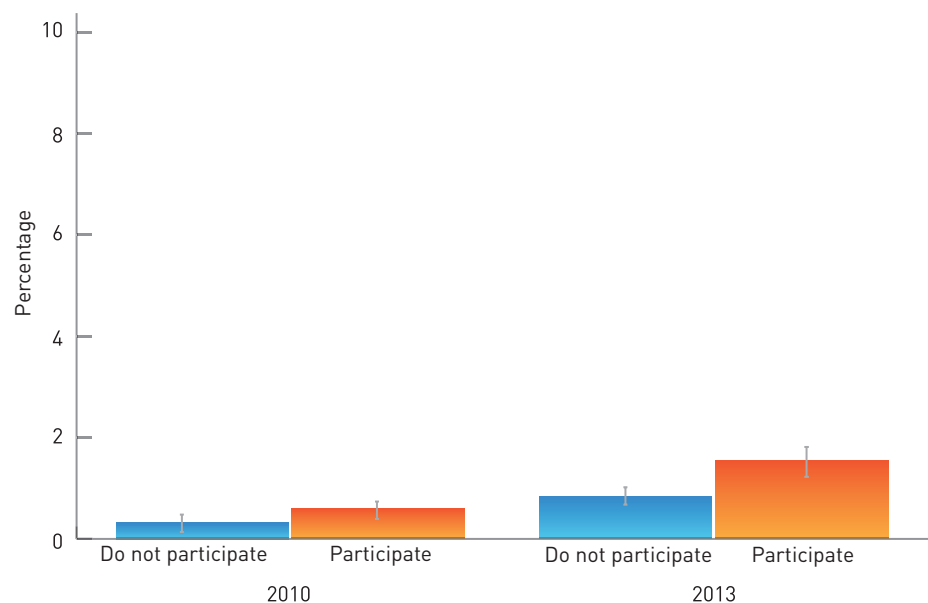
As mentioned throughout this chapter, associativity and prosocial behavior respond to a community process which is fuelled from distinct community spaces and allows for the building of what some call social capital or, as previously mentioned, 'collective efficacy' (Sampson, Rudenbush and Earls, 1997). Participation in social organizations allows the exercise of collective efficacy as it creates a discussion space to communicate and represent the collective concerns. Prosocial actions, on the other hand, are a direct manifestation of this collective efficacy. In Figure 7.12, we can see that despite the dismally low percentages of households that dedicate time to social and community service, the households that participate in some organization dedicate more time to helping others both in 2010 and 2013.<sup>8</sup> Now, in both cases, whether they participate or not, there is an increase in the time reported helping others, which suggests a general increase in prosocial behavior. This correlation between participating and helping suggests that the social organizations are aimed at opening spaces designed to helping others.

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8. The correlation between membership in organizations and dedicating time to social and community services is positive but weak (0.028) and it is statistically significant at 5%.

**FIGURE 7.12.**

HOUSEHOLDS WHICH DEDICATE TIME TO SOCIAL OR COMMUNITY SERVICE IN THE RURAL AREA ACCORDING TO THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS (PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS).



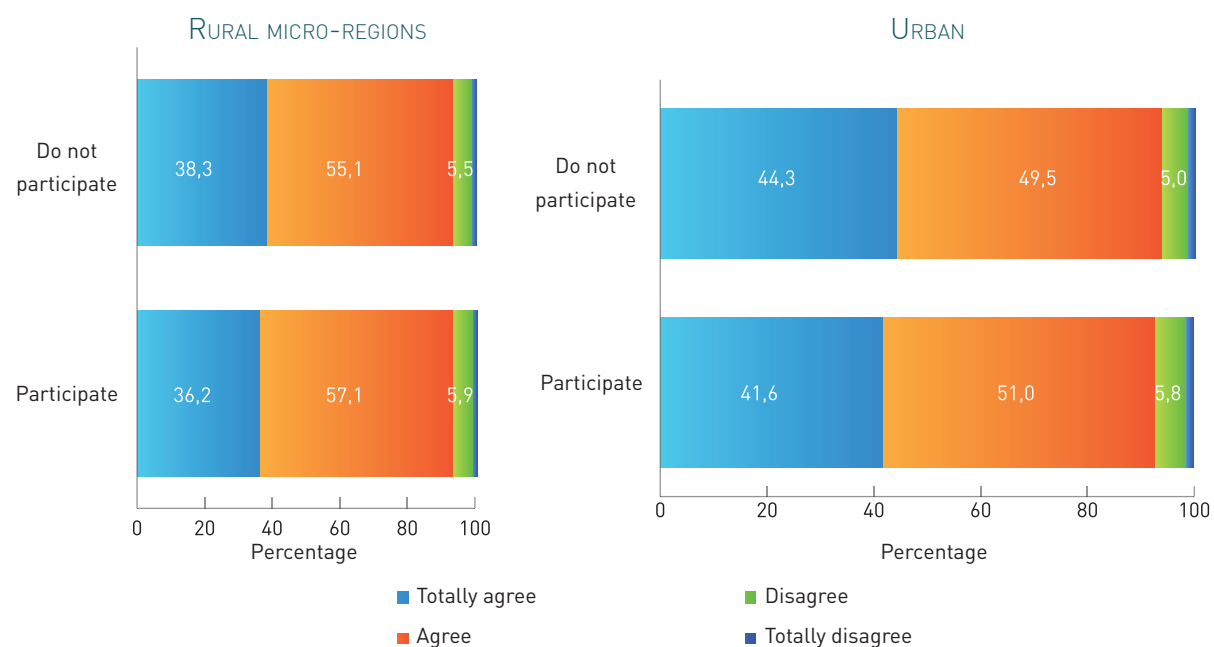
Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

Dedicating time refers to when the household head or spouse affirms dedicating time to this kind of activity differentiating on whether any household member participated in some social organization in 2013. These data are only available for the rural sample that is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.



**FIGURE 7.13.**

PEOPLE WHO AGREED WITH: “THE GOVERNMENT MUST IMPLEMENT STRONG POLICIES TO REDUCE THE INEQUALITIES BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR” BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE).



The figure shows the percentage of people that responded “Totally agree,” “Agree,” “Disagree” or “Totally disagree” to the statement: “The Government must implement strong policies to reduce the gap between the poor and the wealthy.” The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ELCA 2010 and 2013

## 7.5.2. SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND THE WELFARE STATE

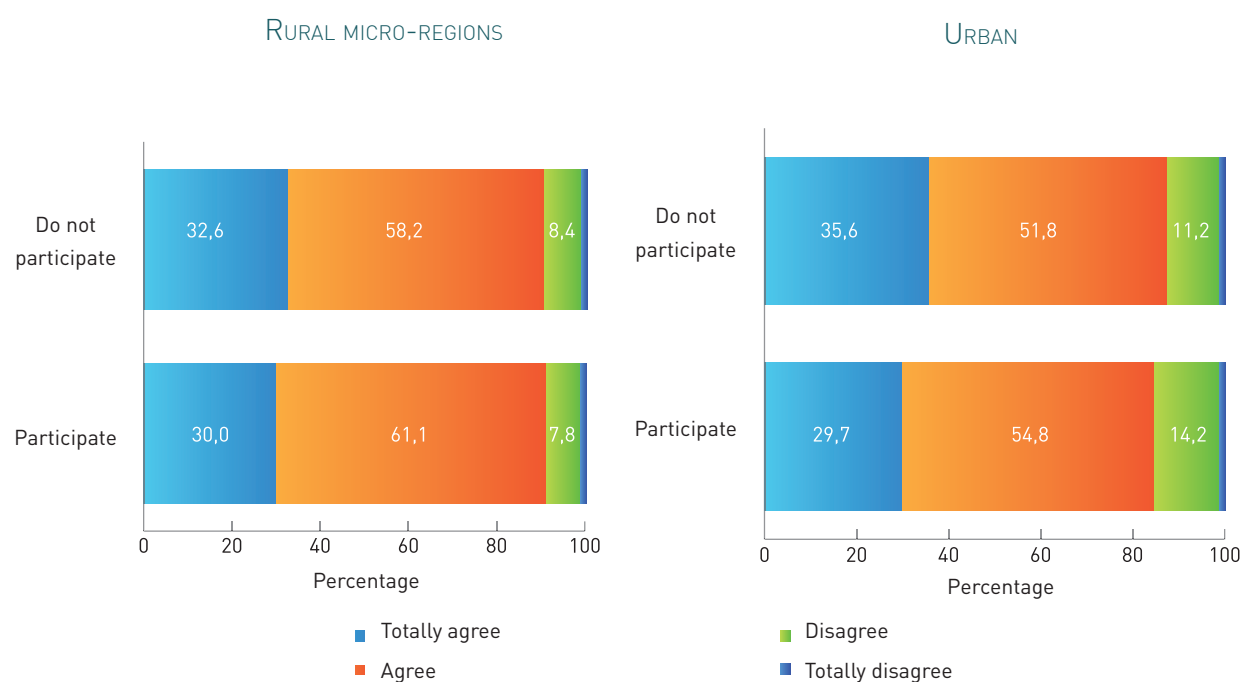
Participation in social organizations and prosocial actions aim at creating well-being at a collective level through collective action. As in previous sections, the great majority are in agreement or totally in agreement with the idea that individuals must

help each other. Before the modern welfare state, this was the source of social benefits and the redistribution of aid for those most in need. However, today there is a welfare state that, supported by public resources, creates programs to support

the most vulnerable groups of society. Moreover, the ELCA participants clearly support this role of the State as the generator of welfare and redistribution, as can be seen in Figure 7.13.

**FIGURE 7.14.**

PEOPLE WHO AGREE WITH: “THE GOVERNMENT IS THE MAIN ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERSEEING PEOPLE’S WELFARE”, BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE).



The figure shows the percentage of people that responded “Totally agree,” “Agree,” “Disagree” or “Totally disagree” to the statement: “The Government is the main entity responsible for overseeing people’s welfare.” The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.

Source: Authors’ calculations based on EICA 2010 and 2013

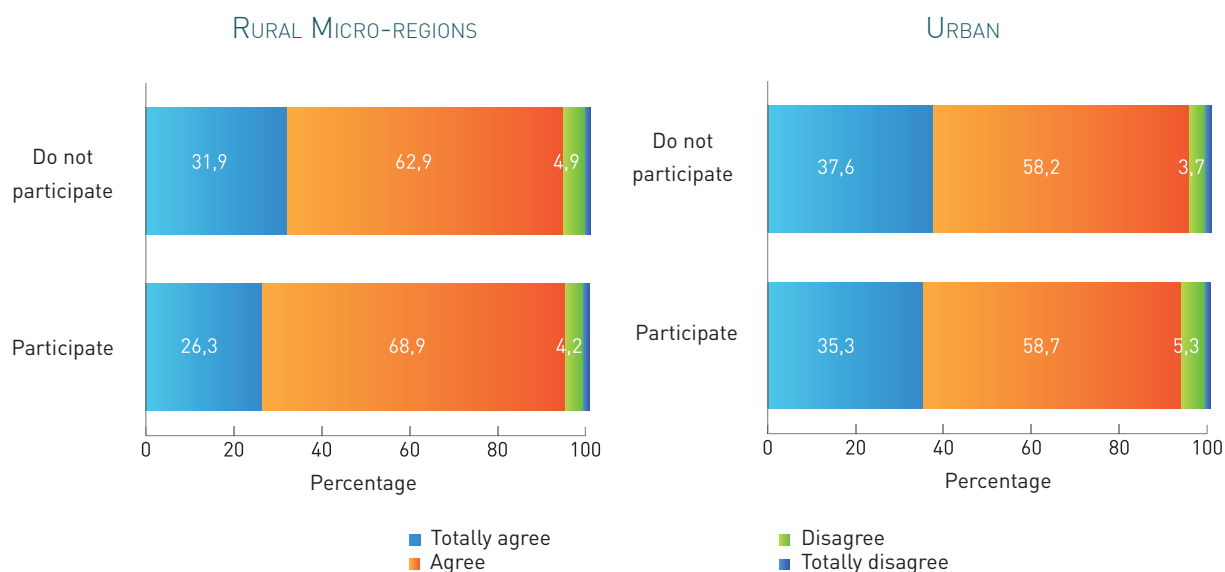
The questions regarding whether the government or each individual should be the main person or entity responsible for people’s well-being show that

there is a balance in the degree to which the surveyed participants see a major role played by both actors without a clear preference. What stands out

in Figures 7.14 and 7.15 is that the percentages of “totally agree” responses are lower in both cases for the rural area.

**FIGURE 7.15.**

PEOPLE WHO AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT: “EACH INDIVIDUAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS/HER OWN WELL-BEING”, BY AREA (PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE).



The figure shows the percentage of people that responded “Totally agree,” “Agree,” “Disagree” or “Totally disagree” to the statement: “Each individual is responsible for his/her own well-being.” The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.

Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

At the same time, we studied the correlation between the variables of associativity (do you participate in any social organization?), the network of trust among the neighbors (would you lend someone \$50.000?), and the opinion regarding the welfare state and redistribution, solidarity and reciprocity. Table 7.1 shows the results. Each cell

highlights whether the correlation was negative (-), positive (+) or statistically insignificant (.) for the urban and rural samples. The results show that those who participated in social organizations agreed to a lesser extent with either the State or individuals being primarily responsible, and with negative reciprocity. In the rural case, those who par-

ticipated in social organizations agreed to a lesser extent with solidarity. Nevertheless, the question about the networks of trust among neighbors exhibited fewer cases of significant correlation, except in the urban area and regarding the issue of the Government being primarily responsible for redistribution.<sup>9</sup>

9. The positive correlation implies that the person is “more in agreement” with the statement and the opposite is true for the negative correlation. To the left you can read the direction of the correlations that are significant in the urban zone and to the right you can read the same for the rural area. Where no sign appears, the correlation is not significant to 5%.



**TABLE 7.1.**

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ASSOCIATIVITY AND THE NETWORK OF TRUST AMONG NEIGHBORS AGAINST OPINIONS REGARDING THE WELFARE STATE AND REDISTRIBUTION, SOLIDARITY AND RECIPROCITY.

	The government is the main entity responsible for ensuring people's welfare	Each individual is responsible for his/her own welfare	The government must implement strong policies to reduce the gap between the poor and the wealthy.	You must always help those who help you.	What goes around comes around
Someone in the household participates in some social organization.	- / .	- / -	- / .	- / .	- / -
How many of your neighbors would lend you COP\$50.000?	+ / .	. / .	. / .	. / .	. / .

The table shows the correlation between the variables of associativity (someone in the household participates in some social organization) and the network of trust among neighbors (how many would lend you COP\$50.000) against the responses of opinions on the welfare state and redistribution, solidarity and reciprocity, for the urban and rural area. Each cell highlights whether the resulting correlation is negative (-), positive (+) or statistically insignificant (.). The positive correlation implies that the person is "more in agreement" with the statement and vice versa for the negative correlation. To the left you can read the direction of the correlations that are significant in the urban area, and to the right, those for the rural area. Where there are no signs, this implies that the correlation is not significant to 5%. The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.

Source: Author's calculations based on the ELCA 2010 and 2013

The question as to whether these social programs have any relationship with the households' participation and prosocial behavior is now opened. Using ELCA information on the participation of the households in State programs, we were able to analyze the frequency with which the households partici-

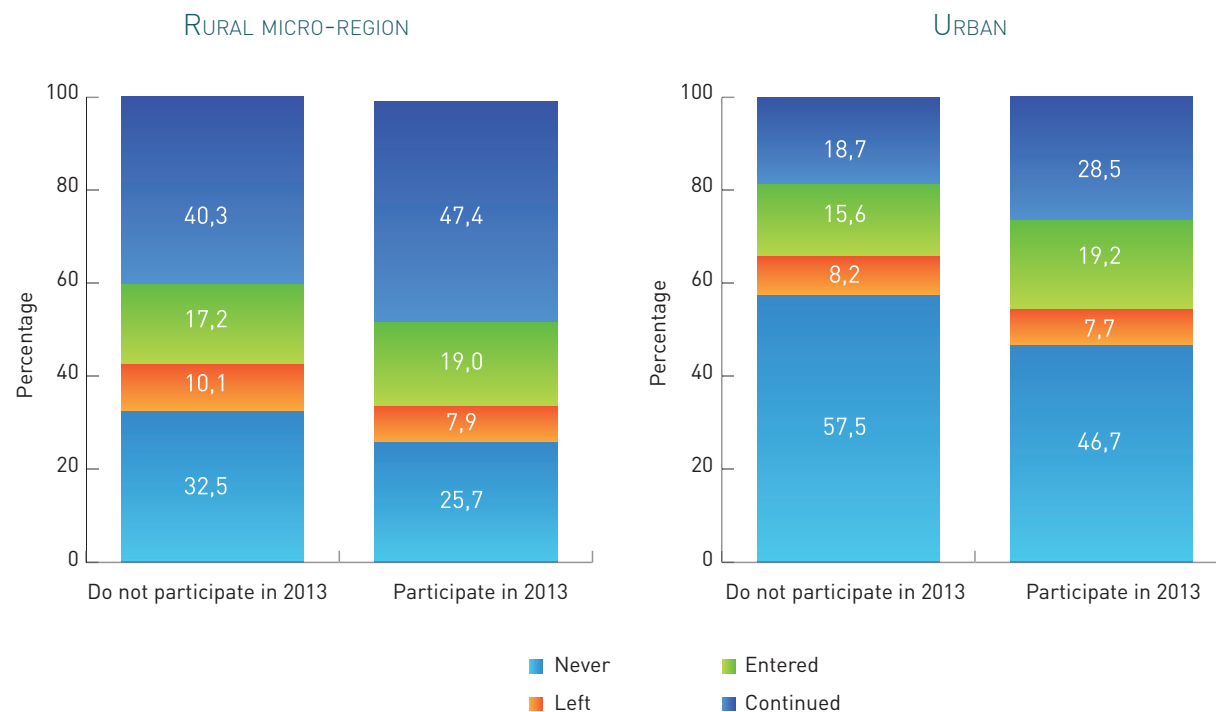
pate and their prosocial activities and participation in civil society organizations. Beyond this, we were able to carry out a dynamic analysis assessing whether the households entered, continued or left these social programs<sup>10</sup> and whether this is related to their prosocial behavior and associativity. Figure

7.16 presents this analysis as a result of a regression, which allows us to deduce that the probability of belonging to a social organization is determined by a household entering a State program or continuing to benefit from one.

10. The social or government programs considered are, for the rural area: Familias en Acción, programs for the elderly, SENA, Red Juntos-Unidos, ICBF, aid for natural disasters, aid for displaced people, titling of abandoned land, land allocation programs, Ley de Víctimas y Ley de Tierras, Agroingreso Seguro or Desarrollo Rural con Equidad, Oportunidades Rurales, Familias Guardabosques and any other rural development or related programs. And for the urban area: Familias en Acción, programs for senior citizens, SENA, Red Juntos-Unidos, ICBF, aid for natural disasters, aid for displaced people and other programs.

**FIGURE 7.16.**

PANEL OF THE DYNAMIC OF HOUSEHOLDS ENTERING INTO AND LEAVING STATE PROGRAMS DIFFERENTIATED BY PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS (PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS).



Source: Authors' calculations based on ELCA 2010 and 2013

The figure shows the percentage of households that have never been beneficiaries of a State program (in 2010 or in 2013), the households that left or stopped being beneficiaries (in 2010 someone in the household was the beneficiary of a program and in 2013 stopped being one), the households that entered programs (in 2010 no one in the household was a program beneficiary but was in 2013), and the households that continued being beneficiaries (someone in the household was a beneficiary of a program in 2010 and also in 2013). These classifications are differentiated by whether or not someone in the household was a member of a social organization in 2013. The social or governmental programs considered are, for the rural area: Familias en Acción, programs for the elderly, SENA, Red Juntos-Unidos, ICBF, aid for natural disasters, aid for displaced people, titling of abandoned land, land allocation programs, the Victims and Land Restitution Law, Agroingreso Seguro or Desarrollo Rural con Equidad, Oportunidades Rurales, Familias Guardabosques and any other rural development or related programs. Urban area: Familias en Acción, programs for senior citizens, SENA, Red Juntos-Unidos, ICBF, aid for natural disasters, aid for displaced people and other programs. The rural sample is only representative of the mid-Atlantic, Cundiboyacá, Coffee Region, and Center-East micro-regions. A 95% confidence interval is reported.



→ In the afternoon, Octavio Ballesteros, his wife Alicia Torres and their adopted son, Felipe García, milk the cows and check on the livestock, in Susa (Cundinamarca).

The left panel shows the data for the rural case. Each bar represents the probability of a household participating (right) or not (left) in social organizations. In general, we can see that the probability of participating in a social organization increases for the households that entered or continued in State programs between 2010 and 2013, when compared to those that never participated or those that left these programs. A similar pattern can be observed for the urban case.

These data suggest that the State programs can be contributing to opening spaces of associativity for the rural and urban households. What is not clear is the transmission mechanism. However, it is quite plausible that this effect is generated by the programs' implementation of conditions that often in-

clude the need to join, in order to receive the benefits. For example, the Familias en Acción<sup>11</sup> program is one of the most common in the country and therefore the ELCA sample explicitly includes, among its categories, participation in spaces of community welfare such as the "Municipality Assembly of more Familias en Acción," the "Leader Mothers' Committee", and the "Well-Being Meetings."

It is difficult to evaluate the impact of these conditions on the construction of social capital, in a profound sense of the word, and even more difficult, to evaluate their impact on the households' prosocial actions. In fact, upon evaluating whether entering or staying in the programs between 2010 and 2013 had some effect on the prosocial behaviors of helping and trusting others, no causal relationship was found. The next wave of the ELCA will surely shed light on this point.

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11. See [http://www.dps.gov.co/Ingreso\\_Social/FamiliasenAccion.aspx](http://www.dps.gov.co/Ingreso_Social/FamiliasenAccion.aspx)



## 7.6. CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this chapter, we evaluated the ELCA households' role of participation in social organizations and prosocial actions in the rural and urban households as symptoms of the construction of the collective efficacy of the urban and rural communities in the ELCA sample. Even though the levels of prosocial behavior in terms of providing help to others and to community and social projects are very low, and the participation of the households in social organizations show positive signs, between 2010 and 2013 there was an increase in the participation and the prosocial actions that can be associated with an attempt to construct social capital and collective efficacy. Given that there is a weak but positive correlation of this participation with the prosocial actions of individuals, it could be said that, in general, a positive trend in this aspect can be observed. It is worth pointing out that the increase in the participation of the households in religious organizations and unions is especially high. This would seem to open spaces of organization which, in the first place, can be derived from the growing explosion of new churches other than the Catholic Church and, in the second place, due to the opening up of democracy and fewer threats to the lives of union members.

Nevertheless, it is also important to point out the high mobility in terms of the households' entering and leaving these organizations, which can point to

a fragility in these processes of attempting to construct social capital that can only now be quantified through the application of this longitudinal survey. The data suggest that only 10% of the urban households and 25% of the rural ones maintained their participation in social organizations between 2010 and 2013, with respect to households entering and leaving organizations temporarily. This impedes a consolidated construction of a social fabric of mutual help and representation among the households in the public and collective sphere. More clearly—as discussed in the previous section—it is a reflection of a dynamic promoted by governmental programs where the opportunism of an obligatory membership to organizations is the cause behind this growth in participation. Time will be a better evaluator of the transformation of associativity in prosocial behavior. Additionally, it is worth mentioning the regional differences; while the Atlantic and Center-East regions saw an important increase in this participation, the Cundiboyacá and Coffee regions showed low or even negative tendencies.

The apparent disconnection between this dynamic of increasing participation and prosocial behavior and that reported by the surveyed leaders is interesting. In the case of the leaders, even though it is not possible to carry out a longitudinal analysis given that the same leaders were not interviewed

throughout, it is worth pointing out that, in general, the leaders in the 2013 survey reported levels of trust and help among neighbors as being lower than those reported in 2010. The new ELCA question regarding whether or not a neighbor would unconditionally lend COP \$50,000 in a case of emergency confirms the assessment of very low levels of interpersonal trust and prosocial actions in general. This was also reflected in the little connectivity between the surveyed individuals and their neighbors (i.e., that they did not have their neighbors' phone numbers saved in their cell phones as a sign of the connectivity in their social networks).

The possible positive relations found between the governmental programs and participation in social organizations, but not with prosocial behavior, lead to questions that can only be answered over time. If these programs aim at constructing greater social capital by demanding that the beneficiaries be associated, could this requirement transform the relations of interpersonal trust and of prosocial actions between individuals? It is difficult to respond to this question with the available data, but it does open a debate on the role of the welfare state and the communities in generating the minimum social capital that must exist to act as a network of social protection in case these governmental programs stop functioning due to lack of resources or because beneficiaries move on.

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