



The  
University  
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**Experiences of ‘unsettlement’: exploring the ‘integration’ of  
Palestinian and Colombian refugees resettled in Chile and Brazil.**

**By:**

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*To my parents, Sylvia and Jaime.*



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## Abstract

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This thesis explores the experiences of resettlement of a group of Palestinian and Colombian refugees in Chile and Brazil. The study looks at the 'integration processes' of both communities in each country and reviews refugee resettlement as a durable solution in Latin American countries. Through extensive qualitative-driven mixed-methods research with two communities in two countries, the research explores some of the multiple scales, dimensions and spaces where the resettlement experience unfolds.

Semi-structured interviews, participant observation and a survey were employed during two extended visits to Chile and Brazil. I interviewed 44 resettled refugees and 36 other actors involved in the programmes, and surveyed a total of 86 refugees. I also did participant observation in two of the implementing agencies. Through this approach, the research reviewed areas of convergence and divergence between the narratives of the government and international agencies, the NGOs and the refugees themselves.

The findings of the research reveal that the 'integration' of resettled refugees in Chile and Brazil involves a constant (re)negotiation of access, identities and agency, within a context of social and structural constraints. The thesis further proposes understandings of refugee integration in the context of emergent resettlement countries without solid structures for refugee assistance. I argue that 'integration' is a translocal, multidimensional and multi-scale experience. It is characterised by unsettlement and uncertainty, by experiences of longing and belonging, and challenged by limitations to the practice of citizenship. The findings also show that despite the resettlement organisations' efforts to improve access and material conditions, their relationship with refugees has been characterised by power imbalances and tensions emerging from mutual unfulfilled expectations. The thesis contributes to the understanding of refugees' experiences in the context of south-south humanitarian responses, providing new insights about refugee integration and reflecting on the implementation of the resettlement programme from the perspective of the refugees.



## Preface

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In 2008, I attended a reception event hosted by the Chilean government to welcome 117 resettled Palestinian refugees who had arrived in the country during the previous months. The event was open to the general public in front of La Moneda, the seat of the Chilean government. The scene was overwhelming. Around a hundred members of the well-established Palestinian community were joined by some members of the government and many curious passers-by, to welcome the newcomers with dances, music and speeches. The crowd were carrying both Chilean and Palestinian flags. The Palestinian refugees looked amazed and confused at the same time. The process of arrival was registered by local and international press, and documentaries were made about the arrival of Palestinian refugees to the region<sup>1</sup>. It was an emotional encounter.

Standing there, however, I could not avoid drawing comparisons between this welcome and the invisibility of the Colombian refugees that I had interviewed as part of a previous research project. Silently, small numbers of Colombian resettled refugees and asylum seekers were arriving in the country. They were not announced in the media and they did not receive public recognition. Instead, they were discriminated and treated with suspicion. I wondered what the difference would be between the lived-experiences of those two groups: a community coming from outside and one from inside the region. When I found out that the same two communities were also resettled in Brazil, and that the Palestinian refugees were protesting outside the UNHCR offices in Brasilia because of their precarious conditions in the resettlement country, I became more inquisitive and wanted to explore how the experiences of these two communities varied in two Latin American countries. The journey of Colombian and Palestinian refugees had started many years before my questions emerged. My own journey exploring their experiences started that evening and still has not finished.

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<sup>1</sup> The documentary “Palestina al Sur” (Hurtado 2011) shows the arrival of Palestinian refugees in Chile. The documentaries “A chave de casa” (Samora & Grisotti 2009) explored the last 48 hours of Palestinian refugees in the Rwaished camp before their arrival in Brazil and “Vidas Deslocadas” (Gomes 2010) showed the process of arrival.



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## List of Abbreviations

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IA	Implementing Agency
ACNUR	Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (UNHCR in English).
AREVI	Área de Refugio de la Vicaría de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores
ASAV	Associação Antônio Vieira
BPC	Benefício de Prestação Continuada de Assistência Social
CEPAL	Comisión Europea para América Latina (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)
CDDH	Centro de Defesa dos Direitos Humanos
CONARE	Comitê Nacional para os Refugiados
DAS	Departamento de Acción Social del Ministerio del Interior
DEM	Departamento de Extranjería y Migraciones del Ministerio del Interior
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional
EPL	Ejército Popular de Liberación
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
MERCOSUR	Mercado Común del Sur (Southern Common Market)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nation High Commissioner for Refugee (ACNUR in Spanish)
UNRWA	United Nation Relief and Work Agency for Palestinian Refugee

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

---

We are all migrants. While some of us willingly migrate, many others are forced to move within their own countries or across borders, being displaced one or many times as a result of persecution and violence. Resettled refugees have experienced these multiple displacements within and across borders. They are refugees who have been pre-selected and transferred to a third country when their rights and needs cannot be covered in the first place where they have sought protection, or they live in an unsafe situation (UNHCR 2011c). This is the case of a group of Palestinian and Colombian refugees who have been arriving in Chile and Brazil within the last decade (Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011; Guglielmelli-White 2012). Nacira and Diego are among these resettled refugees. They do not know each other, they come from different countries and have different stories of displacement. However, both were resettled in Latin America and had to start, yet again, in a new place. For Nacira and Diego, as for other refugees in this research, the experiences of resettlement have meant change, uncertainty and constant negotiations of access, membership and belonging with different actors across diverse scales and spaces.

In this thesis I explore the experiences of resettlement of Colombian and Palestinian refugees in Chile and Brazil. By focusing on refugees' perceptions and knowledge as the main source of analysis, I explore how the resettlement programme is experienced and implemented in two South American countries. I also review areas of convergence and divergence between the discourses of government and international agencies, NGOs and refugees themselves. In the thesis, I demonstrate that although refugees' experiences vary among countries and groups, there are also some similarities. Experiences are understood and explored as situated, but not limited to the nation-state. Instead, refugees' experiences of 'integration' involve structural and social dimensions that have been developed 'translocally' in the place of resettlement as well as in other places where they were first displaced or other imagined places where family and friends were located. Through this analysis, I develop understandings of refugee integration in the context of emergent resettlement countries and provide a timely assessment of the resettlement programme in each country by reaching all key actors involved.

## 1.1. Why study the experience of resettled refugees in Latin America?

With the number of forced migrants sharply increasing to around 59 million by the end of 2014<sup>2</sup> (UNHCR 2015a), and the increase of border restrictions, securitisation and anti-immigrant sentiment (Hansen 2014; Walia 2013; Betts 2010), the current durable solutions framework has been in the spotlight<sup>3</sup>. Within the current three durable solutions that the UNHCR is mandated to pursue in cooperation with the states<sup>4</sup>, the relevance of resettlement to deal with vulnerable refugees or protracted refugee populations has received growing attention among academic and policy maker discourses (van Selm 2014; Long 2010; Labman 2007). According to the UNHCR, resettlement is a tool to provide international protection, a 'tangible' expression of solidarity and a mechanism for burden-sharing (UNHCR 2012a, p.3). In the context of growing demand to enhance the resettlement places available to match the ever-increasing resettlement needs<sup>5</sup>, the UNHCR has encouraged new countries of resettlement. Chile and Brazil are among these so-called 'Emerging Resettlement Countries'<sup>6</sup>.

Both countries were pioneers in resettlement in Latin America, resettling the first groups of refugees in 1999 (Chile) and 2002 (Brazil). Since then, Chile and Brazil, together with other countries of the region, have strengthened their commitment to refugee protection and the implementation of resettlement, among other humanitarian programmes, through the Mexico Plan of Action in 2004 (Americas 2004) and the adoption of the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action in 2014 (UNHCR 2014c). In this context, the region has been regarded as having a long tradition of providing asylum (Lavanchy 2006) and has shown important progress in its legislation on refugee protection (Lyra Jubilut 2006; Lyra Jubilut &

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<sup>2</sup> From this figure, 14.4 million people were under the mandate of the UNHCR, and another 5.1 million Palestinian refugees were registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). About 38.2 million people were forcibly displaced within their own country (UNHCR 2015a).

<sup>3</sup> As I discuss in Chapter 3, researchers, policy makers and practitioners have focused great attention on the failure and possibilities of current durable solutions and what new approaches can be found (see Long 2014).

<sup>4</sup> The other two durable solutions are local integration and repatriation.

<sup>5</sup> According to the UNHCR, in July 2015 it was estimated that over 1,150,000 refugees globally were in need of resettlement (UNHCR 2015e).

<sup>6</sup> Currently, there are around 28 countries offering resettlement worldwide. These are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Uruguay. In 2015, the Republic of Korea announced a three-year resettlement pilot programme (UNHCR 2015c; UNHCR 2015e). The resettlement programme in Chile has been on standby since 2013, as I explore in Chapter 2, and it has been under ongoing negotiations to be reopened.

Lima Madureira 2014; Cantor & Barichello 2013). The perceived political stability of some Latin American countries, particularly in the Southern Cone, their distance from conflict zones and their supposed positive macro-economic growth have further positioned them as 'emergent host countries' for refugees (Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011).

The current global forced migration crisis<sup>7</sup> has demanded responses from countries worldwide, and both Chile and Brazil have committed to receiving new groups of extra-regional refugees, mainly Syrians (Arias 2015; Fellet 2015). The current scenario raises questions in relation to both countries' previous experiences of resettlement. So far, most of the academic studies about resettlement in Latin America have focused on exploring the policies in each country, the adherence to the international legislation, the design of the programmes and the possibilities of resettlement as an example of regional burden-sharing (Harley 2014; Guglielmelli-White 2012; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011; Bessa 2006). However, we know very little about the lived-experiences of the resettled refugees<sup>8</sup> themselves and their own assessment of the resettlement programmes in each country (van Selm 2014). Moreover, there is a lack of comparative studies not only across countries but across refugees from different origins. In this thesis I address these gaps, providing one of the most comprehensive studies of refugee resettlement experiences in Latin America. This thesis is a study of resettled refugee lived-experiences in Chile and Brazil, involving an empirical investigation into how the resettlement programme works through the narratives of their own protagonists.

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<sup>7</sup> It is relevant to note that the so called 'refugee crisis' is not a recent issue. We are indeed witnessing the largest number of displaced people since World War II (UNHCR 2015f), however, for more than five years conflicts in different regions have erupted or reignited creating large displacements. Moreover, two-thirds of the refugee population lives in protracted situations, with people growing up and living for long periods in refugee camps (Milner 2008). This static population has been largely ignored as part of the crisis; however, their situation is no less catastrophic.

<sup>8</sup> In this research I use the term 'refugee' interchangeably with 'forced migrant'. Since resettlement is a durable solution controlled by states and the UNHCR, 'refugee' is understood, following the Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention, as any person who "*owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his [or her] nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail him [or her]self of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his [or her] former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it*" (UN General Assembly 1951). However, more broadly, my understanding of 'refugee' makes reference to any person, independently of their legal status, who is forced to leave their place of residence and lives elsewhere (see Korac 2009).

The theoretical and empirical themes that inform this research are diverse, including literature from across refugee studies, geography and other related disciplines. While I discuss in detail these literatures in Chapter 3, broadly speaking I develop a critique of the current approaches to the study of refugee resettlement and demonstrate the need to explore refugee experiences by looking at resettlement through the lenses of refugee integration. Further, I discuss 'integration' itself, looking at the benefits and limitations of the current, mostly policy-driven and state-centred, approaches to understanding and measuring the concept (see Strang & Ager 2010; Ager & Strang 2008; Sigona 2005; Castles et al. 2002). I suggest drawing on the multi-dimensionality of refugee integration that this literature proposes, and extend these debates by including ideas about scale and translocality. By doing this, I enhance two key discussions within refugee integration: belonging and citizenship. I also build my approach by drawing on an increasing body of empirical work produced by Latin American scholars and practitioners, in relation to refugees' and migrants' experiences in countries of the region, suggesting that the precarity that this population faces urges researchers to explore integration as an experience of 'unsettlement'. By exploring 'integration' as a dynamic and actor-oriented experience, and not only as a policy outcome, the thesis contributes to key debates in the ongoing conceptualisation of refugee integration. In addition, the ideas I develop in this thesis aim to trigger a wider discussion about refugee integration in Latin America.

The findings of this thesis are based on 10 months of fieldwork in Chile and Brazil. My first trip was to Chile, from December 2012 to April 2013, and then I visited Brazil from October 2013 until March 2014. As I discuss in Chapter 4, I adopted a qualitative-driven mixed methods approach, arguing for an exploratory and interpretative analysis, in order to capture the 'multiplicities' embedded in refugees' and other actors' understandings and experiences of resettlement. The research process involved visiting 15 different cities and conducting research in a broad range of spaces including people's homes, gardens, workplaces and institutions' offices, grasping through my fieldwork some of the multiple localities where the resettlement experience takes place. The use of different methods within a multi-sited research approach allows for the exploration of people, connections and relationships, incorporating different voices related to the resettlement programme.

The research process and my positionality, both discussed in Chapter 4, allowed further reflections about conducting research with refugees and about constructions of 'refugeeness' and asylum systems in general. More importantly, the process of data collection unveiled the singularities and negotiations of access and the multiple 'selves' that both participants and I exposed during the process. In this context, positionality became a blurred line between refugees' stories of displacement, gender and resistance and my own experiences as migrant, mestiza and woman; our mutual struggles for belonging and the sharp differences between the privileges involved in our mobilities. The encounters that emerged from the process of data collection allowed me to gain intimate insights into refugees' experiences of resettlement in Chile and Brazil, their struggles and most importantly, their agency.

## **1.2. Research aims and questions**

Resettlement as a programme and a durable solution has been widely explored in Anglo-American scholarship (van Selm 2014; Westermeyer 2011; Ives 2007; Parsons 2005; Robinson 2003). However, this literature has been mostly narrowed down to the study of refugees resettled in traditional resettlement countries. I suggest that the experience of resettled refugees in high and upper middle-income countries within developing regions has been poorly explored. A few exceptions are found in the work of some, mainly Latin American, scholars whose work has been largely focused on legislation and policies, the regional context and burden-sharing (Harley 2014; Guglielmelli-White 2012; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011; Bessa 2009). These studies of resettlement in Latin America also reveal a lack of multi-sited research. When multiple countries are explored, studies predominately favour a general approach which reviews programme policies, but there has been little space given to bottom-up understandings of the refugee experience. As mentioned, especially acute is the lack of research that includes refugees' perceptions together with the perspectives of those designing, facilitating and implementing resettlement in Latin American countries. Drawing from the research problem, this thesis uses a mixed-methods approach to answer the following Research Aim and Research Questions (RQs):

### Research Aim

This thesis aims to explore how resettled refugees from different origins (Colombian and Palestinian) experience integration in Chile and Brazil, in order to understand the extent and ways in which third country resettlement is lived and implemented in Latin America.

### Research Questions

**RQ1** What are the main dimensions influencing resettled refugees' integration in Chile and Brazil?

**RQ2** How do Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees negotiate the emotional dimensions of resettlement and to what extent do they develop a sense of belonging in the resettlement country?

**RQ3** What are the relationships and tensions among the different actors involved in the resettlement programme in each country? How do these relationships influence the resettlement experience?

**RQ4** How do practices and social policies in relation to resettlement shape the experiences of refugees' citizenship?

In this thesis I ground the study of resettlement by focusing on refugees' experiences of integration, instead of looking at resettlement as target numbers and policy implementation only. As mentioned above, the methodological framework used to provide comprehensive answers to these research questions allows a meaningful comparison and dialogue between the experiences identified within the multiple spaces (spatial, contextual and subjective) that this research explores: two countries, two refugee communities, different institutions and a diverse range of individuals, hierarchies and understandings.

### **1.3. Thesis Structure**

This thesis argues that the process of resettlement of Palestinian and Colombian refugees in Chile and Brazil was experienced as an unsettled process of integration. For both groups in both countries, the experiences of integration extended the feelings of uncertainty and

instability felt during displacement, as a result of some precarious living conditions, transitory documentation and mistrust towards the resettlement organisations. At the same time, resettled refugees experienced translocal belongings and showed strong agency during the entire resettlement process, negotiating membership, identities and access with multiple actors. Through three empirical chapters, the thesis builds upon ideas discussed in the literature review to develop the idea of ‘unsettlement’ as a central part of refugees’ integration experiences.

In order to answer the research questions outlined above, this thesis is divided into eight chapters. This chapter, which introduces the thesis, is followed by **Chapter 2** which provides the context necessary to situate the research. While the first part of Chapter 2 explores the main characteristics of Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees and their displacement patterns, the second part reviews the design and implementation of the resettlement programmes in Chile and Brazil. The chapter unveils the distinctive features of the case studies and justifies their relevance as the focus of this research.

**Chapter 3** discusses the theoretical framework that informs the thesis. Divided into three parts, the first section reviews the discussions around resettlement and durable solutions, arguing that in order to understand better the experiences of resettlement these should be studied through the lenses of ‘integration’. The chapter then moves on to explore current debates around refugee integration, its multiple dimensions, power imbalances and the need to include notions of scales and translocality in the discussion around what integration means. Following this, I then explore and explain two pivotal dimensions of the refugee experience: belonging and citizenship. Finally, I look at Latin American literature around integration and demonstrate that it is relevant to include of ideas such as precarity and uncertainty, laying the foundations upon which to build the notion of ‘unsettlement’ within ‘integration’, which will be developed across the empirical chapters. The chapter aims to demonstrate the need to broaden our understanding of refugee integration among different dimensions and across different scales.

The methodological approach is then explored in **Chapter 4**. This chapter also justifies the selection of methods and research strategies and design, exploring in detail each research site, fieldwork visit and methods of data collection: semi-structured interviews, participant

observation and survey. I then review how the data was organised, analysed and interpreted. In addition, in this chapter I explore the practical and reflexive challenges that emerged while doing multi-sited research with urban, and mobile, refugee populations. While considering the particular challenges and benefits of my accounts of access and positionality, I also discuss ethical issues, providing wider reflections about research with refugee populations.

I then move on to three empirical chapters, in which the findings that answer the main aim of this research are discussed and problematised in relation to the literature and the research questions. **Chapter 5** focuses on exploring the negotiations and tensions between refugees and other actors involved in the resettlement programme, directly answering **RQ3**, but also contributing to answering **RQ1**. The chapter grounds the politics of resettlement by analysing the expectations that both refugees and the resettlement organisations developed pre-resettlement, and how these expectations turned into claims of ‘unfulfilled promises’, creating mistrust between refugees and the resettlement programmes. The findings of this chapter are also related to wider debates about refugee uncertainties and the essentialised constructions of what refugees should be, building into discussions about the structural gaps in refugee resettlement.

**Chapter 6** develops ideas discussed in Chapter 3 around sense of belonging and how social and emotional dimensions are pivotal to understanding refugee integration. This chapter builds on the previous chapter in order to answer **RQ1** and **RQ2** by exploring the multi-situated experiences of belonging in the resettlement country and in other important localities that mark refugees’ stories of mobility. In this sense, displacement, persecution and family segregation are shown to have radical effects upon refugees’ emotions and sense of normality, influencing how belonging is constructed in multiple and translocal spaces. The chapter also explores refugees’ constructions of place-belongingness, while at the same time discussing refugees’ negotiations of difference and inclusion, emphasising differences between communities and countries.

Structural dimensions and the politics of belonging are explored in **Chapter 7**, which answers questions **RQ4** and **RQ1** through the analysis of refugees’ accounts of obtaining and claiming citizenship. The chapter explores different scales where citizenship is

negotiated by emphasising four dimensions that exemplify the barriers refugees faced during the pathway to citizenship: status, practice, identity and exclusion. The second part of the chapter focuses on refugee agency and how they have claimed citizenship through individual and collective actions. This chapter reinforces the idea that resettlement is not only negotiated within the boundaries of the nation state, but across multiple scales and spaces.

The conclusion, **Chapter 8**, brings together and reflects upon research findings and the key themes I have discussed in the thesis. I also explore the timely empirical and theoretical contributions of this thesis to the understanding of resettlement in Latin America in particular, and the significance of the research in relation to the knowledge about experiences of refugee integration in emergent countries more generally. I suggest future areas of research and emphasise the relevance of exploring resettlement and integration through multiple voices, particularly those of the resettled refugees themselves.

The analysis built through these chapters, invites further understanding of resettled refugees' integration experiences in Chile and Brazil. More broadly, this cross-country study with two communities, with its focus on the dialogue between refugees' accounts of their own experience and the discourses of other actors involved, contributes to the knowledge about resettlement and refugee integration. The thesis enhances empirical and theoretical debates by including the notion of 'unsettlement' to the understanding of refugee integration, and by providing valuable insights about the diverse scales and spaces where refugees' experiences are negotiated and developed.



## CHAPTER 2

### Two communities in two countries: Resettlement in Chile and Brazil

#### 2.1. Introduction

Colombian and Palestinian refugees have obvious differences. They come from different territories, have particular backgrounds, speak different languages and have distinctive patterns of migration. However, refugees from both communities have been marked by a long history of displacement and high mobility within and across borders, and both have also been resettled in Chile and Brazil. This chapter explores the differences and similarities between refugees from both communities and how these unfold within the process of resettlement in Chile and Brazil, justifying the reasons why both groups are the focus of this research. In order to provide the context necessary to situate this research in time and location, the chapter discusses the main characteristics of the Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees, also placing them in their larger contexts of displacement. The second part of the chapter examines the particularities of Chile and Brazil as host countries for refugees, by looking at the design and implementation of the refugee resettlement programme in both countries. I discuss the characteristics, legislation, procedures and actors involved in resettlement in both research sites.

The chapter is organised as follows: Section 2.2 looks at the displacement of Colombian refugees by broadly exploring the situation in their country of origin, their patterns of migration and some of their characteristics as refugees. Section 2.3 considers similar dimensions in order to review the characteristics of Palestinian refugees. The chapter then moves into a discussion of the particularities of the programme design and implementation in each receiving country: Brazil (Section 2.4.2) and Chile (Section 2.4.3). Finally, Section 2.5 concludes with a reflection about how the study of both refugee groups in both countries allows for an in-depth exploration of the different dimensions of refugee resettlement and integration in the Southern Cone.

## **2.2. Colombian resettled refugees**

For more than 50 years, a longstanding conflict in Colombia has generated one of the largest displaced populations in the world. By July 2014 it was calculated that more than 5,700,000 Colombians were internally displaced people (IDPs)<sup>9</sup> and more than 400,000 had sought refuge in other countries (UNHCR 2015d)<sup>10</sup>. During the last decade, Colombians have been the largest population of refugees in Latin America (Asylum Access 2014) and Ecuador is the country that hosts the largest number of this refugee population, receiving an estimated 250,000 people (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops n.d.). Some of the Colombian refugees also have sought protection in other neighbouring countries such as Venezuela, Panama and Costa Rica (Guglielmelli White 2011). Although the dynamics of the conflict in Colombia have changed during these years, its intensity remains and the number of Colombian refugees crossing international borders has not declined (Verney 2009). Indeed, Ecuador is receiving new arrivals at a rate of 1,000 per month (UNHCR 2014b).

Thousands of Colombian asylum seekers and refugees face persecution or lack of local integration in the first country in which they seek protection. In Ecuador alone, the overall population in need of resettlement for 2015 has been estimated to be 15,000 individuals (UNHCR 2014d). Since 2005, more than 5,500 Colombian refugees with specific protection needs have been resettled to a third country. Most of them have come from first countries of asylum such as Ecuador (70%) or Costa Rica (23%), and a smaller number of Colombians has been resettled from Panama and Venezuela. About 20% of these Colombians refugees were resettled in countries in the Southern Cone, such as Chile, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay (ACNUR 2010, p.20). Canada, Denmark, New Zealand, Sweden and the United States have also resettled Colombian refugees.

### **2.2.1. The internal conflict**

Colombia's history has been marked by episodes of conflict since its independence from Spain at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Ibáñez & Vélez 2008). The current conflict

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<sup>9</sup> IDPs are persons who are displaced within their own country. Although IDPs do not cross international borders seeking protection, they fled for similar reasons as refugees (UNHCR n.d.).

<sup>10</sup> Colombia has 4.7 million people living abroad. Of that number, around 400,000 have refugee status or are in the process of seeking asylum.

started in 1964 due to ongoing agrarian struggles over land ownership. However, the seeds of this conflict were sown decades earlier. This first dispute, known as *La Violencia* (The Violence), started in 1948 when a populist liberal politician, Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, was murdered as a consequence of several political confrontations between the two main traditional parties that have divided the Colombian society since 1850: the Conservatives and Liberals (Pécaut 2009). This episode sparked a “rural civil war” (Ibid 2009, p.37) that led to thousands of deaths between 1946 and 1960. The confrontation was not only between political parties; some of the underlying causes also included social inequality, unequal distribution of resources and unresolved land issues (Ortiz & Kaminker 2014). Ten years later, both parties agreed to divide power and negotiate a peace deal. However, the structural causes of the conflict never disappeared and *La Violencia* continued to manifest itself in rural areas. It was in this context that the conflict resumed with the appearance of left-wing guerrilla groups that came together as a mechanism for resistance, at the beginning of the 1960s. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) emerged from this movement, composed of communist militants and peasant self-defence groups, whose actions were mainly targeted towards rural areas.

During the 1960s, another three armed groups appeared: The National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN), The Popular Liberation Army (Ejército Popular de Liberación, EPL) and The 19th of April Movement (Movimiento 19 de Abril, M-19)<sup>11</sup>. During the 1980’s the conflict escalated, when the drug trade was consolidated in the country through the financing of illegal armed groups. As Ibáñez and Vélez state, “drug trade fuelled the conflict and allowed its geographical expansion” (2008, p.660). At the same time, right-wing paramilitary (Paramilitares) groups began to form in rural areas to protect the private interests of large landowners from the increasingly powerful guerrillas.

According to the report of the Group of Historical Memory (Grupo de Memoria Histórica), this conflict has been “a war *without limits*” where violence against the civil population has prevailed (GMH 2013, p.20). The report shows that between 1958 and 2012, at least 220,000 people have died as result, and a larger number of people have also been displaced within and across the Colombian borders. The different armed actors have

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<sup>11</sup> For a comprehensive reading of the Colombian conflict and the armed groups see GMH, 2013 and Pécaut, 1997, 2009.

attacked the civil population as a strategy to obtain loyalty, to gain resources and to control territories (Ibid 2013, p.37). As I explore in Chapter 6, some participants fled, for reasons ranging from living in a taken red zone<sup>12</sup>, unintentionally watching a killing, fear of children's recruitment by guerrillas, or because of direct or indirect issues with either the guerrilla or the paramilitary groups. In December 2012 negotiations began between FARC and the Colombian government in La Havana, Cuba. However, it is believed that even if the conflict comes to a negotiated end, the levels of violence and displacement linked to organised crime will continue (Norwegian Refugee Council 2014; Ortiz & Kaminker 2014).

### **2.2.2. The displacement**

Forced displacement has been one of the long-term consequences of the conflict. Although it is not within the scope of this thesis to explore in detail the significant effects that the conflict has had on a huge number of people internally displaced (see Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2013), it is worth noting that some resettled refugees also experienced internal displacement, leaving scars that influenced their integration in the third country where they sought protection. As outlined earlier, the largest population of Colombian refugee and asylum seekers is in Ecuador (Ortega & Ospina 2012). By 2013, the Ecuadorian government had recognised 54,800 refugees and estimated that around 160,000 have requested asylum since 2000 (UNHCR 2014b). However, their situation in Ecuador as first country of asylum has been deteriorating during the last couple of years and particularly of concern is the situation of people living in border areas, as well as the difficulties surrounding the registering of asylum seekers and the lack of access to protection (Guglielmelli White 2011). What is more, in 2012 a new restrictive refugee decree (No 1182) was adopted by Ecuador that replaced the previous policies regarding the refugee status determination process (RSD)<sup>13</sup>. In 2013, only six per cent of all asylum seeker applications were recognised as refugees. The non-recognised majority have lived in a limbo between status irregularity in their host country and the impossibility of returning to Colombia.

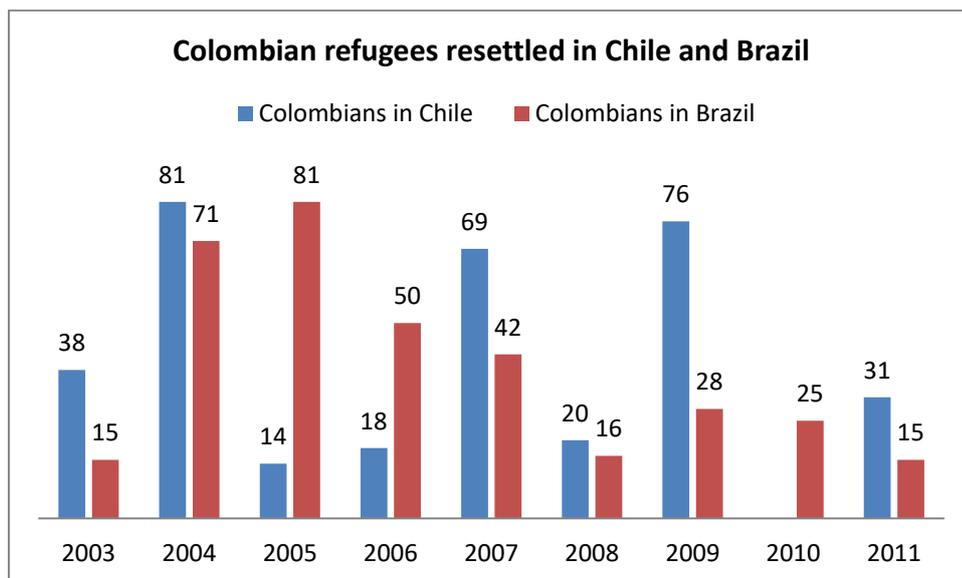
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<sup>12</sup> Red Zone refers to a place either where there is permanent conflict with one or more armed groups on the edge of the law who clash sporadically or where groups operate their drug laboratories.

<sup>13</sup> In June 2015, the President of Ecuador Rafael Correa announced the project of a new Organic Law of Human Mobility that includes 12 specific laws to guarantee the rights of people to human mobility. This legislation would establish that no human can be considered 'illegal'. Despite the expected benefits of this legislation, there was no clarity about how this law would influence the refugee status determination process.

Besides the restrictive measures, some Colombian refugees face persecution, violence and instability in the first country of asylum (see Chapter 6). According to the UNHCR (2014d) the violence refugees and asylum seekers experience – not only in Ecuador but in other Latin American countries – has been related to organised crime, gangs, drug trafficking, poverty and inequality. Many refugees have faced the imperative need to seek protection in a second country of asylum. In 2013, more than 1,800 Colombian refugees were submitted for resettlement, most of them from Ecuador. From those, a small number has been accepted in countries of the Southern Cone. Between 2004 and 2011, Chile received 347 Colombian resettled refugees<sup>14</sup>. Brazil, on the other hand, received 343 up to 2012<sup>15</sup> (see Figure 2.1.).

**Figure 2.1. Resettlement of Colombian refugees in Chile and Brazil between 2003 and 2011.**



Source: Ministry of Interior Chile 2013; Lyra Jubilut and Pereira Carneiro 2011.

<sup>14</sup> The statistic of Colombians resettled in Chile was shared by the Refugee Area in the Ministry of Interior. However, the number shows discrepancies with the number considered by AREVI, the implementing agency. As in the Brazilian case, different institutions keep different records. Usually the Chilean government considers all the cases they had accepted, while the NGO counts the refugees that actually arrived and that still are in the country.

<sup>15</sup> This number is taken from the statistics provided by CONARE to the UNHCR in their 2012 report. However, the official statistics change depending on the institution. For an overview of the different statistics, see Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro, 2011. According to the local press, by 2014 there was 360 Colombian resettled refugees in Brazil (Reis 2014).

### 2.2.3. Colombians heading south

Colombian refugees who arrived in Chile and Brazil under the resettlement programme since 2004 are far from being a homogeneous group. They come from both urban and rural areas, from different professional backgrounds, they have diverse levels of literacy, and they represent various ethnicities, genders and age groups (see Appendix I). Although many of them are peasants, some come from vulnerable backgrounds and others from middle-class origins. Other refugees held university degrees and some are activists or community leaders (Ortiz & Kaminker 2014). In Chile, most of the Colombian resettled refugees arrived and stayed in Santiago, although there were some that opted to move to northern cities such as Iquique and Antofagasta. In Brazil, the distribution of refugees was wide spread across two large states and around twenty cities.

In both countries, refugees' occupations varied according to what they were doing in the previous country or the new opportunities (or lack of them) that they found in the resettlement site. Colombian refugees in Brazil face an extra challenge: language. Colombians are Spanish native speakers and learning Portuguese can be sometimes difficult, depending on literacy levels and individual characteristics (see Chapter 6).

Another characteristic of the Colombian resettled refugees in both countries is that they arrived in countries that had already received a large number of Latin American migrants. For instance, in Chile Colombians are the fourth largest immigrant community<sup>16</sup> after Peruvians, who represent more than 37.1% of migrants in the country, Argentinians (17.2%) and Bolivians (6.8%) (Departamento De Extranjeria Y Migración. 2010). In 2013 alone, the Chilean government gave temporary residence to 26,627 Colombian migrants (Gobierno de Chile 2013). In addition, 90% of the asylum applications received in Chile were from Colombian asylum seekers (ACNUR 2015). In Brazil, the Colombian community was smaller compared with other migrant groups, not being part of the 10 main international migrant communities in the country. According to the 2010 Census (IBGE 2010c), immigrants in Brazil were mainly coming from: the United States (52,050), Japan (41,045), Paraguay (26,610), Portugal (21,673) and Bolivia (15,651). Nonetheless, it is

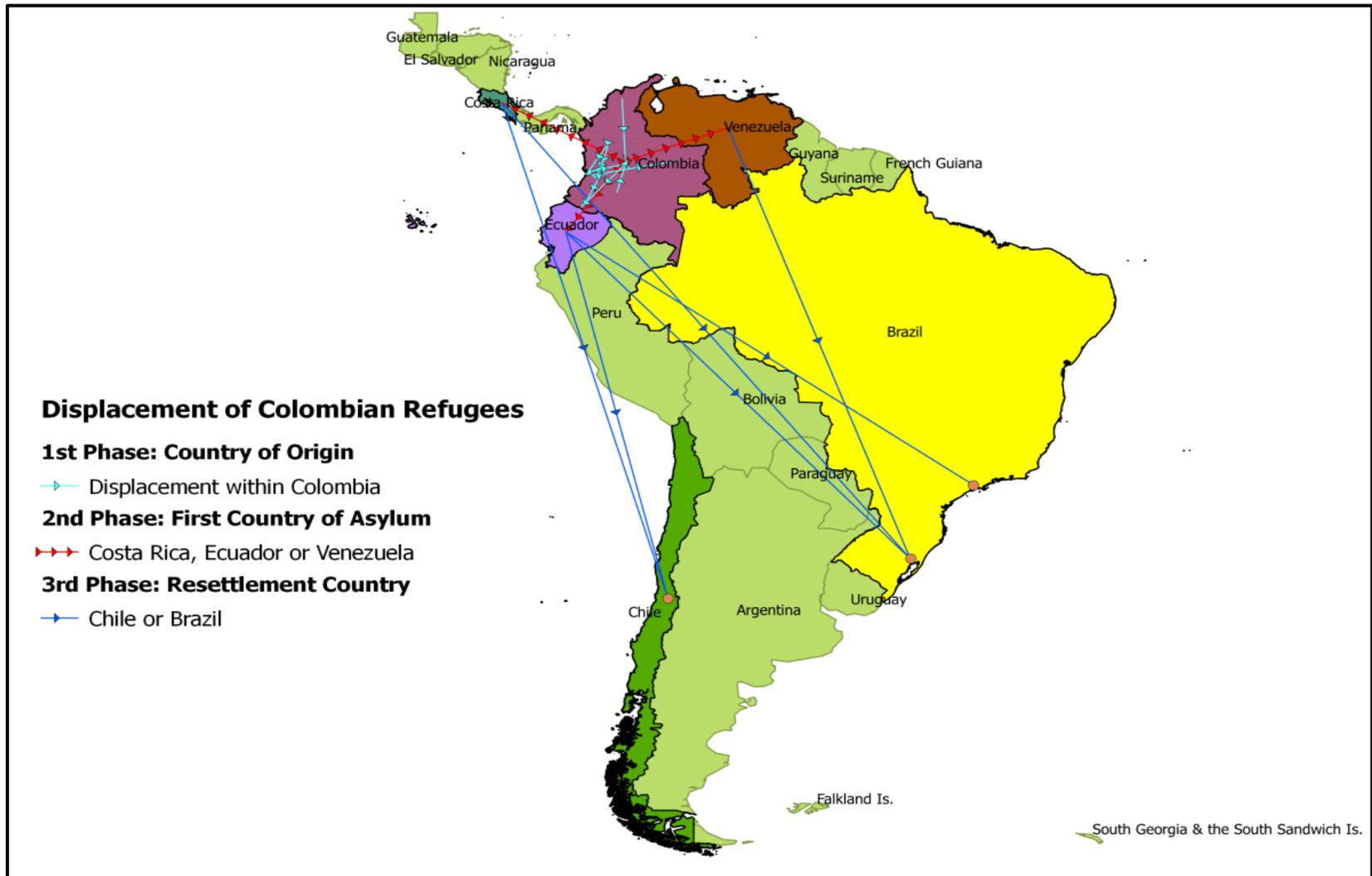
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<sup>16</sup> During 2010 and 2013 Colombian migrants have become the second largest community receiving residency permits in Chile, after Peruvian migrants. The number of visas given to Colombians increased from 7,468 in 2010 to 26,627 in 2013 (Centro de DDHH UDP 2014, pp.348–349).

estimated that the Colombian migrants are around 3,255 (IBGE 2010a). Until 2012, Colombians were also the largest group of asylum seekers in Brazil (ACNUR 2014b). During 2013 and 2014 the number of asylum seekers decreased, possibly as a result of the peace talks or after Colombia was added to the MERCOSUR Residence Agreement, which facilitates temporary residence for Colombian migrants in Brazil for two years. According to the UNHCR, most of the Colombians who arrived to Brazil in 2013 requested this type of residency (Ibid, 2014).

Figure 2.2 shows the patterns of displacement of Colombian refugees resettled in Chile and Brazil, emphasising the phases involved in their exile journey.

Figure 2.2. Patterns of displacement of Colombian resettled refugees in Chile and Brazil<sup>17</sup>



<sup>17</sup> Map created in collaboration with Tom Broomhead, based on data collected in Chile and Brazil through semi-structured interviews and a survey.

## 2.3 Palestinian resettled refugees

*“Approximately one in three refugees worldwide is Palestinian. More than half are displaced outside the borders of their historic homeland”* (Rempel 2006, p.5).

Palestinian refugees are one of the largest and most long-lasting refugee groups in the world. For more than 60 years, three-quarters of Palestinian people have been displaced. The United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)<sup>18</sup> defines ‘Palestine Refugees’<sup>19</sup> as “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict” (UNRWA n.d.). According to the UN agency, at the beginning of their operations in 1950, they were responding to the needs of 750.000 Palestinian refugees. Currently, around 5 million people are eligible for the agency services. This number includes those living in the UNRWA’s five areas of operations: Gaza, West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon (Bocco 2010). Despite the fact that the majority of Palestinian refugees fall under the geographical and temporal mandate of the UNRWA, there are large numbers of refugees living in other countries of the region or in another regions who are under the mandate of protection of the UNHCR (UNRWA and UNHCR 2007)<sup>20</sup>.

The total number of displaced Palestinians is contested. According to Rempel (2006), while most of the media and academic studies often cite UNRWA registration figures, those numbers are not exhaustive. According to the Bethlehem-based BADIL Resource Centre for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (2015), recent estimates suggest that 7.9 million of the 11.8 million Palestinians worldwide are forcibly displaced persons. This research focuses on a small group of 117 refugees resettled in Chile and another 108 in Brazil between 2007 and 2008. These refugees were either born or spent most of their lives in

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<sup>18</sup> The UNRWA was created by the UN General Assembly in December 1949, under resolution 302 (IV), to carry out programmes directed towards Palestinian refugees. The agency’s operations started in May 1950. Considering the lack of solution to the Palestinian refugee problem, the UNRWA’s mandate has been repeatedly renewed, and has been recently extended until June 2017 (UNRWA 2015; Couldrey & Morris 2006). The role of the agency is limited to addressing the humanitarian and human development of Palestine refugees, and not to finding a comprehensive solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (UNRWA and UNHCR 2007).

<sup>19</sup> In UNRWA’s name and official documents they refer to *Palestine refugees* instead of *Palestinian refugees* in relation to the geographical and temporal delimitations of its mandate (UNRWA and UNHCR 2007).

<sup>20</sup> For a more detailed account of the legal status of Palestinian refugees, see Akram 2002.

Iraq before being displaced to refugee camps on the border with Syria and Jordan. This section briefly explores the dynamics of the displacement of Palestinian refugees, contextualising them within a larger history of occupation and exile.

### **2.3.1. The occupation**

The displacement of the largest refugee population in the world started over 60 years ago, when Britain ended its mandate over Palestine and the United Nations took control of the territories in 1947. The UN General Assembly's Resolution 181 of November 1947 divided Palestine into sectors: 55% was given for a Jewish state and 45% for a Palestinian Arab State (Bennis 2012). The armed clashes between Arabs and Jews started immediately. In May 1948, the Jewish community and the Zionist movement announced the newly formed State of Israel (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs n.d.), made up of 78% of the Palestinian land that used to be under British mandate. The 22% left was the Gaza Strip, controlled by Egypt, and the West Bank, governed by Jordan (Bennis 2012). This first Palestinian-Israeli war, known as *al nakba* (Day of the Catastrophe), lasted until 1949 and led to the displacement of some 750,000-900,000 Palestinians (Rempel 2006). Sayigh (1987) stated that, of a total of 1.4 million Palestinian Arab population, 60% became refugees in neighbouring Arab countries or within the remaining parts of Palestine.

In the immediate aftermath of *al nakba*, Palestinians believed they would return to their homeland after a short exile (Mason 2008). However, many of them were forced to migrate again after the 1967 war. That year, during the six day war, Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza. A new wave of violent displacement took place, forcing 300,000 persons into Jordan (Sayigh 1987). Many of them were refugees for a second time. Others were displaced to Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq. Even today, Palestinians have not been allowed to return to the occupied territories<sup>21</sup> and their history in the last 100 years has been one of colonisation, expulsion, exile and military occupation.

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<sup>21</sup> For a more comprehensive review about the conflict see Tessler 2009; Bocco 2010; La Guardia 2007; Said 1988; Said 2001.

### **2.3.2. From Iraq to the borders: living in a refugee camp.**

According to the UNHCR (Pagonis 2006; Wengert & Alfaro 2006), approximately 34,000 Palestinians have been living in Iraq since 1948<sup>22</sup>. Palestinians arrived in Iraq in three main waves: 1. after the war in 1948, mainly from villages around Haifa and Jaffa; 2. the second largest group arrived after the 1967 War; 3. the last group came in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War when many were forced to leave Kuwait (Amnesty International 2007). Palestinians in Iraq were never recognised as refugees by the Iraqi government<sup>23</sup>. However, the Iraqi authorities gave them protection in accordance with key resolutions of the League of Arab States and the 1965 Casablanca Protocol, for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States (UNHCR 2006; League of Arab States 1965). This protection allowed them to have five year residency permits, but they were not granted Iraqi citizenship and therefore did not qualify for Iraqi national passports<sup>24</sup> (Migrationsverket & Landinfo 2014, p.7). Nonetheless, they could apply for travel documents. Palestinians enjoyed a “relatively high standard of treatment” that translated into the right to work, access to health, education and other services (UNHCR 2006; Wengert & Alfaro 2006; UNHCR 2012c). In addition, Palestinians in Iraq were provided with houses or flats, which were owned by the government or privately owned through subsidies<sup>25</sup>.

The situation changed dramatically in 2003 after the fall of Saddam Hussein’s regime, when Palestinians were subjected to harassment, persecution and targeted attacks (see UNHCR 2012c; Amnesty International 2007; Human Rights Watch 2006), mostly from Shi’a militant groups. These groups started targeting Palestinians, predominantly a Sunni minority, resenting what they perceived as special treatment under Hussein’s government and arguing that they were supporting the insurgency (Human Rights Watch 2006). Palestinians were then “evicted from their houses, abusively detained, abducted, tortured or killed in Iraq” (UNHCR 2006, p.2). Although the targeted violence against Palestinians started after the fall of Saddam Hussein’s regime, the attacks escalated following the

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<sup>22</sup> This number is an estimate until 2003. After the US invasion and the militias’ violence against Palestinians, an updated registration carried by the Ministry of Interior and the UNHCR in 2008, registered around 10,500 individuals (UNHCR 2012c). There are no updated statistics available since 2009.

<sup>23</sup> Iraq is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

<sup>24</sup> The situation is similar in most Arab countries hosting Palestinian refugees, in accordance with the Casablanca Protocol (League of Arab States 1965).

<sup>25</sup> A report from the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1999 argued that the situation of Palestinian refugees in Iraq was vulnerable despite some of the accesses granted by the authorities (Refugee Affairs Department 1999).

Samarra bombing in February 2006 (Worth 2006). Between November 2006 and January 2007 the UNHCR received reports of at least 37 Palestinians killed in targeted attacks, as well as an increase of reports of threats and abductions (UNHCR 2007). Following waves of violence in 2006 and 2007<sup>26</sup>, thousands of Palestinians fled Iraq and sought protection in neighbouring countries. Very often, however, these countries did not accept their Iraqi-issued travel documents, and Palestinians stayed in refugee camps on the borders of Iraq with Jordan and Syria.

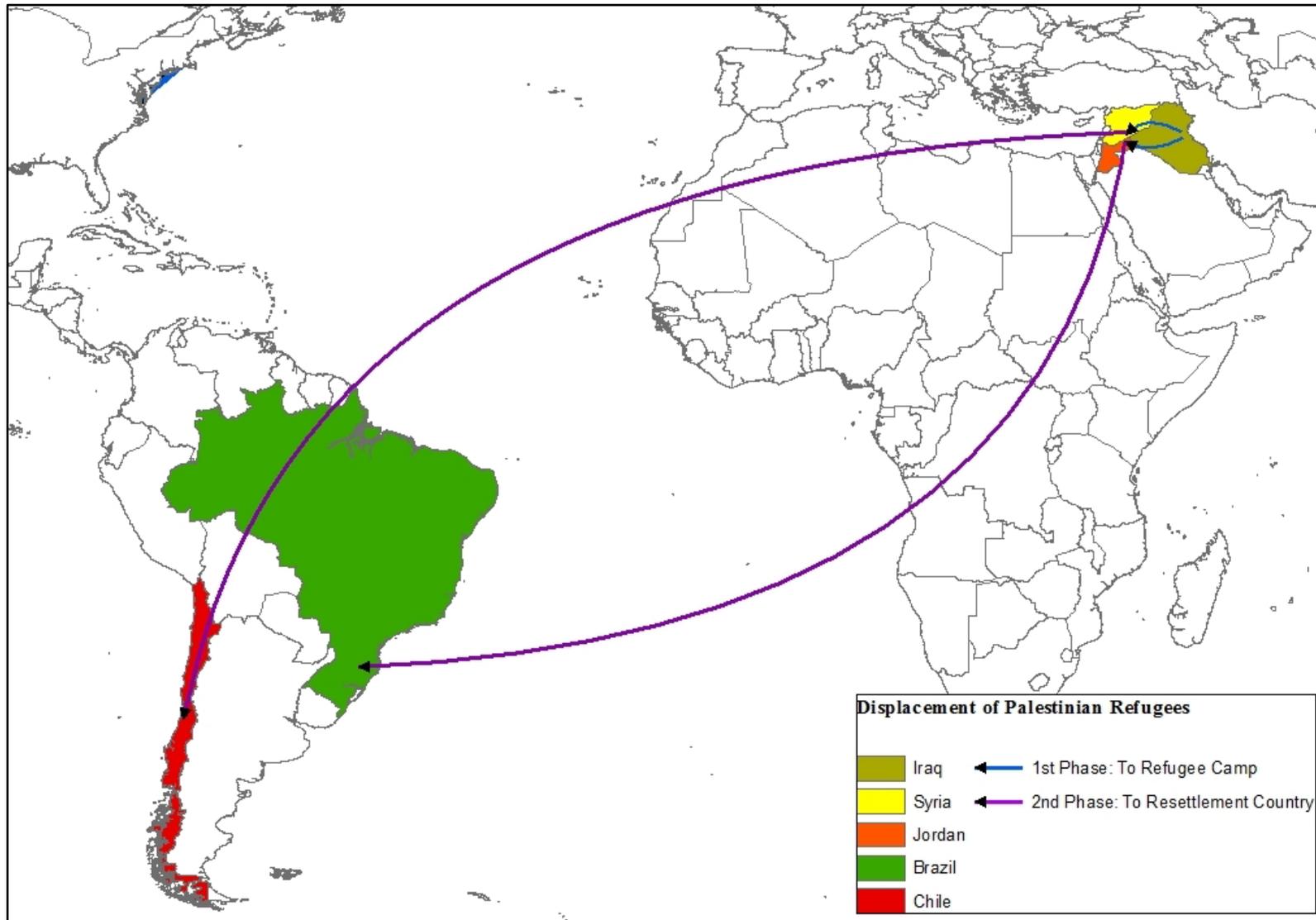
Palestinians that fled in 2003 were stuck in the desert border area between Iraq and Jordan. They were later allowed to enter Jordan and were accommodated by the Ruwesheid refugee camp, located in the far east of Jordan, 70 kilometres west of the Iraqi border (UNHCR 2006). The Ruwesheid camp received nearly 1,500 people from various nationalities, including Sudanese, Somalis, Iraqis and Kurds, besides Palestinian refugees (Hussein 2007). The Palestinians that lived in that refugee camp for almost five years were the ones resettled to Brazil (Hamid 2009). Other Palestinians living in Iraq tried to cross the border to Syria in 2006, but the Syrian government refused to accept them. Unable to return to Iraq, Palestinians stayed in three Iraqi-Palestinian refugee camps that were established on the Syrian-Iraqi border (Amnesty International 2008). The 117 Palestinians resettled in Chile were for two years living in appalling conditions in the Al-Tanf camp, located in the 'no-man's land' on the Iraq-Syria border (Ibid, p.2).

Figure 2.3 shows the displacement of Palestinian refugees resettled in South America during 2007 and 2008, including their dislocation from Iraq to the refugee camps on the borders with Syria and Jordan, and their journey to Chile or Brazil.

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<sup>26</sup> See UNHCR 2007 for a comprehensive list of incidents from 2006-2007 targeting Palestinians in Bagdad.

Figure 2.3. Patterns of displacement of Palestinian resettled refugees in Chile and Brazil<sup>27</sup>



<sup>27</sup> Source: Data obtained from interviews and a survey conducted in Chile (2012-2013) and Brazil (2013-2014).

### 2.3.3. Resettled Palestinians in Chile and Brazil

Since 2004, Chile and Brazil had received a small number of Colombian refugees under the Resettlement in Solidarity programme. In 2007, both countries opened the resettlement programme to those from outside the boundaries of Latin America, in response to an international call to support Palestinian refugees living on the borders of Jordan and Syria. This programme would be known as the Humanitarian Resettlement Programme. Between September and October 2007, Brazil received 108 resettled Palestinians from Ruwashed refugee camp in Jordan. This group were the last group to live in a camp that was about to be closed, and Brazil agreed to receive them without any preliminary interviews or selection processes (Hanusova 2013). The families were split in two groups, 24 of them were placed in Mogi das Cruces in the state of São Paulo and 20 other families in five cities of Rio Grande do Sul (Pelotas, Rio Grande, Santa Maria, Sapucaia do Sul and Venâncio Aires). The Palestinians were resettled in those states because the implementing agencies of resettlement were already working in the area with the Colombian refugees and also because both places had well-established Arab-Palestinian communities (Sampaio, 2010: 31).

Chile, on the other hand, received 29 Palestinian families in April 2008 coming from the Al Tanf refugee camp<sup>28</sup>. Four municipalities were selected in two regions to place the newcomers: La Calera and San Felipe, in the Region of Valparaíso, and Recoleta and Ñuñoa, in the Metropolitan Region of Santiago (Bijit 2012). In the Chilean case, the cities were chosen in consideration of the 'historic presence' of a population of Palestinian descendants in those cities (AREVI 2012). In both countries, the existence of a long-standing Palestinian community was one of the main reasons to resettle Palestinians in Chile and Brazil. According to Baeza (2014), Latin America hosts an estimated half-million people of Palestinian descent. The migration of Arabs to Latin America started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century following the unstable situation in the Ottoman Empire. The newcomers were mainly Christian immigrants who started to arrive in 1870. In Chile, the 1930 census registered that the Arab colony in the country was more than 6,000 people (Agar et al.

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<sup>28</sup> By December 2010, the total number of Palestinian refugees was 120, considering the babies that were born in Chile (under the Chilean constitution a person that is born within its territory immediately received the Chilean Nationality), one person who died, three people who left the country and 2 who arrived by family reunification (AREVI 2012).

2009). According to a '*Social Guide of the Arab Colony in Chile*' written by Mattar (1941 quoted in Agar et al. 2009) there were around 15,000 Arab descendants in the country in the first half of the 20th century. From those families, 51% were of Palestinian origin. Chile is considered to have the largest Palestinian community outside the Arab World with an estimate of more than 300,000 people (Molina 2014). In Brazil, it is estimated that the Palestinian population would be around 55,000 people (Hanusova 2013). Most of them live in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Manaus and São Paulo.

This well established Palestinian community in Latin America, however, has experienced a very different situation to the one of resettled refugees. Baeza (2014, p.59), who has studied the development of the Palestinian community in the region, asserts that the long established colonies are mostly descendants of a *pre-nakba* generation, "mostly middle to upper-class Christians who are well-represented among political and business elites". Although Palestinian resettled refugees in Chile and Brazil shared the past experience of living in a refugee camp for between 2 and 5 years, they also are a heterogeneous community. Members of both Palestinian groups, like the Colombian refugees, have varying levels of literacy and education and have had various jobs before, and during, their time living in the refugee camps. Palestinian and Colombian resettled communities in Chile and Brazil also come from various backgrounds and from different urban and rural settings. These and other differences have been relevant in their learning of both languages and in the job opportunities they have been able to develop in the host countries (see Chapter 6).

## **2.4. The development of resettlement in Chile and Brazil**

This section explores the main characteristics of the resettlement programmes in Chile and Brazil. I argue that both countries are stimulating cases of study because, despite their singularities and differences, they share particular characteristics from which a comparison and dialogue about the resettled refugees' experiences can be discussed. Firstly, Chile and Brazil are pioneers in the region in assuming the resettlement commitment (UNHCR 2001) and both countries host the largest resettlement programmes in the region, with an intake of 597 and 612 refugees respectively (see Appendix II). In addition, both countries have resettled Colombian and Palestinian refugees. Brazil and Chile also share a history of exile

as thousands of people have fled each country because of dictatorship regimes, and both have committed to refugee international legislation since the 1950s<sup>29</sup>, with the enforcement of their national laws after the return of democracy (Nogueira & Marques 2008; Daneri 2008; Lyra Jubilut 2006). Finally, as I explore in this section, resettlement programmes in both countries face several similar challenges, including limited or non-existent established structures or policies that facilitate resettlement. Moreover, the programmes depend on national political compliance and their sustainability relies on international support.

#### **2.4.1. Regional resettlement approach**

With Colombia's decades-long internal conflict in the background, in 2004 Brazil hosted the preparatory meeting that would celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration, the main instrument and base of the refugee protection in the region (Americas 2004). During the meeting, the government of Brazil proposed the creation of a regional resettlement programme for Latin American refugees. The proposal, by which countries of the South Cone contributed to the burden of refugees received by Colombia's neighbour countries, was the birth of the 'resettlement in solidarity' programme. In the notes of those meetings, it is possible to find some of the regional shared interest. The participants acknowledged "the need to strike a balance between the legitimate interests of the State, particularly as regards security, and the humanitarian needs of those in need of protection" (UNCHR 2006, p.271). They also highlighted the need of the international community's support to achieve durable solutions in the region. The resettlement proposal was built on three main pillars: the regional tradition of refugee protection in Latin America; the re-birth of resettlement (related with the strategic use of resettlement and the UNHCR efforts in finding new countries of resettlement, discussed in Chapter 3), and the principle of solidarity. The latter provided an identity to the programme, echoing the move in international refugee law from burden-sharing to that of responsibility sharing, strengthening Latin American States' commitment to refugee protection (Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011, p.71).

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<sup>29</sup> Chile and Brazil are both signatories of the 1951 Refugee Convention, together with its 1967 Protocol (UNHCR 1951). In addition, both are part of the Mexico Plan of Action, the Brasilia declaration of 2011 and the Mercosur Declaration on International Refugee Protection Principles issued at a ministerial meeting in November of 2012 in Fortaleza, Brazil. The last one calls on States to harmonise asylum laws and procedures and noted the need to reinforce the regional resettlement programme for Colombian refugees (UNHCR 2013).

The 'resettlement in solidarity' initiative was adopted as part of the Mexico Plan of Action (MPA) and, from November 2004 to date, five countries of the region (Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay) have received more 1,200 refugees from within the region and abroad. As Lyra Jubilut and Pereira Carneiro (2011, p.64) have emphasised, the programme "has been debated and supported" by states outside the region such as the United States, Canada and Norway, countries that collaborated as donors and also through twinning agreements as a form of capacity building. The resettlement Macro Agreement made between the governments of Chile and Brazil and the UNHCR establishes conditions for resettlement and places obligations on states. Also, depending on the financial resources available, absorption capacity and willingness, each government determines their annual quota in consultation with UNHCR (Harley 2014, p.19).

The implementation of third country resettlement in Latin America has not been free of challenges, such as being highly dependent on UNHCR resources, unable to increase considerably its capacity and the lack of socio-economic integration of its beneficiaries (Guglielmelli-White, 2012; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro, 2011). The resettlement programme emerged as a regional attempt at South-South cooperation in refugee protection (Harley 2014), and the participant countries have developed some binding legal obligations and internal voluntary processes towards this goal. However, besides the progress in the harmonisation of local legislation, the countries failed to share substantial good practices and strategies to face common challenges. This was particularly evident after both Chile and Brazil decided to open the programmes outside the boundaries of Latin America and received more than 100 Palestinian refugees each, and almost no communication was established between the two countries.

Recently, Chile and Brazil also signed the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action (2014). The latter builds upon previous regional frameworks, including the 1994 San José Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons, which focused on internal displacement, and the 2004 Mexico Declaration and Plan of Action. In the next two sections, I review some of the characteristics of the resettlement programme in each country.

#### 2.4.2. Characteristics of resettlement in Brazil

During the last decade, Brazil has been committed to strengthening its role as a leader in refugee protection in Latin America (Teles & Ribeiro Leão 2010; Lyra Jubilut 2006; Phillips 2003). After re-democratisation, Brazil passed a specific refugee law, it promoted resettlement as a durable solution and encouraged regional meetings to secure refugee support from Latin American countries<sup>30</sup>. In June 2014, the country held the first National Conference about Migration and Refugees (COMIGRAR)<sup>31</sup> and, in December of the same year, Brazil also hosted the commemoration of the 30 years of the Cartagena Declaration that ended with the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action (UNHCR 2014c). Brazil is currently the 5th largest country in terms of size and population (192 million people) and is ranked among the top 10 economies in the world (World Bank 2015). According to CONARE, up to October 2014, Brazil had in its territory 7,289 recognised refugees (including resettled refugees) from 81 different nationalities (UNHCR 2014a). Of this total number, 25% were women. The main refugee groups are from Syria, Colombia, Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In 2014 Brazil also registered its highest refugee' eligibility rate since 2010, reaching 88.5%. The UNHCR explains that this figure includes a high number of applications from Syrian refugees. Without counting that group, the eligibility rate reached 75.2% (Ibid 2014a, p.3). In relation to resettlement, the country opened the programme to refugees of Syria and Sri Lanka in 2014 and announced that it is looking to expand the programme to other transregional refugees in 2016. Although Brazil has shown political willingness, regional leadership and a favourable legal framework, the resettlement numbers are still small in relation to global needs<sup>32</sup>.

Although the country is still debating a new migration law, Brazil's Refugee Act has been regarded as a "modern" legal instrument in harmony with international and regional norms (J. Fischel de Andrade & Marcolini 2002, p.39). The Brazilian Refugee Act (Law 9.474/97 of 22 July) was passed in 1997 and is recognised as one of the most innovative legislations in the region (Lyra Jubilut 2006, p.40; Fischel de Andrade & Marcolini 2002).

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<sup>30</sup> The UNHCR also claims that Brazil consolidated as the main donor among emergent countries with US\$ 3.5 million given in 2010, US\$ 3.7 million in 2011, US\$ 3.6 million in 2012 and US\$ 1 million in 2013 (UNHCR 2014a).

<sup>31</sup> The 1ª Conferência Nacional sobre Migrações e Refúgio (Comigrar) was an initiative of the Brazilian government to discuss migration in the country through a participatory methodology that involved local and international actors including the civil society and migrants organisations (Governo Federal Brasil 2014).

<sup>32</sup> The UNHCR estimates that over 1,150,000 refugees globally are in need of resettlement (UNHCR 2015e).

The bill created the National Commission for Refugees (CONARE) and included the expanded definition of refugee of the Cartagena Declaration<sup>33</sup> (Guglielmelli-White 2012). In relation to resettlement, Brazil enacted the Normative Resolution Nº 14 in December 2011, that stipulated the specifications of the resettlement programme, clarified the role and responsibilities of the institutions involved, established a selection process, and broadly indicated rights and duties of the resettled refugees (ACNUR 2013, pp.47–52). Brazil understands resettlement as a protection tool and durable solution “aiming at allowing refugees to integrate into Brazilian society and to achieve self-sufficiency as fast as possible” (Government of Brazil 2013). These aims of the programme shape its design and implementation, but also – as I explore in Chapter 5 – influence the relationship between the organisations involved and the resettled refugees.

In Brazil, resettlement relies on a tripartite structure that includes the participation of the Brazilian Government, the UNHCR, and NGOs (see Figure 2.4.). CONARE, the Brazilian federal institution under the Ministry of Justice, is the government agency responsible for analysing and reaching a decision on all resettlement applications, which were previously referred by the UNHCR. CONARE is comprised of representatives of key segments of the government such as the ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Labour, Health and Education; the Federal Police and members of civil society (represented by the religious NGOs). The UNHCR is also part of CONARE, but without the right to vote (CONARE, 2014: 8).

Until 2014, the programme had two implementing partners in resettlement: the Associação Antônio Vieira (ASAV) in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, and the Centro de Defesa e de Direitos Humanos (CDDH) in Guarulhos, São Paulo. ASAV is part of the Companhia de Jesus (Church of the Society of Jesus), a Jesuit congregation of the Catholic Church. They started to work as implementing partners for the UNHCR in 2003, with the first group of Colombian refugees and with Afghan resettled refugees that had arrived a year earlier. CDDH became an implementing partner in 2010, and in 2011 they received

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<sup>33</sup> The 1984 Cartagena Declaration broadened the refugee definition. Article III (3) says the following: “...the definition or concept of a refugee to be recommended for use in the region is one which, in addition to containing the elements of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, includes among refugees persons who have fled their country because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalised violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order” (Americas 1984). See also Maldonado Castillo 2015.

their first group of resettled refugees. After a number of complaints about the programme, CDDH stopped its duty as implementing partner in 2014. When the Palestinians arrived in 2007, the partner organisation for resettlement in that state was the office of Caritas<sup>34</sup> in Guarulhos. In Brazil and in Chile, most of the UNHCR implementing partners in resettlement are faith based organisations.

**Figure 2.4. Resettlement actors in Brazil<sup>35</sup>**



Source: Data collected during fieldwork in Chile and Brazil.

The resettlement process starts when the implementing agencies of the UNHCR in the first country of asylum and the UN agency itself identify possible cases for resettlement. The UNHCR office in that country makes a first selection and presents the cases to the government. In order to assess the cases presented by the UNHCR, a selection mission that includes representatives of CONARE, NGOs and the UNHCR Brazil travel to the first country of asylum and interview the refugees (Sampaio, 2010: 27). At the end of the interviews, the Brazilian delegation discusses the cases and makes a positive or negative suggestion about the acceptance of the application to CONARE. It will be the members of CONARE who, by simple majority, make a final decision. Brazil considers five main selection criteria:

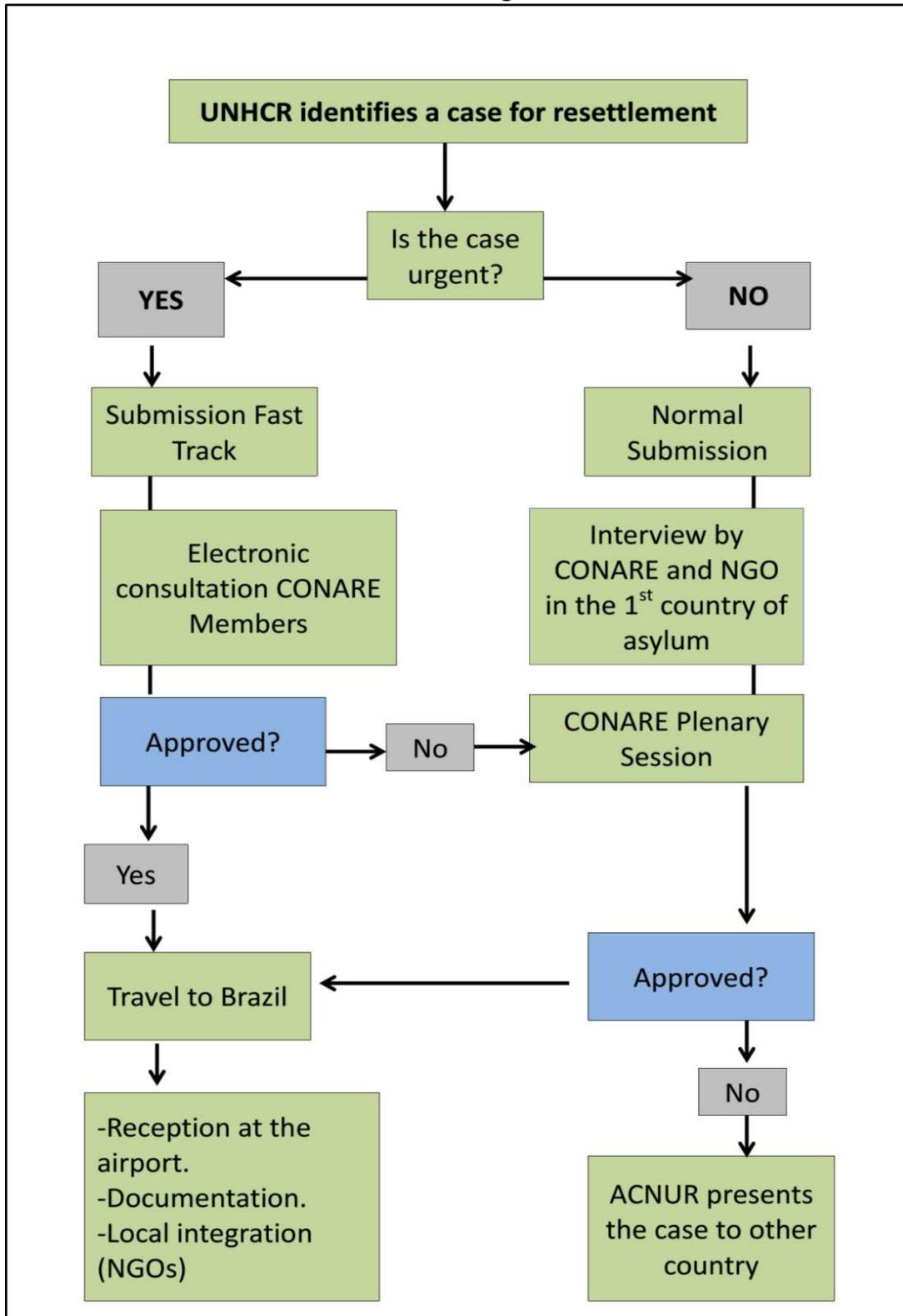
<sup>34</sup> Caritas Brazil, founded in 1956, is an entity of the Brazilian Conference of Bishops (CNBB) and is recognised as a federal non-profit organisation. Caritas was the implementing partner of the UNHCR during the humanitarian resettlement programme for Palestinian refugees until 2010.

<sup>35</sup> This chart considers the actors involved until 2014 when the fieldwork was undertaken in that country.

legal and physical protection needs, survivors of violence and torture, refugees without local integration prospects in the first country of asylum, women at risk, and refugees with strong links with other refugees in Brazil (Government of Brazil 2013). At some point there was specific funding to cover a women at risk programme, however, due to lack of resources it had to be cancelled. In addition, the coordinator of ASAV and social workers from CDDH told me that one of the main criteria is also the refugees' potentiality for integration (see also van Selm 2014, p.514), broadly defined in terms of refugees' age, family composition and capacity to work. The officers attending the mission provided information regarding the resettlement country, showed a video of the country and answered questions asked by refugees. In recent years, the mission has also provided a written 'Declaration of Voluntary Agreement to the Brazilian Resettlement Programme' to be signed by the refugee (CONARE 2014). As one of the UNHCR Senior Programme Assistants told me, this document stipulates their rights, duties and the specification of the programme. That document also highlights the voluntary nature of the process, and it has been one of the most concrete measures taken by the programme in order to avoid unfulfilled expectations, which continue to cause discontent between some refugees and the actors involved in the programme (see Chapter 5).

One important characteristic of the Brazilian model is that it considers a fast-track procedure for emergency cases. By this process, cases presented by the UNHCR to CONARE get a decision within 72 hours (Government of Brazil 2013). If the application is approved – which must be unanimous in these expedited cases – the refugees can arrive in the country within ten days of the initial referral (see Figure 2.5). It is worth noticing that Brazil does not establish an intake annual quota and the annual target is decided each year by the organisations involved, depending on financial resources available and protection needs (Government of Brazil 2013). The country was receiving an average of 60 resettled refugees each year. In both Brazil and Chile, however, the Palestinian programme was so demanding that it meant a sharp decrease in the new arrivals of Colombian resettled refugees for at least two years when that programme was running (Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011).

Figure 2.5. Scheme of resettlement decision making in Brazil.



Source: Translated and adapted from Sampaio 2010, p.29.

Another distinctive feature of the Brazilian programme is the decentralisation of the placements given to refugees. According to ASAV there are more than 22 cities involved in the programme. This approach means small concentrations of resettled refugees in each

city and also the diversification of support networks and partnerships with different local organisations, starting with the 'prefeituras'<sup>36</sup>, churches, schools, NGOs, private sector and even individual volunteers (ACNUR, 2007: 65). Cities are chosen based on the offer of the local services available and also on previously established partnerships through other refugee cases or by the networks of the faith based organisations (Sampaio 2010). According to the implementing agencies, this model would also allow better integration of the refugees into the community, and facilitate faster self-sufficiency (Bessa, 2006: 11). At the same time, as highlighted by one of the NGO's programme officers, in the case of the Colombian refugees this geographical distribution would provide reassurance in relation to their security concerns (see Chapter 6).

The resettlement programme in Brazil is funded by the UNHCR by way of contributions from donor states (UNHCR 2012a). The programme is designed for up to a 12 month period in the case of Colombian refugees and 2 years in the case of the Palestinians. During that time, refugees received financial assistance aimed to cover their basic expenses and also their housing needs by paying their rents (Government of Brazil 2013). In practice, the financial assistance for Palestinian refugees was higher than the one for Colombian refugees and extended after the original 2 years period (Sampaio 2010). Colombian and Palestinian refugees with specific needs also received other types of assistance when necessary, such as specific medication, school supplies and children's winter or school clothes (Guglielmelli-White 2012). Nine Palestinian refugees in vulnerable situation were receiving extra support until the end of 2013, when the UNHCR announced that they will stop granting the extra help that covered rent and food for elderly or ill Palestinian refugees. At the time of the fieldwork, the NGOs in Porto Alegre and Guarulhos were looking for possible solutions and support through the involvement of local authorities.

As part of the resettlement programme, the government facilitates the necessary documentation<sup>37</sup> and grants refugees a two-year temporary visa that can be renewed in the second year for another two. After four years of the temporary visa, they can apply for the permanent one. Naturalisation is possible after 4 years of permanent residency in the

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<sup>36</sup> Municipalities, local government.

<sup>37</sup> The documentation given by the government offices include: ID cards (RNE, Registro Nacional Para Estrangeiros), work permits (CTPS, Carteira de Trabalho e Previdência Social) and the individual's taxpayer registry (CPF, Cadastro de Pessoas Físicas) (Government of Brazil 2013, p.5).

country (see Chapter 7). The implementing agencies in Brazil meet the refugees at the airport, transport them to their host cities, and arrange their accommodation for a year – two years in the case of Palestinian refugees. In addition, the NGO buys basic furniture, and provides them with money to buy clothes and their first supermarket shop. The NGO also arranges allocation to Portuguese classes. The programme should also provide basic social and cultural orientation, and facilitate information to access health and social services and children's access to public schools. The programme also should provide the refugees with access to dental and mental health services available in the public sector or with local partners, and support the refugee insertion into the job market, among others (CONARE 2014).

Although refugees in Brazil have the same access to health services and education as any other Brazilian citizen, there are a number of public policies and social programmes that do not benefit refugees because their access mechanisms do not recognise 'refugee' as a legal category (Sampaio 2010). For instance, the temporary residence permits preclude refugees, or makes difficult, accessing some programmes such as social housing (Minha Casa, Minha Vida) (Guglielmelli-White 2012; Sampaio 2010). Other programmes, such as the pension for the elderly over 65 years old (BPC, Benefício de Prestação Continuada de Assistência Social), can only be accessed by foreigners after they have obtained naturalisation (Scherer 2008). In addition, many of the public policies aimed at social assistance were implemented with federal funds but managed by the local municipalities (Prefeituras) and Federal States (Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011). In this scenario, refugees' access to some social programmes has become a discretionary decision of the local authorities, demanding extra effort by the organisations involved in resettlement to negotiate access. As the UNHCR Assistant Protection officer in Brazil told me, refugees' exclusion from some social programmes has been identified as one of the main challenges of resettlement.

### **2.4.3. Features of resettlement in Chile**

Chile was also one of the first countries to implement a resettlement programme in Latin America. As in Brazil, the country's commitment to refugee protection has fluctuated depending on the government in place and their political sensibility towards refugee

issues. Some members of the centre-left coalition<sup>38</sup> were refugees themselves during Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship and they have shown particular commitment to refugee protection, as stated by the UNHCR Protection officer in Chile. In addition to this shared experience, there was a feeling of 'gratitude' towards other communities that hosted Chileans during their exile and the opportunity to provide a 'gesture' to the international community was welcomed.

According to the UNHCR (2009) Chile and Brazil embraced the commitment and responsibility of being part of the solution to the plight of refugees after the restoration of democracy, opening their doors to those who now suffered in the same way, until recently, their own citizens had. According to the Department of Foreigners and Migration of the Ministry of Interior, 4,584 people had requested asylum in Chile by 2014. By July of that year Chile had recognised 1,220 refugees, a number that includes resettled refugees (Matus & Díaz 2014). Although most of them are Colombian (964) and Palestinian (120), there are also refugees from Iraq, Eritrea and Azerbaijan, among others. The number of refugees in the country is small considering that Chile was deemed one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America in the last decade (The World Bank 2015). And although in 2013 the country was classified as a high income economy, Chile has also been regarded as the most unequal country in the OECD (2015)<sup>39</sup>.

Chile adopted the Law for the Protection of Refugees (Law No. 20.430) in 2010. The legislation established the National Refugee Commission, whose responsibility is to adjudicate asylum claims and planning, promoting and coordinating public policies relating to the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers (UNHCR, 2011b: 2). The Commission is presided over by the Department of Foreigners and includes two representatives from the Ministry of the Interior and two representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Representatives of the UNHCR and the implementing NGO can also be present at the

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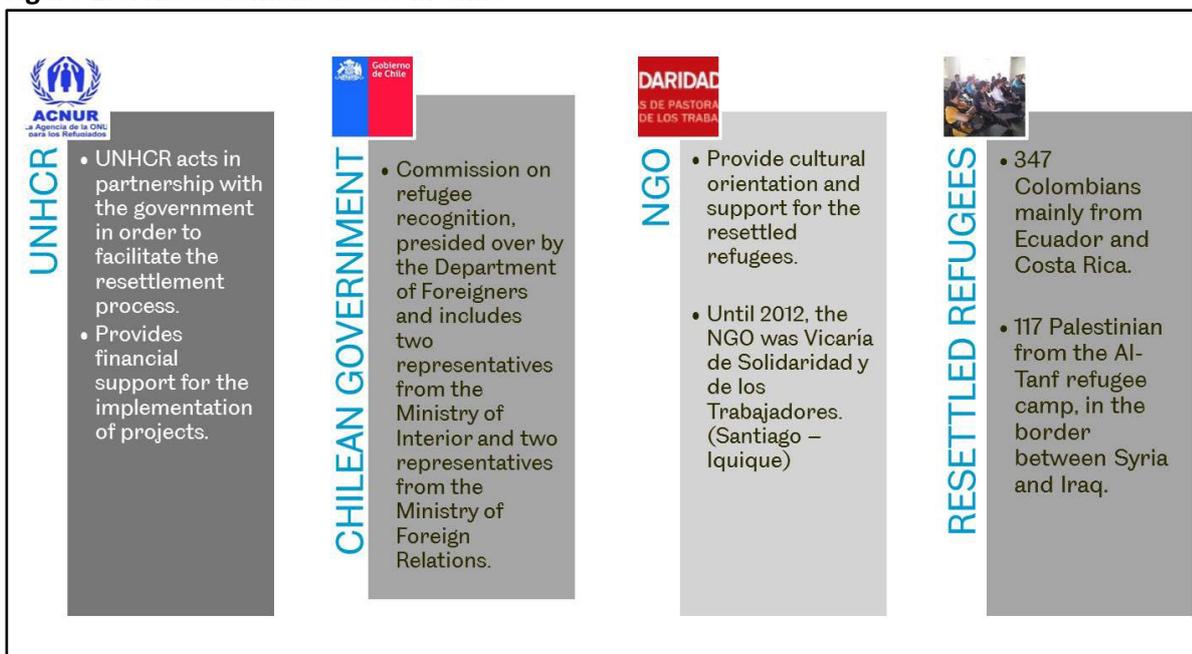
<sup>38</sup> This coalition of centre-left parties governed Chile between March 1990 and March 2010 under the name *La Concertación*. After the electoral defeat in 2010, they were the main opposition to the centre-right government of Sebastian Pinera. After that period they joined other left-wing political forces and formed a new coalition called *La Nueva Mayoría*. In March 2014 the coalition came back to the government with the second mandate of Michelle Bachelet as president of the country.

<sup>39</sup> In this thesis, I broadly use the term 'high middle-income countries' as reference to Chile and Brazil. In 2013 the World Bank considered Brazil as an Upper middle income economy with a gross national income (GNI) per capita of \$11,690. Chile has recently transitioned to a high-income economy with a GNI per capita of \$15,230. However, the gap between rich and poor remains highly unequal in Chile (OECD 2015).

meetings of the Commission, but they don't vote. The legislation sets guarantees and obligations for refugees and regularises procedures and guidelines for determining refugee status. In addition, Article 2 of the Refugee Law includes universal and regional definitions of refugees and Article 45 establishes that individuals and families who are recognised with the refugee status will have the right to permanent residency. This permanent residence status is an important change in relation to previous legislation, and has been extremely important in facilitating refugee access to social services and other public policies. After five years of permanent residency, refugees can apply for Chilean citizenship. The Refugee Law is further complemented by the regulatory decree N°837 and its internal regulation that came into force in February 2011 (Ibid).

The Memorandum of Understanding between Chile and the UNHCR assigns the responsibility for the reception and integration of the resettled refugees to the government through the Ministry of the Interior, in collaboration with the UNHCR and the Civil Society (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores 1999). From 2001 until 2013, Vicaría de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores (the social welfare agency of the Archdiocese of Santiago) was the implementing agency of the UNHCR in Chile (see Figure 2.6).

**Figure 2.6. Resettlement actors in Chile<sup>40</sup>**



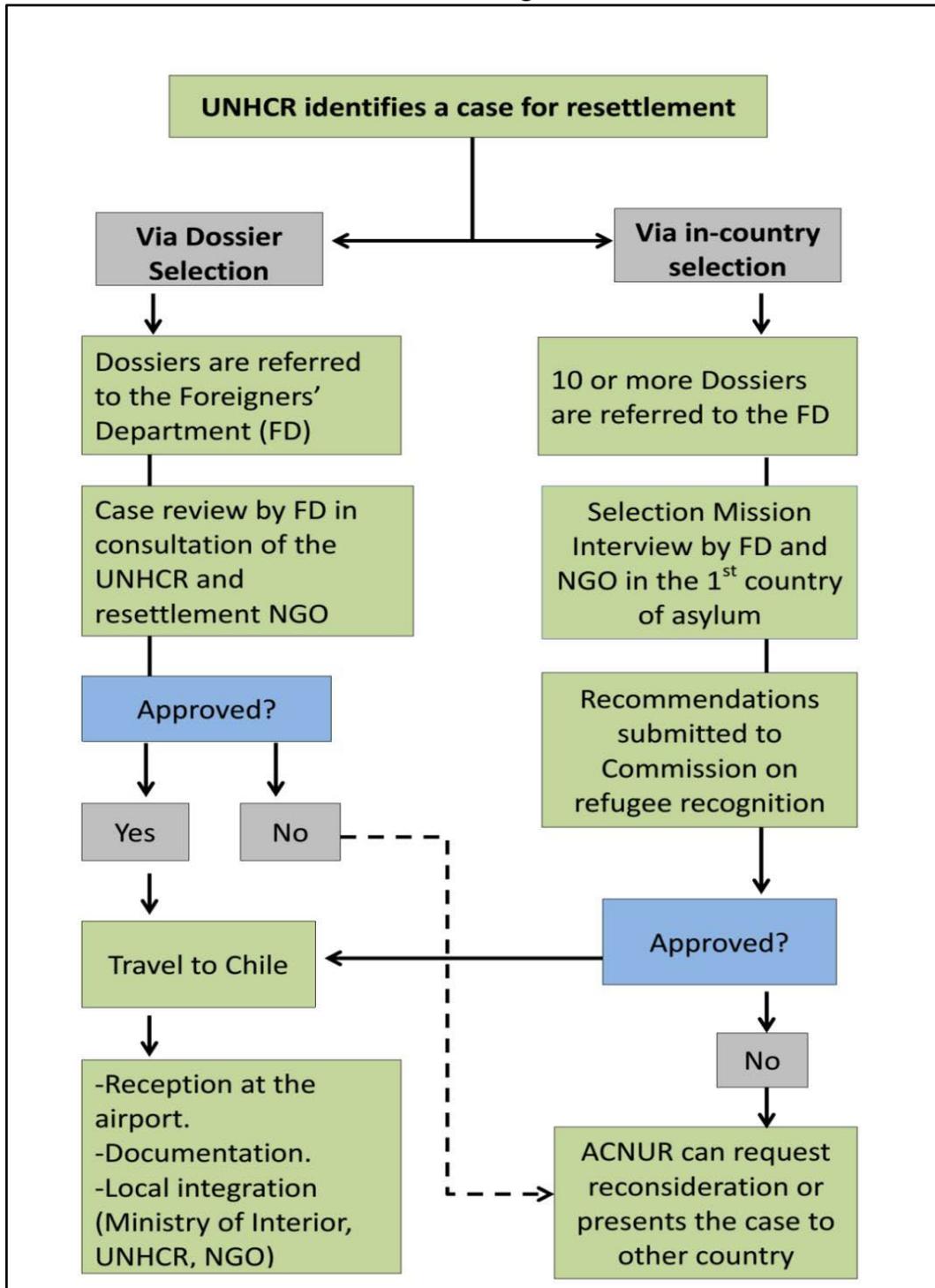
Source: Data collected during fieldwork in Chile and Brazil.

<sup>40</sup> This chart considers the main actors involved in resettlement until 2013 when the programme was 'temporarily suspended'.

The selection process is similar to the one in Brazil. However, one distinctive aspect is that, after the cases are referred, there is an initial evaluation by the Vicaría prior to the selection mission (Guglielmelli-White 2012). The mission includes one delegate from the Department of Foreigners and one of la Vicaría de Pastoral Social. After the interviews, the recommendations of the delegation are submitted to the Ministry of the Interior, which informs UNHCR of its decision (see Figure 2.7). Similarly to Brazil, the Chilean selection mission also provides information about Chile and an initial orientation. If the refugee is interested in resettlement in the country, they must sign a document accepting the conditions of the programme. Chile, as Brazil, has also experienced several issues arising from the unfulfilled expectations of the resettled refugees and it has been adapting its 'promotional' material (see Chapter 5 and 7). The resettlement organisations changed the original video to one that showed the country in all its different dimensions and also adapted their written information. Some years before the closure of the refugee area in the Vicaría, the team of AREVI had also created an 'Orientation guide for resettled refugees in Chile' that included practical information about the country, life costs and money exchange, security, explanations about the school system, job culture and access to social services among others (AREVI 2009).

Chile's selection criteria includes legal or physical protection needs, victims of violence and/or torture, women at risk, refugees without prospects of local integration in the first country of asylum, and refugees with special needs (Government of Chile 2002). A special programme for women at risk was opened and started to receive cases since 2011. As stated by the Coordinator of the Refugee Area of the Department of Foreigners and Migration, the country also puts a special preference for families instead of individuals, based on the logic that families have a better prospect of integration. Similar to Brazil, the integration potential of the cases is crucial in the selection process – based on previous experience and studies, expectations and family members (Interview AREVI Resettlement Coordinator, 2013). Chile also considered cases of elderly people and people with medical needs, after previous assessment of the available services to cover those special requirements. It is worth noticing that Chile has not set a minimal quota of resettlement. Until 2012 Chile was receiving around 30 refugees per year.

Figure 2.7. Scheme of resettlement decision making in Chile.



Source: (Guglielmelli-White 2012; Government of Chile 2002). Adapted from Sampaio 2010.

The programme implemented by la Vicaría included reception at the airport and accommodation for a month in a hostel. After that period refugees needed to find housing covered by the financial assistance they received for the first 12 months. In the case of the Palestinian refugees, the financial help was for almost three years. According to the Resettlement Coordinator at AREVI, the stipend was around US\$700 per month, although

that amount varied depending on the number of family members. Refugees were also offered a one-time grant to purchase basic furniture (Government of Chile 2002). The implementing agency provided financial assistance and support for the first year. Refugees also received a medical check-up upon arrival.

During the first weeks in the host country the resettled refugees received a socio-cultural induction<sup>41</sup> and information related to finding housing. The Vicaría also provided a short vocational training programme. The agency also linked the refugee population with social services and facilitated access to other services and documentation (ID card). They also used to provide a legal service and mental health service, but due to budget cuts and high staff turnover, those services were no longer available at the moment of the fieldwork. In the case of the Palestinian programme, the Vicaría also hired translators and language teachers. The government also managed to negotiate the Palestinians' access to a programme of social housing, ensuring that each family had their own house at the end of the programme (Interview Resettlement Analyst Ministry of Interior, 2013). A special team to support the house hunting and all the necessary documentation was also hired. Unfortunately, housing benefit was not negotiated for the Colombian resettled population. Although they can try to access this benefit by their own means, the acceptance rate by this route is low (see Chapter 7).

The Refugee Law of 2010 establishes that the Ministry of Interior must accomplish a coordination role in relation to refugee integration. While the Department of Foreigners (Departamento de Extranjería, DEM) coordinates the refugee status determination procedures and the resettlement decisions, the Department of Social Action (Departamento de Acción Social, DAS) coordinates the financial contribution that the State delivers through the organisations of the civil society that work with the refugee population in the country (Centro de DDHH UDP 2012). Despite the contribution of the State, Chile – like Brazil and other Latin American countries – depends on external funding given by donor countries through the UNHCR (UNHCR 2012a). The article 13 of the Refugee Law also established refugees' access to economic and social rights such as health, education, housing and labour (González & Palacios Riquelme 2013). The state has

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<sup>41</sup> The induction process aims for the resettled refugees to learn about Chilean culture, the distribution of the city, transportation and how the public education and health systems work.

implemented relevant administrative actions to facilitate access to these rights by subscribing sectorial agreements with different ministries such as the Ministry of Health and Education, and the National Services for Children and Women (DEM 2015). However, challenges like access to social housing, higher education and mental health care remain unresolved. Under the current law, like any other foreigner regularised in the country, refugees must have five years of permanent residency in order to apply for the housing subsidy (Olea et al. 2012).

Unlike Brazil, the geographical placement of the resettled refugees in Chile is centralised and most of the resettled population live in the capital, Santiago. However, there have been some attempts to open it to other cities such as La Calera, San Felipe and Iquique (ACNUR, 2010: 21). This resulted in the increase of partnerships with organisations such as the municipalities, local schools, medical services and universities. In the case of the Palestinian programme, the Christian Palestinian Community and the Muslim local community were also involved (AREVI 2012).

Since late 2012, the solidarity resettlement programme in Chile has been under review and its future is uncertain after a political dispute between the government of Sebastian Piñera and the UNHCR. The conflict started with the asylum granted in Argentina to the Chilean guerrilla fighter Sergio Galvarino Apablaza Guerra, who according to the government faced charges in Chile for murder and kidnapping. In addition, the refugee area of the Vicaría de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores was closed indefinitely in 2013. Until the end of that year there was no clarity about which organisation would take the responsibility for the implementation of the resettlement programme. The other refugee programmes were transferred to the Chilean Catholic Institute of Migration (INCAMI, Instituto Católico Chileno de Migración) which also discontinued its participation in 2014. In 2015 the implementing partner of the UNHCR in Chile was the Foundation of Social Help of Christian Churches (FASIC, Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas). However, the resettlement programme remained on standby; there have been no new selection missions scheduled since 2010. The last group of 32 Colombian resettled refugees arrived in 2012.

## **2.5. Conclusions**

This chapter has discussed some of the main features of the resettlement programme in Chile and Brazil, and the characteristics of the two communities considered in this study: Colombian and Palestinian refugees. Sections 2.2 and 2.3 focused on the historical background of the conflicts that surrounded refugees' persecution, their patterns of displacement and the processes that facilitated Colombian and Palestinian refugees' resettlement in Chile and Brazil. All these dimensions are pivotal in the analysis presented in the empirical chapters of this thesis. Equally important for the analysis are the characteristics of the design and implementation of the resettlement programme in Chile and Brazil, explored in Section 2.4.

The consideration of two resettled groups in two countries enhances the possibilities of exploring the different scales involved in the resettlement experience, including individual, local, national and international levels. Including two distinctive communities in a multi-sited study allows for a review of how a community from inside the region and one from outside the region are being resettled. Having communities in two different countries also enables an analysis of how the refugee structures in the host countries shape the experiences of resettlement. Therefore, the units of analysis are not aimed at comparison only. Instead, the research proposes a dialogue about how resettlement is experienced in the region and how different dimensions, such as country of origin, displacement patterns and host countries, relate with other dimensions such as age, ethnicity and gender, affecting the refugees' 'integration' process. Therefore, I emphasise that the research goes beyond the understanding of resettlement as only a phenomenon, and looks at resettlement as a field of relationships, multi-dimensions and constructed experiences within situated contexts. The main theoretical concepts and discussions that frame this research are discussed in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER 3

### Debating refugee ‘integration’

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#### 3.1. Introduction

In this chapter I situate the theoretical and empirical debates that inform this research. I argue that the study of resettlement has in the main been approached from a policy perspective (van Selm 2014), focused on the capacity and organisational aspects of the programme mostly in traditional resettlement countries (Balarajan 2012; Westermeyer 2011; Bevelander et al. 2010; Barnett 2006; Nakashiba 2013b; Noll & van Selm 2003). The emphasis has also been on exploring the burden-sharing undertaken by the receiving states (Betts 2010; Kneebone & Rawlings-Sanaei 2007; Labman 2007). Within these approaches, far less attention has been paid to resettlement as an experience addressed from the point of view of the refugees themselves (van Selm 2014, p.512). I suggest that the discussion about resettlement as a durable solution should consider a more comprehensive approach that situates resettlement in the context of integration, in order to include more explicitly the experiences of refugees within resettlement.

I will begin with a brief review of the current debates about resettlement, exploring its definition and highlighting how the academic debates have reinforced the geographical narrowness and state prominence in the use of the term. I then suggest that in order to expand the scope of resettlement studies, it is necessary to include the experiences of ‘integration’ of resettled refugees and problematise these experiences in relation to the macro and micro political domains that characterise this durable solution (Section 3.2). In the second part (Section 3.3), I engage in a critical review of the current debates around refugees’ ‘integration’, exploring how the concept has been developed in western scholarship as a policy-driven and state-centred idea. Drawing upon interconnected strands of scholarship within Refugee Studies, Human Geography and Sociology, among other related disciplines, in this chapter I assert the need to critically re-define the word ‘integration’ in terms of its scope and scales in order to understand the experiences of refugee resettlement in Latin America. By exploring debates around belonging (Section 3.4) and citizenship (3.5) as areas pivotal to the understanding of the refugee experience, I suggest that the complexities of refugee integration should be approached by considering

structural, social and emotional dimensions. Finally, I review some of the main discussions around refugee integration in Latin America (Section 3.6) to then propose the inclusion of refugee ‘unsettlement’ as part of the integration experiences of resettled refugees.

### **3.2. Refugee third country resettlement**

‘Resettlement’ involves the action of settling or being settled in another place, involving mobility, territory and people, making it a natural focus of enquiry for geography (Hyndman 1999). Furthermore, resettlement to a third country is a geopolitical concern, characterised by the prominent role of the state within the process and the discretionary powers of the state to accept or to admit refugees. According to the UNHCR, resettlement “involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State that has agreed to admit them – as refugees – with permanent residence status” and equal access to social policies (UNHCR 2011c, p.9). The definition of refugee resettlement as a durable solution focuses mainly on the role of the state, as well as in the process and conditions for resettlement (Nakashiba 2013a, p.2). This perspective is further reinforced by the UNHCR definition that identifies resettlement as a tool of international protection and a ‘tangible’ expression of international solidarity and a burden-sharing mechanism<sup>42</sup> (UNHCR 2011c). At the same time, the UN Agency stresses that resettlement is not a right. Contrary to asylum that guarantees the right to *non-refoulement*, the UNHCR emphasises that resettlement is a discretionary response from states (Ibid. p36). In addition, resettlement must only be used when local integration and repatriation, the other two durable solutions, are unavailable (van Selm 2004).

The definition of resettlement is derived from UNHCR guidelines and state practices rather than being stated in an international legal document (Bessa 2009). As Bessa asserts, the main international instrument of refugee protection, the Convention related to the Status of Refugees 1951, does not provide a definition of resettlement. The lack of a clear definition has prompted criticism that it incites a “tension between political imperatives

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<sup>42</sup> There are two ways in which states contribute to refugee protection: ‘asylum’ and ‘burden-sharing’ (Betts 2009b, p.5). The former is related to the protection given as a receiving territory, the latter can be related to the protection of refugees who reside in other states’ territory. Burden-sharing it is not a duty of the states guaranteed by international law although it was stated in the preamble of the 1951 Convention (UN General Assembly 1951). Burden-sharing has been discussed in refugee studies as two types of action: resettlement and assistance to countries hosting refugees paid for contributions to the UNHCR (Betts & Loescher 2011; Betts 2009a; Thielemann 2006; Martin et al. 2006; Boswell 2003).

and humanitarian obligations” (Sandvik 2010, p.23) that translates into states applying discretionary policies and using resettlement to serve specific interests (Nakashiba 2013b; Bessa 2009). One of the most significant current discussions about resettlement has been focused on its strategic use (van Selm 2013; Pressé & Thomson 2008; Loescher et al. 2008; Labman 2007; UNHCR 2003; van Selm 2004; Canadian Council for Refugees 2003). This debate gained new emphasis after 9/11, because of the opportunities that resettlement represented as an effective tool for states that wanted to participate in the protection of refugees in the context of increased security concerns (Fredriksson 2002, p.13). The concept of ‘strategic use of resettlement’ assumes that resettlement can play an important and complementary role influencing better protection conditions for a wider refugee population, not only those being resettled (Loescher et al. 2008). However, this strategic approach has been criticised, posing questions that it may change the role of resettlement as a humanitarian programme if its aims and functions become confused by states (van Selm 2004). For example, there is a risk that states may use resettlement as a ‘humanitarian alibi’ for restrictive asylum policies and to bypass their legal obligations (Labman 2007), or that the refugee protection regime could become a tool of migrant selection depending on states’ decisions (Fredriksson 2002). Furthermore, van Selm (2014; 2013) has noticed that the impact of the strategic approach is mixed and that there is a lack of strong evidence for the possible positive outcomes.

The literature has also paid attention to the historical changes in the use of resettlement and its evolution in the macro-political landscape (Nakashiba 2013a; Labman 2009; Loescher et al. 2008; Bessa 2009; Martin 2005; Troeller 2002; Chimni 1999; Stein 1983), as well as to the policies implemented in different countries, in particular in relation to the identification of refugees for resettlement (Pressé & Thomson 2008; Noll & van Selm 2003; Robinson 2003; Parsons 2005; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011; Guglielmelli-White 2012; Nakashiba 2013a; Sandvik 2011). Within the existing literature, however, there are limited references to the process of resettlement from the perspective of the lived experiences of refugees. This does not mean that there has been a lack of empirical studies about the resettlement experience (see for example McKinnon 2008, Ives 2007; Barnes 2001). Indeed, some important contributions about refugee resettlement have been made by disciplines such as Geography (Hume & Hardwick 2005; Robinson 2003; Robinson 1993) Anthropology (Nibbs 2014; Shrestha 2011; Harrell-Bond & Voutira 1992; Warriner 2007)

and Sociology (Cheung & Phillimore 2013; Coughlan & Owens-Manley 2006). Nonetheless, most of these studies focus on resettlement in relation to the implementation of the programme, selection, and the legislation in the receiving country, but not as a comprehensive lived-experience (van Selm 2014).

A further noticeable trend in the literature has been to focus on resettlement programmes in developed countries, with consolidated structures for resettlement such as the United States and Canada, or on the opportunities for resettlement that have emerged in European countries (Nibbs 2014; Bevelander et al. 2010; Martin 2005; Robinson 2003; Parsons 2005; Peisker & Tilbury 2003; Noll & van Selm 2003; Robinson 1993; Marett 1993). The geographically narrow approach to the study of resettlement has left countries in Latin America<sup>43</sup> almost invisible within the debate. This omission resonates with the relative rarity of studies exploring South-South responses to forced displacement. Although there is a resurgence of literature in South-South migration, in terms of patterns, drivers, legislation and remittance-led development (Freier & Acosta Arcarazo 2015; Anich et al. 2014; Bakewell 2012; Gindling 2009; Hujo & Piper 2007; Castles & Delgado Wise 2007), Pacitto & Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2013, p.3) highlight that humanitarian action not borne of the “Northern-dominated” international regime has remained largely ignored in academia, particularly the study of South-South humanitarian responses in the context of forced migration. Some notable exceptions have been the work produced by Latin American scholars such Lyra Jubilut and Pereira Carneiro (2011), Guglielmelli-White (2012), Bessa (2009) and Bijit (2012) in relation to the resettlement programme in Chile and Brazil, and Harley (2014), Cantor (2015; 2013) and Lyra Jubilut and Pires Ramos (2014) regarding South-South cooperation in the context of forced migration. During the last 5 years, there have also been increasing interest and valuable contributions to the resettlement debate, produced by postgraduate researchers, particularly after the arrival of Palestinian refugees in Chile and Brazil (Hamid 2012; Menezes 2013; Bijit 2013; Passuelo de Oliveira 2012). Nonetheless, refugees’ experiences and perceptions of the design, implementation and day to day process within the Latin American responses to forced migration remain almost absent from the literature (van Selm 2014). This thesis aims to address these gaps and

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<sup>43</sup> In this thesis I broadly use the term “Latin America” to identify American countries located below Mexico. This demarcation excludes states in the Caribbean, but combines countries of Central and South America following the country information provided by the UNHCR (2015b).

contribute to the emergent empirical research in Latin America and other regions, in order to understand how resettlement is implemented and experienced in Chile and Brazil.

### **3.2.1. Resettlement as a Durable Solution**

Resettlement is one of the three durable solutions for refugees. While current notions of resettlement focus heavily on programme implementation, a broader understanding of resettlement as ‘durable solution’ adds new elements to how we can approach this concept. The UNHCR describes a ‘durable solution’ for refugees as “one that ends the cycle of displacement by resolving their plight so that they can lead normal lives” (UNHCR 2011c, 28). In this sense, the UN agency has highlighted that their primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees and its ‘ultimate goal’ is to identify durable solutions that allow them to rebuild their lives. Two dimensions are identified within the concept of durable solutions. The first is related to refugee protection, and the second, and main interest of this research, refers to the conditions that allow refugees to re-establish their lives. As mentioned previously, three durable solutions have been identified in order to accomplish this purpose: voluntary repatriation<sup>44</sup>, local integration<sup>45</sup> and refugee resettlement.

Two decades ago, Gallagher (1994) asserted that durable solutions should be conceptualised as a way to restore or to maintain permanent relationships between individuals and states. Stein (1986, p.267) contested that this relationship is unequal in principle considering that achieving a durable solution depends on the political will of individual governments, emphasising that “durable solutions are political solutions” (see also Väyrynen 2006; Barnett 2002). In this sense, durable solutions such as resettlement, have arguably been mainly approached from the point of view of refugee governance and the will of governments and the international refugee sector to facilitate the establishment of conditions which will put an end to the displacement and encourage settlement. The

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<sup>44</sup> Voluntary Repatriation makes reference to refugees’ return to their country of origin in “safety and dignity” and as result of a voluntary decision, mainly in post-conflict situations (Chimni 1999; Stein 1986; UNHCR 2005)

<sup>45</sup> Local integration is the durable solution by which the country of asylum recognises the person’s refugee status by providing (temporary or permanent) residence. Local integration has been recognised as a complex and gradual process that considers different but related legal, economic, social and cultural dimensions (Merheb 2006; UNHCR 2005).

high number of protracted<sup>46</sup> and precarious refugee situations (see Milner & Loescher 2011; Milner 2008) demonstrates the failure of current durable solutions and has stimulated debates within the literature about ‘rethinking’ these solutions (Long 2014; Souter 2014; Hathaway 2006). For instance, some scholars have proposed the inclusion of education, regularised labour migration and development into the durable solutions framework (Dryden-Peterson 2011; Harild & Christensen 2011; Lewis et al. 2014; Long 2009). However, some of these proposals are based on extensions of current durable solutions rather than offering a radical new approach.

A discussion about durable solutions provides a starting point for the understanding of resettlement, but does not provide a theoretical framework within which to explore the resettlement experience. A lack of theoretical reflection in this field has been acknowledged by Black (2001). While the dialogue with practitioners is one of the major strengths of the field, Black criticises that this “does not obviate the need for critical theoretical reflection”. A decade after that assessment, there has been an interesting proliferation of middle-range theory research within refugee studies (Zetter 2015; Strang & Ager 2010; Ager & Strang 2008). However, studies in relation to refugee resettlement are still largely related to policy and legislation (Harley 2014; Sandvik 2011; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011; Sandvik 2010; Robinson 2003).

In order to challenge the gaps outlined above, I propose to explore resettlement not just as a programme but rather as an experience. These lived-experiences cannot ignore the fact that the refugee regimes and international law are created and managed by states, therefore a refugee system is based as much on humanitarian action as it is in the interests of the states (Hathaway 2006; Bertino Moreira 2014). Resettlement is a strategic project that has a double aim of protecting refugees whilst maintaining and not damaging the interests of the state. Resettlement is also a complex process that is designed, experienced and even resisted by different actors. In order to address the complexities of the refugees’ experience, I suggest exploring resettlement within the framework of ‘refugee integration’. Through the lens of ‘integration’ it will be possible to discuss the multifaceted dimensions of resettlement, prioritising the lived experiences of refugees, without omitting an analysis

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<sup>46</sup> In 2011 there were approximately 30 protracted refugee situations worldwide, estimated to be two-thirds of the world’s refugee population.

of the role of the state and the power structures integral to the resettlement programme. This approach will allow me to discuss the constant tensions between policy discourse and the refugee narratives, shedding light onto the different scales and sites where resettlement is negotiated. 'Integration' is indeed a central aim of the resettlement process, but it has been mostly addressed as a policy outcome (Guglielmelli-White 2012; Pressé & Thomson 2008). My purpose, instead, is to explore discussions around 'integration' to facilitate debate in relation to resettlement as process, but mainly, as a lived-experience.

### **3.3. Refugee 'integration': the discourse of the 'dominant'**

In the context of forced migration, the term 'integration' refers to a variety of processes, experiences, politics and negotiations that take place when a refugee arrives in a new context in a host country of asylum. Because of the variety of dimensions involved (Favell 2001), 'integration' is a contested concept (Zetter et al. 2002) that is used with diverse aims by academics and policy makers (Hyndman 2011; Da Lomba 2010; Ager & Strang 2008; Van Tubergen 2006; Sigona 2005). The meanings of 'integration' are also considered to vary from country to country, and according to time and context (Castles et al. 2002). The notion of 'refugee integration' has been broadly discussed across social science disciplines; nonetheless, the term still lacks a clear definition (Brunner et al. 2014) and it has been mainly approached from a policy-driven perspective (see Korac 2009). However, there are some commonalities in these various literatures in relation to what 'refugee integration' entails. For instance, most authors accept that 'integration' is used as opposition to one-way assimilation (Hyndman 2011; Castles et al. 2002; Yu et al. 2007; Ley 2005), that integration is a 'process' and not just 'a goal' (Castles et al. 2002; Atfield et al. 2007; Da Lomba 2010), and that it is multidimensional (Da Lomba 2010; Smyth et al. 2010; Strang & Ager 2010; Sole et al. 2002). Some of these common ideas are considered in the definition provided by the UNHCR, which states that refugee integration is a:

... mutual, dynamic, multifaceted and ongoing process. From a refugee perspective, integration requires a preparedness to adapt to the lifestyle of the host society without having to lose one's own cultural identity [...] From the point of view of the host society, it requires willingness for communities to be welcoming and responsive to refugees and for public institutions to meet the needs of a diverse population (UNHCR 2011c, p.53)

The UNHCR definition reflects the current and most widely accepted conceptualisation of integration amid academic circles and practitioners. I will be focusing on three main dimensions drawing from this definition: the 'two-way approach', the prevalence of a policy-driven perspective and the multifaceted characteristics of integration.

The UNHCR definition embraces the notion of integration as a 'two-way process' that involves the participation and 'mutual adjustment' of both the refugee and the receiving community (UNHCR 2011c; Ager & Strang 2008; Da Lomba 2010; Atfield et al. 2007; The Refugee Council 2004; Rudiger & Spencer 2003). Another advocate of this reciprocal notion of refugee integration has been the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) who describes the process as "dynamic and two-way: it places demands on both receiving societies and the individuals and/or the communities concerned" (ECRE 2002, p.4). This view is a move away from the previous assumptions that considered integration to be a 'one-way process', based upon 'migrant assimilation', by which migrants were expected to integrate into the new culture without reciprocal adjustments being made (Castles et al. 2002, p.113). However, the idea of integration as a 'two-way' process is still problematic since it assumes that integration occurs between "two distinct, but homogenous groups": the host society and the refugee community (Sigona 2005, p.118; Strang & Ager 2010, p.601). This idea ignores the different actors, logics and interests involved in the refugee process – including the state, NGOs, civil society and faith based organisations, among others – but also underestimates the diverse characteristics of the refugee population. Furthermore, the 'two-way' approach also assumes a "homogeneous 'us', a society without classes, inequalities and cultural pluralism" (Sigona 2005, p.120). Therefore, the 'two-way' approach does not necessarily recognise that both the refugee communities and the host communities are culturally heterogeneous and that their social structures are built upon social inequalities (Sole et al. 2002, p.35). This criticism of refugee integration as a 'two-way process' is particularly relevant when thinking about refugees in Latin America, a region characterised by a relatively weak refugee structure and high levels of inequality.

In addition, the assumption of two groups accommodating each other does not really account for the power relations embedded in the refugees' integration process. Refugees' experiences of displacement are revealing in this sense. They often arrive into a new country in a diminished position, traumatised, with a broken identity and not as a result of

their own decisions. Particularly in the case of refugees, 'integration' carries the inherent idea that the process is meant for someone that has been segregated. That is to say, one of the main dimensions of power embedded in refugee integration is the exclusionary idea of 'us' and 'them', highlighting the 'otherness' of the refugees in the receiving country. In this sense, Franz (2003, p.136) argues that the current understanding of 'integration' often contributes "to the creation and perpetuation of the mentality of a 'we' who belong and of 'the aliens' who do not belong". Furthermore, Sigona (2005, p.119) claims that in some countries the concept is connected to the idea of national belonging, and "how to become 'one of us'". The division between 'us' and 'them', takes us back to the question that Castles et al. (2002, p.114) posed over a decade ago, "integration into what?". It also highlights that integration has been largely defined by the 'dominant' societies that receive refugees and migrants, what Abdelmalek Sayad (2010) refers to as the false premises upon which the discourse of integration is constructed. This means that most of the analysis around integration has been undertaken from a state-centred and policy perspective, rather than acknowledging refugees themselves as primary social actors in the integration process (Korac 2009; Griffiths et al. 2005).

Foucault's (2009) 'governmentality' is relevant here to understand the dynamics of integration in the context of refugee resettlement. Governmentality has been succinctly defined as the 'conduct of conduct', referring to the attempts of the state to regulate and control the people in its territory. According to Fassin (2011, p.214) the concept problematises the issue of control, relating power and administration of the state to the subjectivation of individuals. Governmentality, Fassin argues, can be understood as "the institutions, procedures, actions, and reflections that have populations as object. It exceeds the issue of sovereignty and complicates the question of control. [...] It relies on political economy and policing technologies" (Ibid). In this context, it can be argued that the relationship between resettled refugees and the organisations in charge of the programme can be explained through the production of networks of power that derive from the ways that the government seeks to regulate the conduct of people by "ruling from a distance" (Legg 2005; Foucault 2009). More broadly, this thesis also explores state's technologies of control, as one of the ways in which the state tries to influence population patterns. These technologies of domination are also present in refugee resettlement not

only through the relationship between NGOs and refugees, but also in the use of temporary citizen status for example.

It is also worth exploring the paradoxes of the notion of 'self-regulating' subjects in relation to the governance of resettled refugees (Fornet-Betancourt et al. 1987; Legg 2005). Dean (2010) argues that the neoliberal<sup>47</sup> perspective opens new spaces for state intervention that, through certain techniques, implemented either by the state or other agents, are necessary to (re)produce suitable self-responsible individuals. By this, Dean (Ibid., p.43) discusses the programmatic quality of governmentality that makes different purposive efforts to "organize and reorganize institutional space, their routines, rituals and procedures, and the conduct of actors in specific ways". For example, in the case of resettlement in Chile and Brazil there is an imposition of conducts through the discourse of 'self-sufficiency' and 'personal responsibility', under premises of neoliberal governance that aim for the 'mainstreaming' of refugees (see Gray 2011; Root et al. 2014; Lippert 1998). Structures of power are dominant in the notions of integration at the national level, but also in the assumptions that guide humanitarian responses more generally (see Ticktin 2006; Harrell-Bond 2002; Hyndman 2000), and both contribute to the portrayal of refugees as powerless victims that need to be 'regulated'.

Nonetheless, it is also important to consider refugees' 'counter-conduct' and recognise the daily actions that resettled refugees develop as a form of resistance and as new forms of power. In this sense, I agree with Bevir (2010, p.425), who recognises the limited role of resistance in some studies about governmentality, which rarely examine agency "as either a source of power/knowledge or as evidenced in specific instances of counter-conduct". In this context, this research draws on an increasing body of literature that aims to emphasise the relevance of agency while studying the experiences of refugees (Korac 2009; Nyers 2006; Essed et al. 2004; Turton 2003; Sole et al. 2002). In the next sections, I look at how the current approaches to integration have contributed to outlining different dimensions involved in refugee integration and the need to include in the analysis the different scales and localities where the negotiations of integration take place.

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<sup>47</sup> Neoliberalism is a theory of political economic practices based on promoting human well-being based on 'rational self-interest' and the notion that everybody has the potential to benefit from capital accumulation (Harvey 2007).

### **3.3.1. Integration as a multidimensional process**

Despite the limitations imposed by the idea of the 'two-way process', discussed above, the literature has largely recognised that integration is a multidimensional process (Atfield et al. 2007; Zetter et al. 2002; Valtonen 2004). For instance, in her research about the interface between legal status and refugee integration in the UK, Da Lomba (2010) states that integration has two main dimensions: public and private. The public dimension relates to the legal framework applicable to non-nationals and the private dimension to the social environment (domains such as employment, housing, education and health) in which refugees are placed. Similarly, the Spanish sociologists Sole et al (2002, p.21), introduce the concept of "socio-cultural integration" that builds upon the idea of overcoming conflict and developing solidarity. The authors discuss integration as "the interpenetration of the members and the cultural elements of two populations into a unique and new social and cultural structure". Therefore, integration would involve a continuous process of negotiation between social groups, defining the presence of migrants in public spaces and allowing mutual recognition of the normative systems in places and the values of each group. In this vein, Sole et al. highlight two sets of dimensions of integration. The first is identified as socio-structural integration and is related to labour and social integration through the insertion into a certain social class. The second level is related to cultural integration and is described as migrants' willingness to claim their own space, in which they feel they are citizens with rights and agents of a political project. The latter point is important because it places refugees in a main role among the multiplicity of actors involved in the integration process.

Other important contributions highlighting the multiple dimensions where integration is experienced, have emerged from policy-driven research (i.e. Canadian Council for Refugees 2011; Threadgold & Court 2005; The Refugee Council 2004). Within refugee studies, refugee integration is mainly understood in relation to its functional aspects (Korac 2003a), despite the fact that its measurement has proven to be difficult (Hyndman 2011, p.7; Kuhlman 1991). Diverse research has tried to address this policy concern by developing different sets of indicators or models aimed to measure, and also to understand, the process of integration. I briefly outline four of those models here, aiming to emphasise the different dimensions involved in refugee integration. Ager and Strang (2008, p166), for

example, propose a comprehensive set of ten core domains of integration related to four overall themes: achievement and access across the sectors of employment, housing, education and health; assumptions and practice regarding citizenship and rights; processes of social connection within and between groups; and structural barriers to such connections related to language, culture and the local environment (See also Strang & Ager 2010).

Another typology widely recognised in the literature is proposed by Zetter et al. (2002), and is based on four clusters of indicators relating to the legal (citizenship status), statutory (refugee governance strategies), functional (access to welfare system, language, labour market, and housing, among others) and social domains (social networks, social capital and sense of belonging). A third set of indicators is proposed by Atfield et al. (2007). In their research into the understanding of how integration underpins refugees' experiences of settlement, Atfield et al. mainly focused on respondents' own perceptions of the concept. They grouped the participants' responses into three aspects of achievement and aspiration: functional processes, emotional feelings of belonging and acceptance' and equality and empowerment. Finally, Castles et al. (2002) extensively review a comprehensive set of generally accepted indicators, including the structures in place, conditions of access and refugees' motivations and capital, among others. They argue that integration should be used as an 'umbrella term' for diverse and overlapping processes.

All the models outlined above, seem to acknowledge that integration is made up of a series of processes across diverse structural and social dimensions (Gidley 2014). However, these models, mostly focused in outcomes and indicators, have failed to pay more attention to the links and dynamics between different dimensions and how they affect each other (Strang & Ager 2010; Phillimore & Goodson 2008). In this context, I support Bijit's (2012) assertion that the aim of 'full integration' does not exist and that instead, there are some aspects in which a person can accomplish more or less integration. In this line, Gómez et al (2005, p.7) add that the current definitions of integration subscribe to an idea of what the process 'should be' instead of what the process actually 'is'. Therefore, while indicators can contribute to exposing the complexity of the process through its multiple dimensions, their measurement always provides a partial view of the integration experience. Additionally, the main focus from which integration has been explored is

mainly the nation state, obscuring other scales that are pivotal to exploring refugee integration (for instance, the individual, the local and international structures of governance) (see Gidley 2014). In this sense, Sole et al. (2002) criticise the ethnocentrism that prevails in most definitions of integration. Similarly, some researchers have suggested that the policy-driven analysis has given little recognition to refugees themselves as primary social actors in their integration process (Korac 2009; Rutter et al. 2007; Griffiths et al. 2005). As van Selm (2014, p.514) points out, this is the case for integration within refugee resettlement where research from the refugee perspective is almost absent. Indeed, we need to know more about refugees' perspectives of their own experiences, not only what they understand by integration, but actually how they experience it, how they perceive other actors and what dimensions and scales are relevant to them.

### **3.3.2. (Multi)situated experiences: adding notions of scale and translocality**

The multiple-dimensions identified by the academia and policy makers as part of refugee integration are relevant to understand how people experience the dynamic, and sometime contested, processes of integration. However, the prevailing multi-dimensionality of integration does not fully acknowledge the different scales and spaces that are also involved in the refugee experience. This is mainly because most of these dimensions include relations and developments limited within the boundaries of the receiving countries (Gidley 2014). Even if social and intimate dimensions are recognised, they are mostly related to the experiences that take place in the host state. That is to say, integration is presented as having temporal and spatial limitations, summarised in the well-known phrase 'integration starts upon arrival'. Moreover, discussing integration only in relation to its multiple dimensions overlooks the multiple power relationships previously discussed. Therefore, in this section I suggest the need to add the notions of scale and translocality to the discussion of refugee integration.

The use of scalar thinking to understand social processes has underpinned much geographical debate. While the notion of scale has been used in diverse ways, most of them represent some spatial relationship. Dalhman (2009, p.190) states that scale can be understood as a "series of nested levels, local, national, regional and global, that provide a convenient way of thinking about relationships between humans and institutional actors

across different spatial extents”, thus emphasising a vertical understanding of scale. The socially constructed nature of scale (Marston 2000; Delaney & Leitner 1997), suggests that scales do not imply fixed hierarchical platforms for social activity, but instead are constructed as a result of those activities and processes (Gregory et al. 2009). However, Marston, Jones and Woodward (2005) confronted these notions and proposed the idea of ‘flat ontology’ that would create a human geography without scale, in order to resist conceptualising processes tied to hierarchical scales (such as region and nation-states) that are above the sites where experiences and social processes are concretely grounded (such as streets, houses and squares).

As Peter Jackson (2006) asserts, instead of focusing on the hierarchies of scale, the aim of including notions of scale to the study of refugee integration is to focus on the connections between scales. Therefore, the proposal is to review the complex social processes that shape refugee integration at different levels. According to Collyer (2014, p.119), “both the construction of scale and the production of space” are significant in analysing spatial practices in forced migration, that go beyond physical locations and instead include questions about power distribution and the construction of social reality (see also Hyndman 2001).

By adding the notion of scale to the study of integration, it is not my intention to add yet another layer of hierarchy to the refugee experience. Instead, by including scale into the analysis, it can be possible to recognise the power relationships within the system and understand that the refugee experience gives equal importance to the local and the global (international and transnational) as to the nation state (and all the scales in between), as significant scales where refugees’ experiences are negotiated, decided, resisted and lived. Understanding the scales where integration takes place would also enable better recognition of how the different dimensions of integration influence each other. As Jackson (2006, p.200) argues, decisions taken at a specific level may have “differential consequences in different localities”, emphasising the importance of understanding scales in relation to other scales and places.

I have suggested that the use of scales can enhance our understanding of refugee experiences of integration and resettlement. In addition, in this thesis I use the lenses of

'translocality' to explore the spatial interconnectedness of the refugee experience within and beyond the national boundaries of the receiving country (Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013). The use of translocality in exploring mobility, migration and social movements has grown considerably, in an attempt to emphasise the relevance of the local (Brickell & Datta 2011b; Freitag & von Oppen 2010; McFarlane 2009; Long 2008; Núñez-Madrado 2007; Appadurai 2005; Escobar 2001). Within refugee studies the significance of locality has mostly been approached in relation to the attachments that forced migrants left behind in the country of origin and the ones they create (and reproduce) in the new place of asylum, as well as in 'home' making practices and dynamics in different localities (Korac 2009; Brunner et al. 2014; Brun & Fábos 2015; Barnes 2001). As Greiner and Sakdapolrak (2013, p.373) assert, translocality is used "to describe socio-spatial dynamics and processes of simultaneity and identity formation that transcend boundaries – including, but also extending beyond, those of the nation states". In this thesis, translocality is used to understand how these simultaneous processes, relationships and dynamics affect and transform refugees' integration experiences.

According to Brickell and Datta (2011b, p.3) translocality can be understood as a form of "grounded transnationalism", that allows examination of the local "as situated across a variety of scales – body, home, urban, regional or national" (Ibid., p.11). Therefore, translocality explores local-local negotiations and relationships across different scales, which until recently took place mainly within debates on 'transnationalism'. In order to understand the need to move the discussion to translocality, it is relevant here to briefly examine the debates about connections between transnationalism and integration. Studies about transnationalism that have emerged since the mid-90's (Vertovec 2003; Vertovec 2004; Hannerz 1996; Portes et al. 1999; Vertovec 1999) have explored migrants' and refugees' transnational forms and practices without linking them together as part of the integration experience (see Erdal & Oeppen 2013). Instead, two main perspectives have prevailed until recently: one that sees transnationalism and integration as opposites (in the sense that the first one may have negative implications on the second one), and the other that sees that these two can coexist in parallel (Tamaki 2011; Schans 2009; Snel et al. 2006; Itzigsohn & Saucedo 2002).

Taking into account these two broad views, Erdal and Oeppen (2013, p.872) try to understand the interactions between integration and transnationalism. The authors suggest that the different academic positions (alarmist, less alarmist but pessimistic, positive and pragmatic) recognise that interactions between transnationalism and integration occur, but that few questions have been asked about the nature of these interactions. One of the main contributions of their research is that the authors explore these interactions from an actor-centred approach and propose a typology for understanding the nature of these interactions, what they describe as ‘migrants’ balancing acts’. Through these ‘acts’ people connect societies of origin and settlement, linking their daily local lives with transnational fields (Ibid., p.877). This approach acknowledges that both integration and transnationalism are parts of a social process and that the nature of their interactions is based on migrants’ choices. One major drawback of this analysis is that fails to embrace the fluidity of these relationships, which extend beyond the receiving country and the country of origin. In the case of resettled refugees, their relationships, negotiations and everyday social practices and encounters are informed by localised experiences and local-local interactions that also include the places of transit and displacement (see also Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013; Núñez-Madrazo 2007).

In this context, three aspects of translocality are pivotal to the understanding of refugee integration. One is related to refugees’ translocal experiences as a way to explore ‘transnational-local’ dynamics, including those related to sense of belonging and identity formation that are constructed in different locales across borders. Second, translocality also allows exploration of refugees’ negotiations across locales within the resettlement country, taking into account some of the different scales where the resettlement experience develops. Third, the concept of translocality develops an agency-oriented approach to these dynamics (Brickell & Datta 2011a). This last point is particularly relevant because exploring refugees’ translocal experiences enables consideration of how refugees’ agency takes shape in space (Christou 2011).

Particularly relevant for this analysis is the approach taken by Brickell and Datta (2011a), who draw on Bourdieu’s notion of habitus<sup>48</sup> (Bourdieu 2002) as a field of social practices in

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<sup>48</sup> Broadly, Bourdieu (2002) defines ‘Habitus’ as a type of “cultural habitat which becomes internalised, in the form of dispositions to act, think, and feel in certain ways”.

order to focus on the spatial applications of the concept. They address the question of how it is possible to examine the multi-scalar situatedness of migrants' experiences and their multiple affiliations across space and time, by suggesting that habitus allows examination of "the translocal 'field' of practice where migrants' (social or cultural) capital are exchanged differently in different spaces, places and scales" (Brickell & Datta 2011a, p.11). They suggest including 'space' as a form of capital and thinking of 'habitus' as a field of meaning that includes both subjectivities and physical locations. These subjective locations are pivotal in shaping migrants' everyday spatial practices and their negotiations at different scales, addressing agents' "simultaneous situatedness across different locales". Therefore, the translocal emerges as "multi-scalar engagements" formed by "localized context and everyday practices" (Ibid, p.11), which are key to the understanding of integration as a process developed within, across and outside the boundaries of the receiving country. These translocal social fields would be characterised by power imbalances where agents have to negotiate, exchange and value all forms of capital across different scales (Kelly & Lusia 2006; see also Massey 1991).

Exploring integration as a translocal experience radically breaks current understandings of refugee integration, while at the same time allowing a more nuanced perspective of how refugee integration is experienced and how it should be understood. Translocality unveils refugees' translocal lived-experiences and transnational-local practices, by paying attention to refugees' "social constructions, material geographies and multiple histories" (Brickell & Datta 2011a, p.4). In addition, by including the notion of translocality, it is possible to better explore the multiple scales where the refugee experience develops.

In order to explore the resettlement of Colombian and Palestinian refugees in Chile and Brazil I will be reviewing their experiences from two theoretical and empirical approaches within which the discourses and practices of integration can develop. These are belonging and citizenship. These debates will allow critical exploration of the resettlement process in Chile and Brazil as a political project, a lived-experience and a contested policy across different localities and scales. Again, the aim of this exercise is not to provide yet another model from which to measure integration. Rather, the aim is to explore the theoretical possibilities of the process and how the multiple dimensions of integration have shaped

the daily lived-experience of Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees in both countries.

### **3.4. Belonging**

Belonging is core to the refugee experience of integration. It has been identified as one of the key dimensions to consider within the process (Ager & Strang 2008; Atfield et al. 2007) and also has been largely explored among refugee and migration scholars as a concept in itself (Valentine et al. 2009; Yuval-Davis 2011b; Fortier 2000). Belonging has been widely discussed in relation to three major analytical dimensions: in relation to identity reformulation (Ehrkamp 2005; Madsen & Naerssen 2003; Valentine et al. 2009; Sporton & Valentine 2007); as place-belongingness (Antonsich 2010; hooks 2009; Morley 2001) and as politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2011b; 2006). It can also be understood as all of them together. As Wood and Waite (2011, p.201) assert, 'belonging' "is a dynamic emotional attachment that relates individuals to the material and social worlds they inhabit and experience. It is about feeling 'at home' and 'secure', but it is equally about being recognised and understood". The idea of recognition that the authors highlight is directly related with membership and the multi-scalar processes of inclusion and/or social exclusion that Yuval-Davis (2011b; 2006) refers as the politics of belonging. The three dimensions that characterise belonging, emphasise emotional processes that are inherent to the experiences of mobility (Christou 2011).

The close links between belonging and the refugee experience caused me to question my own approach, and interrogate why an 'integration' framework better supports an understanding of the refugee resettlement experiences, as opposed to 'belonging' in itself. The answer is twofold, due to semantical and theoretical considerations. Antonsich (2010, p.646) asserts that "belonging is not an easy term to be translated in other languages". Despite the fact that the word in Spanish (*pertenencia*) and Portuguese (*pertença*) can be placed in the context of migration and refugee studies, it is not part of the daily lexicon either of the refugees or the organisations involved in resettlement in Chile and Brazil. 'Belonging' is a term frequently used in academic work produced in English, and the use of the concept can reinforce the geographical narrowness present in the study of resettlement. 'Integration' is instead part of the narratives refugees construct out of their

own experiences and it is also core to the policy aims of the programme in both countries. Nonetheless, I will be discussing belonging as one of the main dimensions of integration, on the basis that is an essential part of the understanding of the refugee experience. On the other hand, I also draw on Castles et al's (2002) argument to suggest that a critical approach to 'integration' can be used as a conceptual umbrella under which it is possible to problematise the multiple and complex layers of the refugees' resettlement experience. 'Belonging' is one of these layers, since it allows us to look at the intimate, discursive and representational experiences of refugees while they negotiate 'being' and 'becoming' in the host country (Christou 2011, p.249; Svašek 2010). In this section I discuss further two of the main dimensions of belonging that have a crucial role within the experiences of integration: belonging as identity and as place-belongingness. The dynamics involved in the politics of belonging are further discussed in relation to citizenship practices in the next Section.

In relation to identity, 'belonging' has been discussed as a dynamic, mobile and negotiated experience of identity reformulation that not only focuses on attachment and membership (Valentine et al. 2009; Sporton & Valentine 2007). Yuval-Davis (2006, 199), also identifies 'belonging' as an "act of self-identification or identification by others in a stable, contested and transient way". Yuval-Davis has also argued (2011b, p.14) that identities are narratives and stories people tell themselves and others about who they are and who they are not. These narratives can be related to certain groupings such as individual attributes, aspirations, sexual identifications and body images, among others. Belonging can also develop in multiple territories, spaces and layers (see also Fortier 1999; Bhimji 2009). Moreover, some authors assert that 'belonging' as identity would be inherently related to 'belonging' as place-belongingness, considering that the questions about 'who I am?' and 'where I do belong?' complement and build on each other (Probyn 1996; Antonsich 2010). In this sense, 'belonging' can be related to peoples' memories, history (and stories), and to the localities (imagined or material) that marked them. These belongings, however, are not fixed and they may shift in different times and situations, as emotions and perceptions would do (Yuval-Davis 2011a, p.5).

As place-belongingness, 'belonging' is understood as an emotional feeling that comes from attachment to a particular place (Antonsich 2010). In this sense, argues Antonsich,

'belonging' means to find a place where the person can feel 'at home'. However, home is not understood as the "domestic(ated)" material space, but rather as a "symbolic space of familiarity, comfort, security, and emotional attachment" (Antonsich 2010, p.646; see also hooks 2009). For migrants and refugees, these symbolic and emotional dimensions of 'home'<sup>49</sup> are determinant to their experience of feeling 'in their place' but also for their identity reformulation. A sense of belonging can be developed in relation to the places (and people, customs and life styles) that the person left; their imaginaries of 'home', or/and the new places of asylum (see Barnes 2001; Ehrkamp 2005). In this sense, Wright (2014) argues that belonging can refer to a place but also can exist in the absence of a specific site as it is the case of diasporic belonging (see Chapter 6). Therefore, belonging is a translocal experience, a feeling that can transcend boundaries (Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013) but also exists in relation to more than one place (see also Nowicka 2007). Ralph and Staeheli (2011, p.526) explore the spatiality of social relationships that construct 'home' and argue that home "can be understood as located in the complex relationships through which migrants and others build and interpret lives". And these relationships are mostly established translocally (Morley 2001; Wright 2014).

This translocality allows to understand how and why refugees' belongings are in constant reformulation between "not just being, but longing", in what Elspeth Probyn (1996) identifies as the "affective dimension of belonging". This nostalgia is marked by refugees' process of identification with, and membership of, the different places they have been, and with the diverse groups and people they have met. It extends even to those places where they have not been, but in which their relatives currently are or where their identification is based. In this sense, belonging is also a translocal process by which resettled refugees keep the core elements of their self-identification related to their imagined place of origin (through reinforcing national identity, language, religion and traditions) and create membership of a new place and group in the host country through new common elements (for example, new language, understanding of the local context, new groups of belonging).

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<sup>49</sup> For a more comprehensive discussion about different perspectives about home see Blunt (2005) and Ralph & Staeheli (2011) in relation to home and migration.

In order to understand the notion of belonging, Yuval-Davis (2006, p.196) differentiates between three levels on which belonging is constructed. These levels include social locations, individuals' identifications and emotional attachments to various groups, and the ethical and political value systems with which people judge their own and others' belonging(s). All of these will be considered in Chapter 6, in relation to the research findings.

### **3.5. Citizenship**

Citizenship has been widely linked to integration. Zetter et al. (2002, p.113) suggest that although citizenship is not integration it is indeed an important staging post, asserting that "the rites of passage conferred by citizenship provide certainty of residence and guarantee key rights: these are significant variables on which successful integration depends". Ager and Strang (2008, p.176) add that the notions of nationhood, citizenship and rights are fundamental to understanding the 'principles and practice of integration', even if they vary across settings. These authors not only recognise citizenship as a status through the Marshallian perspective of rights (Marshall 1949), but they also validate citizenship as a formal form of belonging, a political project of belonging that determines membership of a certain territory or a political community (Castles & Davidson 2000; Yuval-Davis 2011b; Benhabib 2004; Ager & Strang 2008; Mountz 2009). In this case, territory includes a wide spectrum of "sites, scale and spaces from the local city to the modern nation-state" (Mountz 2009, p.288). In liberal democratic theory this political membership aimed to be inclusive and open to all, allowing national cohesion and a shared sense of belonging (Stefoni 2004). However, attachment to the idea of a particular form of membership to a nation means that the principle is an exclusionary category (Castles & Davidson 2000, p.84). Yet, citizenship has also been redefined by globalisation and the consequent crisis of the model of state sovereignty and the increased speed of human mobility. The latter has pervaded the study of transnational practices of citizenship, multiple forms of citizenship and even the idea of 'global citizens' (Ong 2006; Mountz 2009; Castles & Davidson 2000; Staeheli 1999).

As a formal membership of a state, citizenship is presented by Marshall (1949) as the acquisition of rights and responsibilities. The Marshallian concept considers citizenship as a

legal status that confers civil, political and social rights based on nationality, stated at birth or by naturalisation. The refugee experience cannot be understood without considering the formal membership, since refugees' daily lives are marked by the loss and reclamation of citizenship rights. Refugees experience loss of citizenship privileges when the state (either the one at the country of origin or at the first country of asylum) is not able to protect them from persecution. Refugees aim to reclaim those rights when they have to embark on a new 'journey to citizenship' (Cole 2014) after the country of resettlement discretionarily accepts them as refugees into their territory. At the same time, the refugee's legal status as formal acceptance to a territory imposes responsibilities on the refugee but also on the state. In the case of refugee resettlement, by accepting resettled refugees the state assumes, at least on paper, the responsibility to protect them and to provide the same entitlements enjoyed by the regularised foreigners in the territory<sup>50</sup>. Citizenship, therefore, can be described as the regularisation of refugees' membership and as such is accompanied "by rituals of entry, access, belonging and privilege" (Benhabib 2004, p.1). Those rituals of entry and access are characterised by documentation and status, and I will argue that, to a certain extent, they frame the experience of resettled refugees in both countries in the study. As a formal membership, citizenship validates belonging, provides protection from the state, controls mobility (through documentation and passport) and classifies refugees' relationship to the territory.

Nonetheless, as several scholars have suggested, status per se is not a guarantee of substantive citizenship. Holston and Appadurai (1996, p.190) assert that, while access to rights and membership in the nation-state may depend on formal citizenship, the practice of what is termed 'substantive citizenship' (in relation to the possession and exercise of civil, political, socio-economic and cultural rights) is mostly independent of the formal status. In this context, citizenship is not only about the status assigned as part of formal membership, it is also about "the relationships, practices and acts that construct, regulate and contest citizenship" (Staeheli 2010, p.398). As Nyers and Rygiel (2012) assert, reality is much more complex than binaries of non-status/status. According to Stokke (2013), citizenship can be understood around four key components: statuses, membership, rights and participation. In this line, Staeheli (2010, p.393) asserts, citizenship is simultaneously

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<sup>50</sup> This mainly applies to Chile and Brazil, according to the resolution No 14 in Brazil and the Chilean Legislation.

“a legal category, a claim, identity, an ideal and a tool in nation building”. As this thesis shows, these different dimensions that regulate movement and belonging are negotiated across multiple scales and spaces, defining the complexity of citizenship (Stokke 2013). While the state remains the main domain of citizenship, the practice of citizenship has been decentred from the nation-state, including new spaces of international governance but also new sub-national levels.

As I suggest in this thesis, for resettled refugees, performing citizenship is about obtaining membership, since it is about claiming ‘the right to have rights’ by being ‘legal’ and ‘political’ (see Benhabib 2004; Arendt 1962). Nyers and Rygiel (2012) suggest that the increasing regulation of mobility at different scales has not only prompted new ways of governing peoples’ mobility; it has also created new ways of being political (Isin 2002). Isin’s conceptualisation of ‘status’, ‘practice’ and ‘acts’ of citizenship is also relevant here to explore not only the multiple dimensions of citizenship, but also the different ways it can be experienced and claimed (Isin 2012; 2008; 2002; Isin & Nielsen 2008). Isin claims that people are flexible and intelligent practitioners “of the art of performing or enacting their rights and the rights of others” (Isin 2012, p.150). According to Isin, the traditional conception of citizenship as status has been contested and redefined through diverse political and social struggles ‘of recognition and distribution’. In this way, those constituted beyond the limits of citizenship have found new ways to politically claim citizenship (Isin & Turner 2002). Therefore, citizenship changes from being a constitutional right to a more performative practice that takes place not through participation in the society or status, but by claiming spaces of belonging within the society (Benhabib 2004; Soysal 1994). As Isin and Nielsen (2008) suggest, in order to explore citizenship beyond the limitations of status and practices, it is necessary to shift the focus from the subjects to the acts that produce those subjects.

Although Isin’s work largely focuses in the conceptualisation and enactment of ‘acts of citizenship’, he also has discussed the other two notions as spaces from which citizenship can be studied and the acts can be understood. Drawing on Staeheli’s (2010, P.399) assertion that the construction and disruption of citizens and citizenship can be understood in the “traces of acts, practices, and relationships”, this thesis explores refugee citizenship experience by exploring four main dimensions: citizenships as status, as

practice, as identity, and as exclusion. By doing so, this thesis recognises that refugees' membership of the resettlement country is related to the legal status and also to the relational process around it. I also explore refugees' acts of citizenship and to what extent these acts can overcome the barriers imposed by the status and the practice of citizenship.

Refugees want the right to be in a place and to claim rights because of being humans, not due to their refugee status. That is why it is not possible to understand citizenship in the context of integration while separating completely status, practices and acts. In this thesis, I understand that refugees' legal status and membership control can result in poor practices of citizenship, while at the same time the marginalisation experienced from it triggers deep changes in refugees' individual and collective agency making the claimant subjects, political beings and, as such, citizens.

### **3.6. Latin American perspectives on integration**

There has been an increase in academic and policy driven work on forced migration in Latin America, mainly in response to the growing number of refugees coming from within and outside the region (see, for example, the special issue of the *Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade Humana* December 2014). Yet, there is a lack of theorisation about refugee integration in the region. Instead, Latin America has contributed greatly to the conceptualisation of refugee integration praxis as a result of empirical studies that explore different dimensions of refugees' lived-experience in the receiving countries. Currently, there is a growing interdisciplinary body of literature that reviews the implementation of refugee programmes in relation to local, regional and international legislation (Fischel de Andrade 2014; Lyra Jubilut & Lima Madureira 2014; Guglielmelli-White 2012; Cavaleri 2012; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011; Nogueira & Marques 2008; Lyra Jubilut 2006). In addition, some scholars have focused on empirical approaches to study refugee integration or particular aspects of how forced displacement unfolds in the region (Ortiz & Kaminker 2014; Correa et al. 2013; Ortega & Ospina 2012; Bijit 2012; Villa Martínez 2011; Guglielmelli White 2011; Lyra Jubilut 2010; Moreira & Baeninger 2009; Paspalanova 2009; Bello & Villa 2005). However relevant, this literature reveals the need to provide insights about what the region understands about refugee integration, and how these understandings influence the design and implementation of durable solutions in Latin

America, particularly when most of the current approaches are built around notions mostly developed in western English-speaking academia (Kuhlman 1991).

It must be noticed that the discussion about refugee integration in the region has also been built on the empirical studies carried out in relation to the experience of other migrants, not necessarily refugees (Stefoni & Bonhomme 2015; Stefoni & Bonhomme 2014; Bonhomme 2013; Torres G. & Garcés H. 2013; Polloni & Matus 2011; Feldman-Bianco et al. 2011; Cano & Soffia 2009; Stefoni 2004). Recognising the differences in the nature of their displacements and their legal status in the country of residence, these studies are significant since the experiences of migrants and refugees in Latin America are frequently characterised by what is known as the “migration-asylum nexus” (see Castles & Loughma 2003; Murillo González 2008), where they are marked by similar journeys and challenges imposed by structural constraints and social exclusion in the receiving country. The experiences of both groups also correspond to the intersection of dimensions such as race, gender, class, geographical distribution and the condition of being ‘outsiders’ (Tijoux 2014; Margarit Segura & Bijit Abde 2014; Pizarro 2013; Mora & Undurraga 2013; Carrillo Sánchez 2012; Pizarro 2012; Carneiro & Collar 2006; Hopenhayn & Bello 2001). Although this research does not follow a feminist theoretical framework, it is certainly inspired by feminist ideas and it does recognise the need to explore the marginalisation of refugees through the lenses of intersectionality, understood as the interaction between social categories such as gender, race, class, sexuality and even territory, and how these interactions result in oppressions and power imbalances (see Kimberlé 1989; Yuval-Davis 2011b; Davis 2008; Valentine 2007; Brah & Phoenix 2004). Although it is beyond the scope of this research to explore in depth the use of intersectionality in order to understand the racialisation processes and inequalities in Latin America, it is important to highlight its use in the analysis of findings and research methodology, allowing a better understanding of how differences and power relationships are negotiated within resettlement. As Crenshaw Kimberlé (1991, p.1299) stated “through an awareness of intersectionality, we can better acknowledge and ground the differences among us and negotiate the means by which these differences will find expression in constructing group politics”.

Empirical studies about refugee and migrant integration in Latin America reveal another three themes that are relevant to understanding forced migration in the region:

discrimination, invisibilisation and lack of access (to housing and employment for example). For instance, Guglielmelli White (2011) explored the experiences of Colombian refugees in Ecuador and found that discrimination unfolded in different forms, from difficulties accessing work and housing, to verbal abuse or, in some cases, physical violence. Similar discrimination towards migrants and refugees has been identified in the context of other receiving countries such as Venezuela (Carreño Malaver 2014), Ecuador (Ortega & Ospina 2012), Brazil (Moreira & Baeninger 2009) and Chile (Thayer Correa 2013; Iskra 2012; Stefoni 2004). According to Ortega and Ospina (2012, p.95), the discrimination that affects the refugee population is constructed around 'negative perceptions' in relation to social categories such as certain nationalities, gender, sexuality, refugee status, race and class. This discrimination is neither a new nor exclusive phenomenon in Latin America (see Wade 1997). However, it does play a pivotal role in understanding refugee integration in the region. The functionalist approach to integration suggests that refugees should integrate by reaching self-sufficiency and by accessing local programmes in the receiving country; however, this approach does not fully consider how refugees' experiences are shaped by the difficulties they face while trying to access the labour market and certain social programmes, in places where the host society may not be as receptive as the ideal suggests (Bertino Moreira 2014). In addition, discrimination comes together with the invisibility of refugees in the region (Guglielmelli White 2011; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011). Although thousands of Latin Americans experienced exile during dictatorship periods, host communities know very little about refugees' experiences and usually perceive refugees as "fugitives" from justice instead of recognising them as people seeking protection (Moreira & Baeninger 2009, p.48).

The accounts of discrimination and invisibilisation, identified by different authors, result in critical obstacles to accessing housing or employment (see for example Carreño Malaver 2014; Paspalanova 2009). In this regard, research has revealed some precarious labour conditions, difficulties accessing formal jobs and refugees' disappointment because of low payments (Ortega & Ospina 2012). Mora and Undurraga (2013) have also explored the racialisation of migrants as one of the main elements of labour segregation and limited job mobility, suggesting the existence of an "institutionalisation of the production of categories of racial differences in the labour market" (Ibid., p.308). In addition, while access to housing has been reported as affected by refugees' nationality or phenotype

(Cavaleri 2012; Guglielmelli-White 2012), other studies also suggest that refugee populations live in inadequate accommodation or overcrowded multi-family houses (Polloni & Matus 2011; Carreño Malaver 2014). Overall, researchers in the region have identified social and economic integration as the biggest challenges. Despite refugees being entitled to basic public services, “some of their specific needs and vulnerabilities are not being met” (Nogueira & Marques 2008, p.57). Thayer Correa (2013, p.3) asserts that migrants in Chile, for example, are in a diminished position in relation to the native population due to the exclusion they experience as the result of a "partial extension of citizens' rights". For Ortega and Ospina (2012), refugees are placed in a physical, social and economic periphery in the receiving countries in Latin America (see also Margarit Segura & Bijit Abde 2014), showing both the limitations of their citizenship rights and the historic reproduction of ethnic, socioeconomic and gender relegation.

Through these findings, Latin American authors have contributed to the discussion about integration by focusing on what has not been accomplished in relation to unchallenged indicators of integration, suggesting that many refugees and migrants in the region experience precarious lives (see Lewis et al. 2014; Waite 2009). Adding precarity to the conceptualisation of ‘refugee integration’ reinforces the idea that integration cannot be solely conceived as a policy outcome; instead, integration should be understood as a dynamic experience shaped by policy, as it is by race, class, gender and even legal status. Drawing on empirical research produced in Latin America around ‘integration’ and on research about labour conditions of forced migrants elsewhere, I discuss ‘precarity’ as part of the refugee experience in order to start building one of the main arguments of this research, the notion of ‘unsettlement’ as part of the integration experience. Drawing on Louise Waite’s (2009, p.416) review of the term ‘precarity’, this research recognises ‘precarity’ both as a condition “referring to those who experience precariousness”, and also as a possible point of mobilisation. As a condition, precarity is related to life-experiences inflected with uncertainty and instability (Ibid 2009). Waite suggests that the term ‘precarity’ has been mostly used to describe a generalised condition of society (Ettlinger 2007), a condition of powerlessness that emerges from global events such 9/11 and oppressive governmental responses (Butler 2004), or understood as a more contextual condition related to working experiences generated by neo-liberal labour market conditions (see Bourdieu 1998; Fantone 2007; Lewis et al. 2014). Waite (2009) places

herself in the last group, using as a case study the situation of migrant labourers in low-paid sectors in the UK, and arguing that precarity can be useful to explore particular societal groups experiencing precarious lives in relation to specific socio-spatial contexts. Resettled refugees' experiences in Chile and Brazil would fit into this general category. Another characteristic of 'precarity' that Waite emphasises is its difference from other similar concepts such as 'vulnerability' or 'risk', because, besides describing a condition, 'precarity' has a "political potential" and it has been used as a motif by different social justice movements (Waite 2009, p.413).

Waite's discussion of the term is relevant to understanding precarity in relation to refugee integration. Here, as Waite, I do not use 'precarity' to describe a generalised condition of life and instead I recognise the importance of the socio-spatial context that frames resettled refugees' integration as precarious experiences within many micro-spaces of everyday life (Ettlinger 2007). As discussed in this thesis, refugee integration is shaped by neoliberal governance aims of self-sufficiency, by restrictive policies and discrimination, all of which contribute to refugees' experiences of uncertainty and instability in the resettlement country. Additionally, refugees' experiences are characterised by "mobility across different space and time lines" (Waite 2009, p.427), sharing other characteristics with the dynamics of the labour market in a historical moment characterised by globalisation and mobility (Urry 2000). It could be argued that precarity is an inherent condition to the refugee experience, since uncertainty and instability are a constant in the refugee processes. However, that assumption would contribute to reproducing institutional and discursive universalisations about what 'refugeeness' is, by adding yet another category to depoliticise, decontextualise and mainstream the refugee experience as one of powerlessness (Rajaram 2002; Malkki 1996; 1992). Instead, I emphasise that there are social and institutional structures within resettlement, but also within displacement, that make the refugee situation precarious by creating general insecurity, vulnerability and exclusion across some of the dimensions discussed above, for example in relation to socio-economic conditions, labour market, documentation and access. That is to say, precarity within refugee integration recognises the fluidity of social reality while at the same time exposing the barriers and faults of the refugee system at local and international levels. Finally, refugee precarity acts as a trigger of mobilisation, providing another layer from which to explore refugee agency. Paraphrasing Bourdieu (1998, p.86),

refugees' experiences show that against the current refugee barriers, political struggle is possible. Chapter 7 discusses to what extent that mobilisation takes place.

### **3.6.2. Introducing 'unsettlement' as part of the integration experience**

In this thesis I introduce, and seek to theorise, the idea of 'unsettlement' in order to understand refugees' integration experiences during the process of resettlement. 'Unsettlement' can be understood as the condition by which refugees' feelings of uncertainty and instability, as a result of the experiences of displacement, extend and normalise into resettlement. Once in the receiving country, unsettlement is experienced as the result of precariousness and translocality. I am concerned with tracing the temporal and spatial dimensions – as well as the structural and emotional dimensions – of unsettlement that affect the forced displacement experience and how these take shape, extend and normalise in the resettlement country

The idea of 'unsettlement' has been constantly used in studies related to refugees and migrants' experiences, taking for granted that the word describes refugees' situations, processes, feelings or statuses without further conceptualisation (Wachter et al. 2015; Shrestha 2011; McKinnon 2008; Kadri 2009). Indeed, refugees' experiences are unsettled, since they are characterised by lack of stability and constant unpredictability. Nonetheless, a closer review of what it means to experience and live 'unsettled' allow us to look beyond the displacement and to understand further the linkages of some of the complex processes within the integration experience, such as uncertainty, instability, precarity and translocality. In the previous sections I have briefly discussed my understanding of translocality and precariousness. In this section, I would like to explore further the concept of 'uncertainty' in forced migration, in the hope of contributing to the current literature.

Experiences and life in general are characterised by uncertainty (Boholm 2003). Present and future are mostly unpredictable and ambiguous for all of us. However, as Horst and Grabska (2015, p.2) suggest, conflict and displacement create 'radical' uncertainties usually characterised by violence, changing events and the need to take risks. They argue that, once in exile, refugees experience liminal situations, which can transform their uncertainties into protracted ones. Horst and Grabska (Ibid 2015) argue that both radical

and protracted uncertainties are interrelated, and that the difference between them allows better understanding of the temporal and spatial dimensions at risk during displacement, as well as the coping strategies refugees develop.

According to Williams and Baláž (2012, p.168), uncertainty in the context of migration can be understood as the product of two sources. The first is related to the “imperfect knowledge” about the conditions, both in the country of origin and in the place of destination. The second source of uncertainty is related to the “unpredictability of the future”, since all possible scenarios refugees may face involve change and therefore some uncertainty. The idea of ‘uncertainty’ as part of the forced displacement has been mostly studied by anthropologists (Horst & Grabska 2015; Griffiths 2013; Colson 2003), although it has also recently been given its own entry in the *Dictionary of Human Geography* (Gregory et al. 2009). Both disciplines separate the notion of uncertainty from risk, since the latter considers the probability of a particular outcome, which can allow calculation or management of that possible result (see also Boholm 2003). Nonetheless, in the context of conflict and displacement, there is little space to calculate uncertainty and, instead, people face the need to either take fast and unplanned decisions to flee conflict, or to live in a situation of long-term waiting as a consequence of the exile. When people flee persecution and arrive in a new host country, the probabilities of possible outcomes are not to be known (Williams & Baláž 2012) and, therefore, their experiences are marked by unpredictability. The experience of these uncertainties translates into feelings of anxiety and fear, while at the same time it can prompt spaces of negotiation, agency and innovation (Grabska & Fanjoy 2015; Brun 2015).

So far, uncertainty within forced migration has been mostly explored in relation to: the experience of exile and long-term displacement (El-Shaarawi 2015); related to its use as a tool of governance and control (Biehl 2015; Griffiths 2013; Norman 2005); as a driver of action and coping strategies (Brun 2015; Grabska & Fanjoy 2015; Ryan-Saha 2015); as part of refugees’ narrated experiences (Eastmond 2007), and as related with “experiential temporalities” of forced migrants’ detention (Griffiths 2014, p.1994). This body of literature, as Horst and Grabska (2015) assert in the introduction of a major special issue on the topic, challenges understandings of ‘certainty’ as the norm. Instead, uncertainty has

been recognised as a fundamental feature of current modern life (Zinn 2006) and as inherent to the refugee experience.

In this thesis I introduce the notion of uncertainty as part of the conceptualisation of unsettlement, in order to include refugees' experiences in third country resettlement as yet another context where uncertainty develops, extends from displacement and normalises. Moreover, unsettlement allows exploration of uncertainty as part of the refugee integration experience. I argue that in order to explore integration as a process and not only as a goal or as the end of displacement, we need to understand the uncertainty and instability refugees experience as result of their history of displacement and the precarious situation in the resettlement country. What is more, resettled refugees' multiple experiences of displacement in different localities frame their experiences of unsettlement translocally. Once in the resettlement country, refugees face the unpredictability of the present and future in a third host country, while at the same time their experience is marked by a sense of belonging that develops simultaneously here, there and elsewhere. As Mankekar (2015, p.5) asserts, "the temporalities of everyday lives are punctuated by moments that collapse past, present, and future". In the case of resettlement, uncertainty and translocality develop in parallel, intertwining temporal and spatial dimensions. In this context, refugee instability is related to their material conditions in the resettlement country but also to the emotional instability of starting all over for a third (or more) time in a new place.

Therefore, unsettlement develops from a traumatic and radical experience of dispossession and displacement from the first country of asylum, to the long term experiences of waiting during exile and transit, and extends and normalises during the resettlement process. As I show in this research, resettlement is characterised by lack of information, changing contexts within the country of durable solution, precarious living situations, multiple belongings, uncertain futures and refugees' agency and coping strategies. Through the idea of unsettlement I aim to challenge the totalising claims about integration emphasised by current conceptualisations. Unsettlement, therefore, offers a framework for thinking about the experiences of refugees in the host country, exploring the linkages between social, political and institutional structures and processes (El-Shaarawi 2015, p.46), together with personal and emotional dimensions.

### 3.7. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the main theoretical and empirical debates that inform this research. Drawing on the review of the literature about third country resettlement, I have suggested that in order to understand the experience of resettlement it is necessary to explore the process through the lenses of refugee integration. By doing so, the analysis of resettlement would go beyond current discussions about burden-sharing, quota numbers and refugee selection, and focus instead on the experiences of resettlement and to what extent it represents a durable solution that can end with the displacement and lead to the re-establishment of 'normal' lives. In order to develop an integration framework from which to explore resettlement, I have proposed the enhancement of our current understandings about refugee integration by recognising the complexities and multidimensional characteristics of the refugee experience, including notions of scale and space. I have also emphasised that integration develops translocally, with simultaneous memberships and self-identifications negotiated in different places. This analysis aims to explore beyond the 'two-way' approach, and the temporal and spatial limitations that dictate where, when and among whom, integration takes place. By doing so, this review of refugees' experiences of integration in resettlement can address more comprehensively the power dynamics involved in the process and the multiple localities – within and outside the nation state – where refugee integration develops and is negotiated.

I have suggested that looking at resettlement through the analysis of integration allows exploration of the tensions between refugee governance discourses and practices, and the refugees' narratives and representations of their own processes. In order to explore the multiple negotiations embedded in the integration experience, I have also emphasised the role of two notions in this framework: belonging and citizenship. Both categories allow review of the diversity of structural, social and emotional dimensions involved in integration, which this thesis aims to uncover. Favell (2001) has suggested that the use of the term 'integration' may have been stretched to consider a series of complex processes raised by both academics and policy makers. I argue that these different complexities should not be separated and that the concept must indeed be inclusive: if we do not allow the nuances of the refugee experience to inform 'idealised' goals of refugee policies, these experiences and processes will remain dissociated.

The Latin American debates around integration also suggest the need to conceptualise and understand integration as a situated experience, shaped by the context of the receiving country and the country (or multiple countries) of origin (or transit). This review also suggests that the notion of 'refugee integration' in Latin America is not a fixed set of propositions, but instead a challenge to normative understandings of the integration process. Drawing on the, mostly, empirical literature produced in the region in relation to refugee and migrant populations, I have suggested that the integration experience is marked by precarity, instability and uncertainty. All of which emphasise the need to understand integration and resettlement considering refugees' experiences of 'unsettlement'. Some main features of the notion of 'unsettlement' have been outlined, concept that I will continue developing through this thesis. Problematising refugee integration by situating the analysis in Latin America, emphasises the relevance of southern perspectives in refugee studies and in wider knowledge production (Connell 2013).

Drawing on different strands of the literature and considering the complexities of the concept, I discuss integration as a multidimensional, translocal, subjective and dynamic process by which refugees negotiate and claim their role in the host community while at the same time developing and/or transforming their sense of belonging. Integration occurs at different levels and stages, involving refugees, different members of the host society and supranational institutions. Integration is per se a process of power imbalances, where membership and self-identification are in constant tension. The main aim of the process of integration should not be limited to developing a sense of belonging in the receiving country, but also to becoming full participants in the economic, social and political activities of the new country (Hyndman 2011).



## CHAPTER 4

### Methodology

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#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach of the thesis and justifies the selection of methods and research strategies, exploring different levels of decision making during the research process (Crotty 1998). The chapter also reflects on the challenges faced during the development of the study. In Chapters 2 and 3, I have suggested that a multi-sited approach to exploring refugees' experiences embraces the multi-dimensionality and diversity of interacting factors affecting the resettlement process. Following this assertion, this chapter argues for an exploratory, interdisciplinary and interpretative approach to research that aims to capture the 'multiplicities' embedded in refugees' and other actors' understandings of resettlement. In order to approach the research aim and questions formulated in this study, I developed a qualitative-driven mixed-methods framework (Johnson et al. 2007; De Lisle 2011; Mason 2006). This made it possible to compare resettlement in both countries through the experiences of two refugee communities and the views of a wide range of actors involved in the process. This logic of comparison and dialogue helps to uncover wider meanings, contexts and lived experiences of resettlement in Latin American countries, by exploring resettlement from multiple scales and spaces (individual, local, national, international and transnational). This approach allows a deeper understanding than the current discussions about the resettlement programme and the refugees' experiences in the region.

This chapter is divided into six main sections. The first of these discusses the epistemic stance and methodological approach of the research (4.2 and 4.3). The chapter then moves on to discuss fieldwork in two research sites (Chile and Brazil) and to justify the use of three different methods of data collection: semi-structured interviews, participant observation and surveys (4.4). I also explore sampling and data analysis for the different methods in this section. In Section 4.5 I discuss the challenges of access, research positionality and ethical issues. The last two sections (4.5.2 and 4.6) review issues of validity, ending with a discussion about the strengths and limitations of the study.

## **4.2. Epistemic stance: constructing multi-dimensional experiences**

As stated in Chapter 1, this research aims to explore refugees' experiences of integration in Chile and Brazil in order to gain understanding of the lived realities of refugees and the implementation of the resettlement programme in high middle-income countries in Latin America. The refugees' experiences are dynamic, multidimensional and (multi)situated (Mason 2006), and when recounted as narratives, they are constructions of the social world influenced by other experiences, people, institutions and cultural contexts. These narratives are also produced in relation to "immediate and broader contexts" (Sigona 2014, p.370) and to "hegemonic discourses and practices" (Anthias 2002, p.511). As such, the research is focused on the complexity and diversity of perceptions and meanings that refugees and other actors construct about the resettlement experience. Therefore, the social reality that the study aims to explore is approached from a constructionist perspective.

The research supports the notion that "all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty 1998, p.42). As Creswell (2013, p.20) asserts, these meanings are "varied and multiple", demanding that the researcher goes beyond the exercise of narrowing meanings into a few categories. Instead, the researcher should aim to make sense of the meanings that others adopt about their social reality. The constructionist paradigm has been widely explored in the literature across different disciplines such as Human Geography (Jackson & Penrose 1994), Sociology (Berger & Lunckmann 1966), Psychology (Burr 2015; Gergen 1985) and Education (Denzin & Lincoln 2005). It is not the interest of this thesis to further explore the scope of this well established tradition within the social sciences. Instead, I aim to make clear my epistemic stance in order to draw on Mason's (2006) argument for a "qualitative driven" approach to mixed-methods.

I argue that to capture the multiple spaces and voices from which the refugee experience is built, a constructionist stance works as an appropriate base from which to include multiple methods to explore those understandings. There has been a long debate in

relation to epistemological approaches to mixed-methods (Morse 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2009; Bryman 2007; Greene & Caracelli 1997). However, I agree with Philip (1998, p.263) that “epistemology should not be viewed as fixed” and that instead of ruling methodological choices, it should inform them. In this sense, based on a clear constructionist view of the research process, this thesis uses mixed methods of data collection, instead of mixing methodologies.

While qualitative research is useful to explore the complexity and contradictions within lived-experiences, “the messiness of complexity demands multiple investigative tools” (De Lisle 2011). I therefore argue that the interpretative and inductive driver of this study can be enhanced by a mixed-methods approach in order to draw attention to the multiple social and spatial dimensions of the refugee experience<sup>51</sup>. The interest in making sense of refugees’ experiences of integration is related to my own story of migration, as I explore further in Section 4.5, but most specifically with my commitment to the understanding of the refugees’ lived processes<sup>52</sup>. A mixed-methods approach enables this by illustrating the everyday experiences of the resettlement process with textured accounts drawn from multiple voices, locations and scales. The next section details further the use of the proposed methodology.

### **4.3. Mixed-methods with a qualitative interpretative approach**

Philip (1998, p.264) asserts that mixed-methods research design may refer to a situation “whereby two or more methods are used to address a research question at the same stage in the research process, in the same place, and with the same research subjects”. As outlined above, this framework is adopted under the premise that the combined use of qualitative and quantitative methods, driven by a constructionist approach, facilitates diverse spaces of knowledge production, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of multidimensional lived experiences (See Creswell & Plano Clark 2011; See Johnson et al. 2007; Wheeldon & Åhlberg 2012; Meth & McClymont 2009). According to Johnson et al.

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<sup>51</sup> In her text about *Linkages Methodologies in Forced Migration*, Colson (2007, p.324) argues that the complexity of the refugee experience requires interdisciplinary resources and approaches that take into account “the many linkages and multiplex interactions that drive the whole system and transform it over time”.

<sup>52</sup> I have been writing about refugees in Latin America since 2004. First as a journalist and then as part of my academic work.

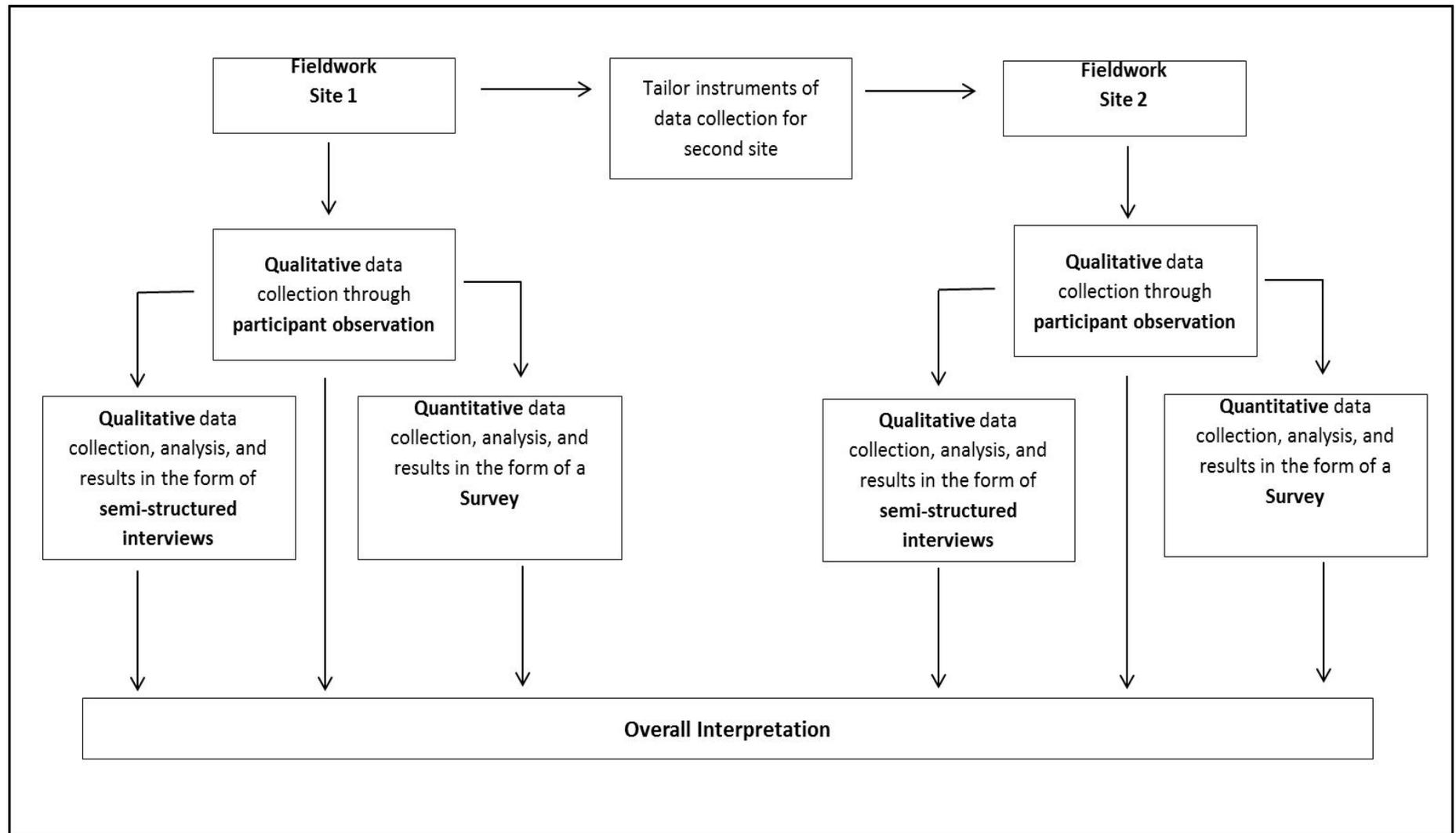
(2007, p.124) a potential definition of this “QUAL +quan” research<sup>53</sup> states that the design relies on a “qualitative, constructivist-poststructuralist-critical view of the research process”, while recognising that the “addition of quantitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects”.

This study used a multi-sited embedded design (Creswell & Plano Clark 2011, pp.90–95), understood as a combined collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data within a traditional qualitative or quantitative research design. This design enabled that the data sets obtained from the participant observation and the survey, provided support to the data obtained through the semi-structured interviews. In this multi-sited parallel design, qualitative and quantitative methods were conducted in an interactive and dynamic way in each study site (see Figure 4.1). The reason for this design is twofold. First, the methods chosen complement each other or facilitate spaces and contacts to conduct the other. Second, the research required an emergent design, in which some of the research strategies of data collection and analysis were modified during, and in between, fieldwork at each research site (Creswell 2013, p.47). The emergent design, characteristic of qualitative research, also responded to the challenges, limitations and opportunities that I encountered at each research site. In the case of this research, the quantitative data set, together with the data from the participant observation, provided a ‘supportive’ role to the narratives of the refugee experience allowing triangulation of findings and a more comprehensive understanding of the difference and inconsistencies of participants’ accounts. The analysis of each method was done separately, but driven by a qualitative perspective that embraces people’s testimonies, perceptions, views and experiences as “meaningful properties of social reality” (Mason 2002, 39). This type of design can also fit within what is called “mixed-methods ethnography” (Morse & Niehaus 2009), in which both forms of data collection are discussed within an ethnographic design. The data was then brought together through triangulation (see Section 4.4.4).

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<sup>53</sup> As explained in Johnson et al (2007) ‘Qual’ stands for qualitative research and ‘Quan’ for quantitative research, and the use of capital letters denotes the dominant approach.

Figure 4.1. Multi-sited embedded mixed-method design (adapted from Hesse-Biber 2010).



Despite ongoing development, a mixed-method approach has become common in recent years and has developed into “a distinctive research approach in its own right” (Creswell 2003). This methodological practice has been used already, both in Human Geography (Philip 1998; Smith 1984; Chapman & Shucksmith 1996; Sporton 1999; England 1993; Winchester 1999) and Refugee Studies (Weine et al. 2005; Landau & Roever 2004; Boateng 2009; Sulaiman-Hill & Thompson 2011), among other relevant disciplines.

The discussion about the epistemic approaches behind mixed-methods and the “compatibility” between qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection has been extensively discussed in the literature about mixed-methods (Fielding & Schreier 2001; Morse 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2009; Creswell 2011; Bryman 2007). In general, the practice of mixed-methods has adopted a more positivist orientation where the dominant component is quantitative and the qualitative data is employed to illustrate quantitative results (Bryman 2007; Hesse-Biber 2010; Creswell & Plano Clark 2011). Some dissident voices have emerged arguing against this “methodological orthodoxy” (Hesse-Biber 2010, p.455) by centring qualitative approaches within mixed-methods practice (see also Morse & Cheek 2014). Mason (2006, pp.13-16), for instance, has argued strongly for the benefits of this approach, citing three main reasons: 1. mixing methods offers potential to explore new dimensions of experience in social life; 2. this approach can enhance our capacity for theorising beyond macro and micro scales; 3. mixing methods can enhance and extend the logic of qualitative explanation. Mason based the last reason on two ideas that are key to this study: a qualitative logic of comparison and the relevance of context. The former aims to compare (whether situations, cases or contexts) using a qualitative logic that seeks to understand the different dynamics and particularities of each case. This can then establish comparisons during the analysis, instead of using standardised measures (Ibid 2006, p.16). The latter point emphasises the situatedness of social experience and contextual understandings, which this thesis aims to highlight by including the experiences of individual members of two refugee groups resettled in two countries.

Hesse-Biber (2010) contributed to this discussion by reviewing several case study examples of this type of research in order to identify its main contributions. Some of the benefits of, and reasons to use, this approach included: to increase representativeness, to locate target

populations, to enhance validity and reliability of research findings, to address inconsistent results, to triangulate findings, to enhance understanding of the research findings and to advocate for social transformation. While I agree with these points, they focus more on the justification of the use of quantitative methods within qualitative research, instead of highlighting, as Mason does, the value of a qualitative driven mixed-methods practice. Mason argues for a qualitative driven mixed-methods practice that is reflexive, creative and flexible, and that recognises the validity of more than one method in order to celebrate richness, depth, nuance and complexity in data and understanding (Mason 2006, pp.21–22). Through my research I argue that a qualitative driven approach to mixed-methods offers vast potential to generate new ways to explore the complexities of the refugee experience. In addition, I claim that this methodological approach allows for the critical review of the implementation of these different methods in the context of a vulnerable population that demands great reflexivity in the research process.

Table 4.1 summarises the design of this approach and details the methods implemented in relation to the research questions, the scales, sites and units of analysis. Each research method and the fieldwork experience are explored in the next section.

**Table 4.1. Research Design**

Research design: Qualitative-Driven Mixed-Methods Framework						
<p><b>Research Aim:</b> This thesis aims to explore how resettled refugees from different origins (Colombian and Palestinian) experience integration in Chile and Brazil, in order to understand the extent and ways in which third country resettlement is lived and implemented in Latin America.</p> <p><b>Research Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RQ1 What are the main dimensions influencing resettled refugees’ integration in Chile and Brazil?</li> <li>▪ RQ2 How do Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees negotiate the emotional dimensions of resettlement and to what extent do they develop a sense of belonging in the resettlement country?</li> <li>▪ RQ3. What are the relationships and tensions among the different actors involved in the resettlement programme in each country? How do these relationships influence the resettlement experience?</li> <li>▪ RQ4. How do practices and social policies in relation to resettlement shape the experiences of refugees’ citizenship?</li> </ul>						
			<p><b>Scales and units of analysis:</b> Two countries – Two communities – Different institutions - Individuals</p>			
Method	Aim	Country	Colombian	Palestinian	Other Actors*	Data Source
<b>Participant Observation</b>	To gain understanding of and access to diverse actors To identify location of actors To generate multidimensional data Access to secondary sources	Chile and Brazil	X	X	X	Implementing Agencies: AREVI in Chile ASAV in Brazil
<b>Survey</b>	To obtain refugees demographic characteristics Mapping participants To gather perceptions		X	X		N= 86 total sample of resettled refugees (Between both communities in both countries).
<b>Semi-structured Interviews</b>	To enhance meanings and understanding through: - Participants’ perceptions, views, interpretations, and experiences. - Contextual knowledge - (Multi)situated experiences - Complex realities		X	X	X	44 refugees purposively selected. 36 other actors among Governments officers, UNHCR officers, NGOs staff members, Social organisations, policy makers, religious leaders, etc.
<p>X: makes reference to the participants that each method engaged. *Other actors include UNHCR officers, government officers, NGOs staff, religious leaders, among others.</p>						

#### **4.4. Research design and methods of data collection**

In the following subsections I explain further the research decisions I made. First, I detail the characteristics of each fieldwork phase, and then I discuss the use of the three methods of data collection and the issues and strategies of access and sampling in relation to specific methods. Data collection took place in Chile and Brazil during two extended visits. The first period of fieldwork was carried out in Chile, during December 2012 and April 2013. The second, in Brazil, started in October 2013 and lasted until March 2014. In each country I visited different places within different cities, demonstrating the multi-local nature of the research. The two identified macro research sites, Chile and Brazil, were initially acknowledged as the two main case studies. In total I visited 15 different cities (detailed below) and within these, I conducted research in spaces that varied from the participants' homes, gardens, and workplaces to local government and NGO offices, universities and international organisation headquarters. The multi-sited fieldwork, reinforced the translocality of refugees resettlement experience itself, which developed not only transnationally, but also in different localities within and across national borders (Brickell & Datta 2011b). Within the research process, this translocality manifested itself as different scales of inquiry (supranational, regional, national, institutional, local and individual) exposing a complex matrix of dimensions that needed to be considered. This multiplicity of spaces, actors, perspectives and dimensions necessitated the use of a mixed-methods approach in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the refugees' resettlement experiences (Greene et al. 2005).

Besides visiting 15 different cities, research in both countries differed considerably in terms of access and duration of stay. The geography and geo-political organisation of each country, as well as the institutional dynamics and refugees' distribution in Chile and Brazil were some of the factors that affected these differences. Despite the changes to research design I made in the field, and that I discuss below, I applied a similar research strategy in both countries in relation to the methods implemented. During the entire research process, I was the sole investigator who interacted with all the participants.

## Fieldwork in Chile

The fieldwork in Chile followed a previous visit to Santiago in December 2011, when I travelled for a week and met with two members of the implementing agency and with one representative of the UNHCR in Santiago. This visit allowed me to map the field and identify relevant contacts. I started with the fieldwork in Chile due to my close knowledge of the local context and to the existence of previous contacts<sup>54</sup>. The first visit facilitated the negotiation of the participant observation that I carried out in the implementing partner of the UNHCR in Chile at that time, the Refugee Area of Vicaría de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores (AREVI). In Chile, data collection took place in two cities: Santiago and San Felipe (see Figure 4.2). Santiago is the capital of the country and where the central government is located, together with the headquarters of the UNHCR in Chile and AREVI (the implementing agency). Also, most of the resettled refugees arrive and remain in Santiago. San Felipe is located 88 kilometres north of Santiago and was one of the cities chosen by the authorities to resettle Palestinian refugees. After the arrival of the Palestinian refugees, some Colombian refugees were also resettled in that city.

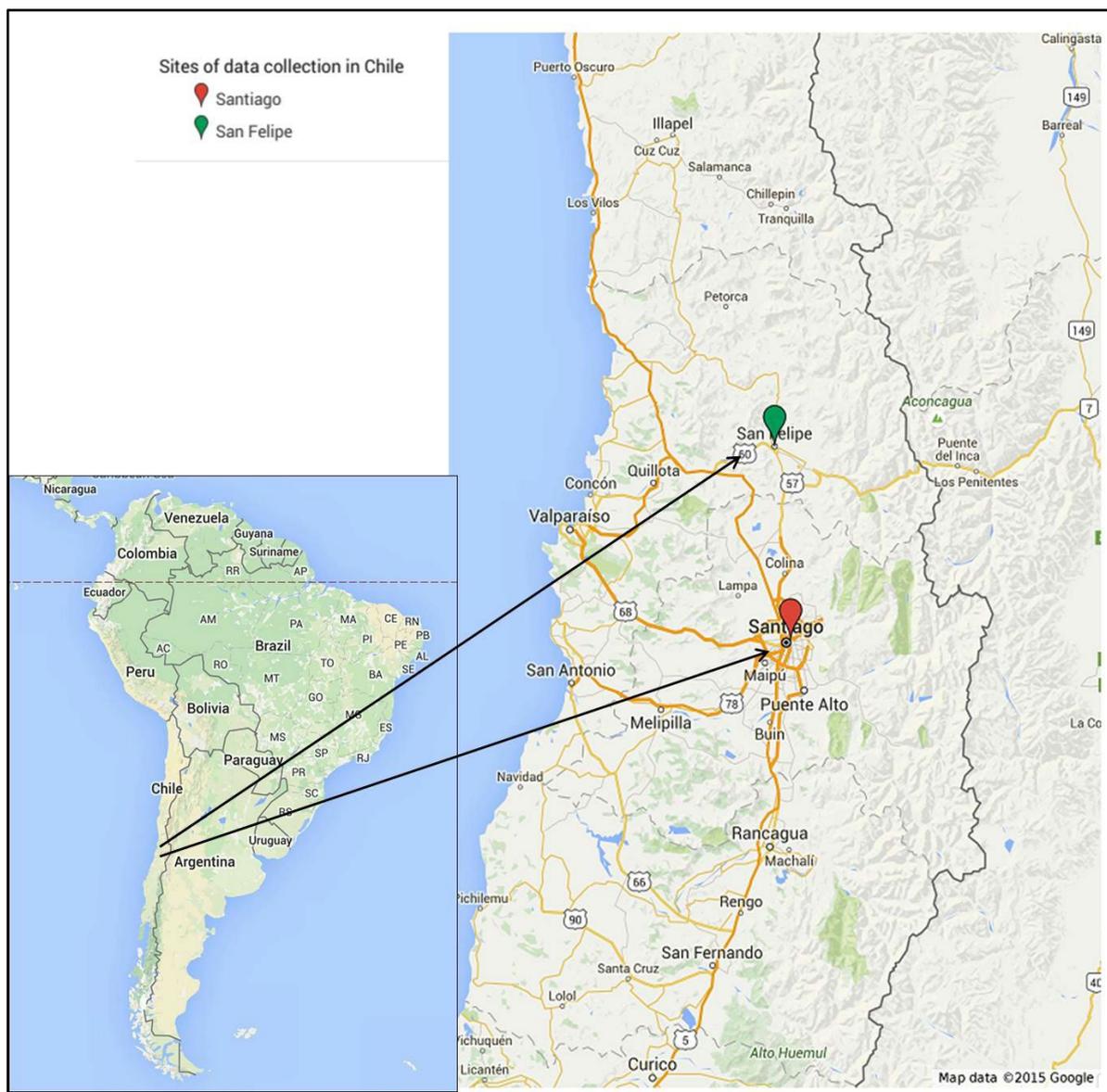
During this fieldwork, 38 interviews were conducted with refugees (N= 23), governmental officers (N= 2), members of the implementing agency (N= 5), UNHCR representative (N=1), and other actors involved in the programme (N= 7)<sup>55</sup>. In addition, I conducted 57 surveys, 19 with Palestinian refugees and 38 with Colombian refugees, and conducted participant observation in AREVI.

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<sup>54</sup> These contacts were established in the Vicaría and in the Refugee Area of the Ministry of Interior when I interviewed some of its staff members for two newspaper articles that I wrote in relation to refugees in Chile and the South Cone (Vera Espinoza 2006; Vera Espinoza 2010).

<sup>55</sup> These interviews included a representative of the Organization of Colombian Refugees, two former staff members of the Vicaría, a CEPAL migration expert, a high ranked member of the local Mosque, the coordinator of an University mental health programme and the coordinator of an University juridical clinic that supports migrants and refugees (the last two have been working in partnership with one or more of the main institutions involved in resettlement). A full list of participants is provided in Appendix III.

Figure 4.2. Sites of data collection in Chile



Source: Google Maps 2015

### Fieldwork in Brazil

This second period of fieldwork was carried out after five months back in the UK following the first trip. During that time I transcribed some of the interviews with refugees in Chile and carried out an initial phase of coding on the interviews and preliminary analysis of the surveys. This allowed me to identify some primary categories, but also to reflect on the research process and to better plan the fieldwork in Brazil. This was especially important as I knew that distance, language barriers and my limited knowledge of the local context would be some of the main challenges. Due to the geographical distribution of the

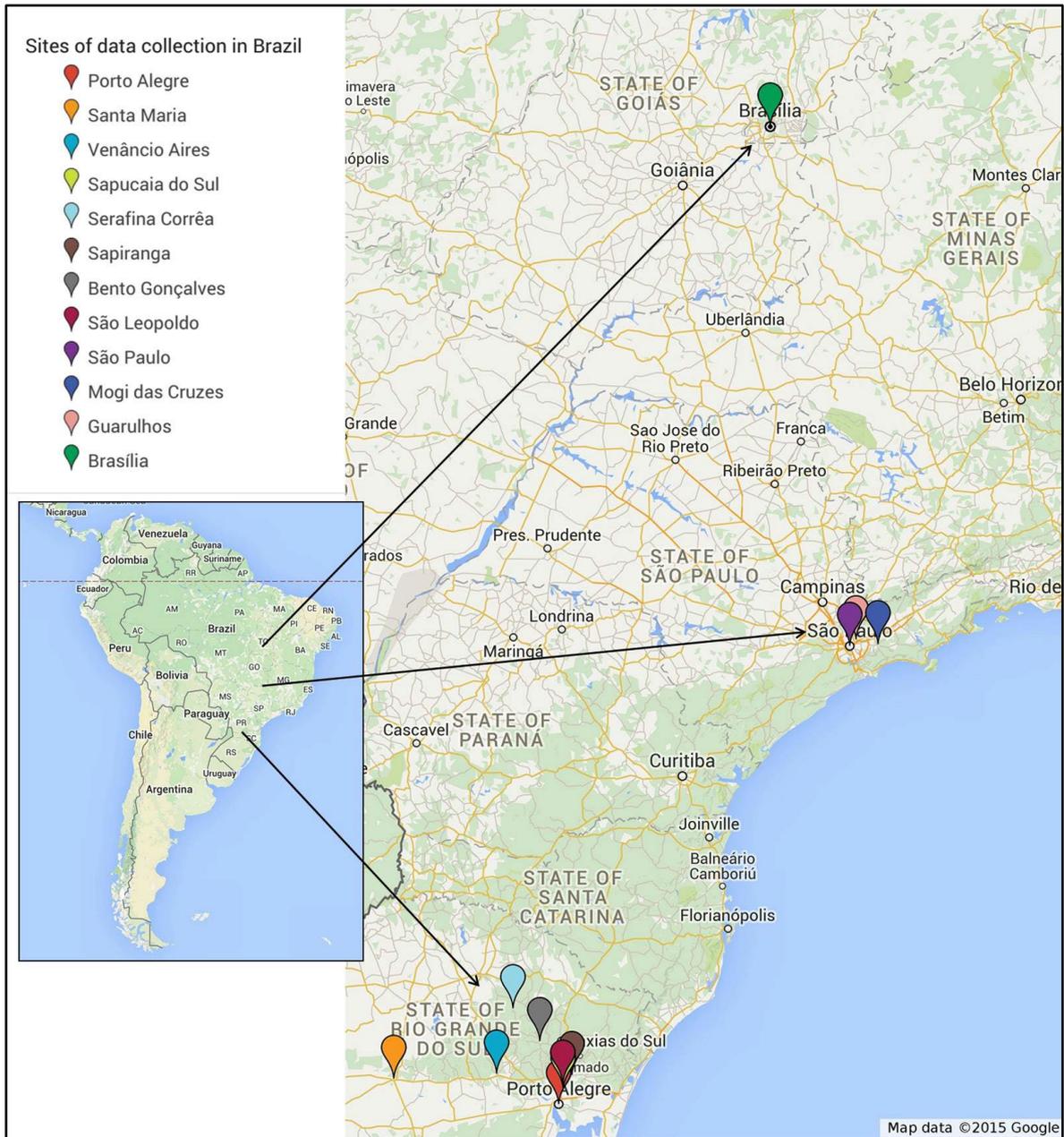
resettled refugee population in Brazil and the dispersal of other actors involved in resettlement, I conducted research in 12 different cities in three states – Rio Grande do Sul, São Paulo and Federal District (see Figure 4.3)

The spread and distribution of actors meant that I had to divide my fieldwork into three stages given the time and funding available to me. During the first three months I stayed in Porto Alegre, which is the capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, located 2,113 Kilometres south of Brasilia, Brazil's capital. Porto Alegre also hosts the area's implementing partner of the UNHCR, Associação Antonio Vieira (ASAV). During the first month I carried out a participant observation in ASAV and visited refugees in seven cities of the region where resettled refugees have been placed. The second stage involved three weeks in Brasilia: the main government offices, the UNHCR headquarters and other organisations working with refugees are all in the capital. The last stage of this fieldwork involved six weeks in São Paulo, the most populous city in Brazil, located 1,008 km south of Brasilia. From São Paulo I travelled to two nearby cities, one where Colombian and Palestinian refugees have been resettled (Mogi das Cruzes) and one where the other implementing partner for resettlement in that region was based (Guarulhos). During the fieldwork in Brazil, 45 interviews were conducted with refugees (N=21), governmental officers and public servants (N=4), members of the implementing agencies (N=6), UNHCR representatives (N=2), former members of the resettlement programme (N=3) and other actors involved directly or indirectly with the programme (N=9)<sup>56</sup>. In addition, I conducted 28 surveys, 9 with Palestinian refugees and 20 with Colombian refugees, and participant observation in ASAV. In the following sections I explain the decision to conduct three methods of data collection at each site.

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<sup>56</sup> These interviews included a representative of the local mosque in Mogi das Cruzes, the Spiritual Leader of the same Mosque, a group of psychologists working sporadically with refugees in Rio Grande do Sul and members of different municipalities that have been involved in the programme. A full list of participants is provided in Appendix III.

**Figure 4.3. Sites of data collection in Brazil**



Source: Google maps 2015

#### 4.4.1. Participant observation

In both research sites I conducted participant observation in the offices of two implementing partners of the UNHCR. Implementing partners are NGOs or similar institutions to whom the UNHCR provides financial support to perform specific services<sup>57</sup> to benefit refugees (UN-NGLS 2009; NGO Liason Unit UNHCR 2004). These organisations

<sup>57</sup> The services provided by the implementing partners include: delivering the UNHCR subsidies, providing access to different institutions, languages classes, documentation, etc. The delivery of these services is discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

are in direct contact with the refugee population, provide them with subsidy money and implement the integration strategy developed in the resettlement programme. In Chile, I spent a month in AREVI, and in Brazil a similar time with ASAV in Porto Alegre. In both places I recorded my reflections in a field diary, with field notes taken either in situ or retrospectively but in close proximity to the events depending on the situation (Emerson et al. 2001, p.353). In these notes I recorded a detailed and descriptive account of everyday activities and information gained. I also recorded my feelings, moods and experiences, as suggested by Dewalt et al (1998, p.270) and Coffey (2006, p.216). All the notes of the field diary were compiled in a single file per country and uploaded to NVivo 10 (see Section 4.4.4). During the period of the participant observation, as in the rest of the fieldwork, I also took photos of some of the places I visited and gathered secondary data when available.

Participant observation has a long tradition as a method of data collection and it has been broadly discussed as a way in which the researcher immerses themselves in a research setting in order to “experience and observe at first hand a range of dimensions in and of that setting” (Mason 2002, p.84). These dimensions may include interactions, social actions, relationships and events, as well as other spatial and temporal aspects. In order to gain the understanding of specific communities or people, the researcher will spend time “being, living or working” with them (Laurier 2010, p.116), placing the researcher within the “everyday life-world” (Kitchin & Tate 2000). Most authors agree that participant observation is a “relatively unstructured manner” of collecting data in a particular setting in which the researcher observes and/or takes part “in the common and uncommon activities” of the people being studied (Dewalt et al. 1998, p.260). Participant observation can also be considered a “strategic method” (Bernard 2006, p.343) that places the researcher in a valuable position where “the action is”. This idea informed the design of the research and the use of participant information as part of this study was twofold. On the one hand, doing participant observation in two implementing agencies allowed me to gain first-hand insight into context, relationships and information produced in both NGOs. In this sense, one of the main strength of this method is that it allows the researcher to see directly what people *do* instead of only relying in what they *say they do* (Teddlie & Tashakkori 2009, 239; see also Kawulich 2005). On the other hand, the use of participant observation was intended as a strategic platform from which to understand the different

scales and actors involved in resettlement, and also to access those people and institutions.

**Box 4.1. Information and power**

*“Today I interviewed a Colombian couple. We met in the food court of a shopping centre. They stressed during the entire interview their security concerns. They didn’t feel safe anymore in the resettlement country due to the increase of the Colombian population and they thought that the organisation was not prepared to handle their safety concerns. In this sense, the husband told me: ‘I don’t have any problem with you now that I know you, but don’t you think it is a questionable practice that the organisation gave you our contact details without letting us know? What if the person that asks doesn’t have good intentions?’ And then it hit me, he was totally right. The NGO is a gatekeeper with such control over them that it doesn’t really consider the refugees’ decision over their own information. What about me? Am I helping to reproduce these dynamics of power?”*

(Field Journal, April 2013)

The use of participant observation as a means of accessing interviewees was rather problematic, since it assumed that AREVI and ASAV would provide access on behalf of other participants, such as other organisations and refugees, that may not know about the research otherwise (O’Reilly 2009). However, this has been a common approach in refugee studies, since it has been recognised that some organisations control “access to refugees”, demonstrating the power relationship within the refugee system. Harrell-Bond & Voutira (2007) argue that an “underlying fear of bad publicity” would be one of the main motivations why the UNHCR and NGOs would be ambivalent in allowing research with refugee communities, imposing control through different bureaucratic structures (see Box 4.1.).

I was reflexive about the reproduction of power dynamics by approaching the organisations first (see Section 4.5). However, the organisations only provided the contacts and my approach to participants was always direct. In fact, I took extra care in informing refugees that, despite getting their contact through the organisations, I did not have an institutional commitment with them. Considering the tense relationship that some refugees have with the implementing partners, it would have been problematic if the participants associated me with the NGO team. At the same time, during the negotiation of my presence in both institutions I made clear my stance as researcher and the limitation that I would have to share information about the refugees with the organisations. My engagement with the everyday activities was different in each organisation, responding to the dynamics of each institution and to their bureaucratic and organisational structures. The negotiation for the participant observation carried out in AREVI, in Chile, was

facilitated by the visit I did some months before the fieldwork. All of the team members knew why I was there and what my research was about (Dewalt & Dewalt 2002), having received an information sheet about the study. At the same time, we agreed that I would collaborate in some of their activities so the organisation could also benefit from my presence. This meant that during the first week, I was able to participate in the annual evaluation day event that the Vicaría organised with resettled refugees. The activity aimed to create spaces for reflection, both collectively and based on individual experiences, in order to strengthen refugees' integration process and to promote the creation of their own strategies to navigate the difficulties faced in the host country. The activity gathered a total of 45 Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees who had arrived to Chile between 2008 and 2011. As I wrote in my field diary, this was a valuable activity in terms of contacts, data gathering and testing the survey:

Today's assessment event was a good experience. It gave me the opportunity to deliver the survey to 18 people. It took them 20 minutes to fill it in. With the Palestinians it was a bit more difficult. We had analysed and discussed the survey with the team in la Vicaría the previous day; that time they suggested that they would prefer it if I implemented the survey in Spanish only, but I also took the translation in Arabic and it was indeed extremely necessary. Although some of the Palestinian refugees speak Spanish, they struggle with reading.

(Field journal, December 2012)

As shown from the notes above, some of the research strategies changed during the course of the fieldwork. The need to implement the survey in Arabic was one of them. In Chile, I also participated in the evaluation of a programme of refugee scholarship and worked alongside the team filling in the evaluations requested by the UNHCR. I also managed to interview different staff members. Although the staff gave me access to all the documentation available, they did not allow me into their planning meetings. In the organisation in Brazil, my presence as researcher was negotiated with the coordinator and some members of the staff during my first visit. They also received the information sheet. In contrast to the Chilean organisation, ASAV staff welcomed me in most of the team meetings. In ASAV, they requested less of my involvement in their daily activities, but observation was facilitated by an open office space where the team was in constant communication. Despite the openness of this team, they were more reluctant to share written official and planning documents than the Chilean organisation.

In both study sites, my positionality was affected by my nationality, my language and research institution, factors that I explore in the subsection about access. In addition, a crucial factor was the particular moment that each office was experiencing. In Chile, at least three members of the team were leaving and the end of the programme was announced. This could have been a reason why the team was relaxed regarding access to information. In Brazil, on the other hand, the office was hiring two new team members and there was a proposal to open a new extra-regional programme in 2016. Therefore, access was controlled, but open at the same time. Being based in these institutions with different types of access gave me the opportunity to participate and observe many other situations of great value for the study. In Chile, for example, when the staff asked me to translate and check some information I got a better understanding of their reporting system to the UNHCR. In Brazil, on the other hand, I participated in some of the office's daily activities such as joining the team during the arrival of one of the resettled families and accompanying another family during the process of police registration. In both countries participant information allowed me to collect a great amount of data in relation to the main features of the programme and the dynamics between the refugees and the organisations implementing resettlement.

#### **4.4.2. Surveys**

The decision to conduct surveys as one of the methods of data collection derives from the multidimensional factors involved in the research aim and questions. The aim of this thesis, for instance, demanded a closer examination of resettled refugees' key demographic and social characteristics in order to identify how the integration process of refugees has been for each community in each country. In addition, RQ4 aimed to understand specific dynamics of access to services and social, economic and cultural rights. Surveys were conducted with Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees in both countries. Surveys with refugees and migrants are claimed to provide invaluable and rich information within the framework of mixed-methods research (Vigneswaran & Quirk 2013; Castles 2012). Yet, the implementation of surveys among mobile populations such as refugees has faced many methodological issues related to sample, design and language (Landau & Roever 2004; Alice Bloch 1999; Bloch 2007). Below I explore the design and implementation of the

survey, with an emphasis on the challenges encountered and the strategies adopted to deal with them.

The survey was divided into 10 sections, with a total of 73 closed questions (see survey in Appendix VIII). The questions were kept simple, defining technical terms clearly and avoiding jargon and double negative statements (Painter & Philo 2004). These questions asked socio-economic and demographic information together with a set of multiple choice and ranking questions to get refugees' characteristics, perceptions and opinions about their integration process. Specific questions covered topics such as housing, health, education, jobs, documentation, and relationships with the host community and with other actors of the programme. The questions were compiled in relation to the understanding of integration used in this thesis, different measurement models established in the literature, and information provided by informants. The range of responses to each question was based on a Likert scale (Robinson, 1998). Although I took care in adapting the survey to each country, modifying specific questions to the local context (currency of salaries and rent, names of organisations and local institutions), the aim of each question remained the same for both countries<sup>58</sup>.

The questionnaire was initially written in English and then it was translated into Spanish and Arabic using a "translation decentralizing procedure" (Bloch 2007, p.239). This process allowed me to standardise the instrument and to provide a critical examination of the different concepts across language and culture. The process of translation included two translators in each language in order to create a reliable instrument. I translated the first copy into Spanish and then requested a Spanish language teacher (native speaker) to do the same. Both copies were then compared and discussed. In the case of the Arabic version, the first translation was conducted by a linguistic PhD student and Arabic native speaker living in the UK. The revision of that version was performed by a Palestinian living in Chile. Both versions were also compared and discussed in order to check cultural biases.

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<sup>58</sup> It is worth noticing that the survey designed for this thesis was used as a reference for the research project 'Perspectivas Político-Jurídicas de Proteção dos Direitos Humanos dos imigrantes no Brasil' lead by Dr. Giuliana Redin at the Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, in Brazil (see [https://www.jurua.com.br/shop\\_item.asp?id=24233](https://www.jurua.com.br/shop_item.asp?id=24233)). I was also invited to talk more broadly about the process of data collection in November 2013.

Adjustments were also made after the pilot carried out in Chile with both Colombian and Palestinian refugees who participated in the evaluation day organised by AREVI.

**Figure 4.4. Participant completing the survey in Brazil.**



**Source: Author.**

### **Survey Sampling**

One of the main issues I faced while conducting the survey was sampling and reaching a number of participants that could give statistical significance to the results. When I was designing the project, my sampling strategy aimed to include 200 resettled Colombian and Palestinian Refugees in Chile and Brazil who arrived to the countries between 2005 and 2011 (50 from each group in each country), all of whom would be 18 years and older. The idea was to select participants through stratified random sampling, by identifying the subgroups and randomly selecting the units (McLafferty 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2009, p.172). Although the delimitation of the sample universe was clearly based on personal and geographical characteristics, classificatory criteria usually become problematic in the

context of mobile and marginal populations (Landau & Roever 2004, p.5). Accessibility, as in the case of this research, is often obstructed because refugees are constantly moving both geographically and administratively, “across formal and informal ‘bureaucratic’ regimes” (Voutira & Doná 2007, p.168).

For example, I found that NGOs and governments kept an estimate of the number of resettled refugees in each country organised by nationality. However, this information did not always specify how many were younger than 18 years old or how many of those refugees were no longer in the country. Although the information about age could have been available in the files of each resettled family, these were not always systematised. Finally, neither Chile nor Brazil had comprehensive and reliable contact information for resettled refugees. I found that refugees’ information is only updated during the time that the organisations are in direct contact with the refugees. This mostly happens during the first two years after arrival or when the organisation still provides a monthly financial subsidy. In both countries I tried to compile long lists of refugees with the information available from each NGO (see Section 4.5). However, random sampling would have not been possible among such small numbers of refugees with accessible contact information and I therefore did not have an accurate sampling frame from which to draw a random sample. In order to overcome this challenge, I decided to implement non-probability sampling strategies. Considering the debate around non-probability approaches in the literature on surveys with mobile populations and the generalisability limitations that this could impose on the study (Vigneswaran & Quirk 2013), the decision was not easy to take. However, I considered that the characteristics of my case studies, both in terms of the countries and the refugee populations, would have made it impossible to reach a larger random sample within the time frame and funding available for the project. At the same time, the data obtained with the smaller sample allowed me to triangulate results with the semi-structured interviews providing extra depth to the findings.

In both research sites I used a combination of two purposive sample strategies: quota sampling and snowballing sampling. As argued by Bloch (1999) and Parfitt (2005), in quota sampling the researcher finds respondents that fit into pre-specified categories that are considered to represent the survey population. However, since no equal number of participants was reached in each group, I used snowball sampling as well. I reduced the

bias inherent to this method by using multiple entry points as suggested by Sulaiman-Hill and Thompson (2011), choosing a wide range of people to provide contacts. Between both fieldwork periods, I conducted a total of 86 face to face surveys. Although I was there with the participants conducting the survey, I felt it was better that they self-administered the survey. By doing this, I aimed to reduce the interview-induced bias and the pressures they could have felt from answering questions related to the organisations involved in resettlement (McLafferty 2010, p.82).

### **Survey analysis: Descriptive analysis through frequencies**

The data obtained from the survey was tabulated in the field and then analysed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a software system that provides “a multifaceted means of working with and analysing numerical datasets” (McKendrick 2010, p.423). The data was addressed using a descriptive analysis, where the primary aim is to describe the context and demographic characteristic of the refugee population in the study, instead of seeking to explain why certain phenomena occur (Lewin 2005, p.125). First I carried out a frequency analysis that showed the number of occurrences of each response chosen by the participants. The information provided was useful to look at a general overview; however it did not offer differences by nationality or country of resettlement. Therefore, I conducted an exploratory data analysis using cross-tabulations (McKendrick 2010; Field 2009; Lewin 2005). This analysis allowed the comparison of resettled refugee groups in each country by demographic characteristics and perceptions of different services and policies. The surveys did not provide generalising results, since I accomplished a smaller sample than the one originally aimed. I also collected more surveys from participants in Chile than participants in Brazil, due to the difficulties caused by the wide distribution of the studied population within two large states and more than 20 different cities. Nonetheless, the instrument proved to be valuable in reaching vulnerable and ‘hidden’ populations, while also enabling access to refugees who were not comfortable talking about their experiences.

The implementation of the survey also revealed its limitations. While implementing the survey, it became apparent that the questionnaires alone were not able to embrace the complexity of the experiences of refugees’ integration. For example, I delivered the survey to a family composed of two adults and one teenager. In the section about

accommodation they answered that they were renting a place and provided the detail of how much they paid and how many people were living in the house (a total of 7). What the survey did not reveal was that three members of the family had been sharing the same bedroom and the same bed for over a year, creating issues within the family group (see Chapter 7). A similar situation of overcrowding was experienced by other refugees in both countries. As Valentine (2005, p.111) argues, the explanatory power of questionnaires can be limited. The implementation of the survey also revealed other characteristics of the two refugee groups in the study. I noticed that Palestinians in both countries were reluctant to disclose their salary or the amount they paid for housing in the survey. Although the survey was anonymous, they did not want to put that information on paper, even though they were willing to discuss money matters during the interview. Overall, survey data provided valuable descriptive information while also confirming the pivotal role of semi-structured interviews in order to accomplish meaningful answers to the research questions.

#### **4.4.3. Semi-structured interviews**

Undertaking interviews was a significant experience that provided a deeper understanding of the resettlement experience. More than that, it also opened up new spaces of reflexivity about the research process itself. The interviews aimed to explore participants' experiences, access and opportunities in the host country but also in other places where their lived-experiences developed. They also provided data about different actors' perceptions, emotions, expectations and actions (Longhurst 2010).

I carried out 80 semi-structured recorded interviews in total and many other informal interviews conducted during the participant observation. In the informal interviews, people would provide context, refer to other participants or simply share part of their experiences or knowledge. As stated above, the semi-structured interviews included resettled refugees, UNHCR officers, government officers, NGO staff and others people related to the resettlement programme or to the refugee communities (see details in Appendix III). I decided not to make a distinction between so called 'elite' interviews and the rest of the interviews, because I did not want to impose another layer of power upon the relationship between the different actors involved in resettlement. I recognise that each interviewee required a specific approach, but this is not because of the institutions

that they belong to, but rather because of the specificities of each individual and their context. At the same time, all the voices included in this study, independently of their role or status, contributed from their context and subjectivities to the reconstruction of knowledge about resettlement (Charmaz 2006). However, refugees' accounts were considered the main source of analysis and they were contrasted with the narratives of other 'informants' (the rest of the participants).

All the interviews were semi-structured. In terms of format, all the interviews considered some initial queries related to the research questions, covering specific topics depending of the participant (see Appendix IV). This interview guide, following Bryman's (2012, p.471) description of the method, was useful to ensure that all the relevant topics were covered. However, I did not always follow the proposed order and conversation was sometimes tailored to the experiences and positions of each participant. In this sense, the interview structure was flexible enough to allow unexpected themes to emerge and facilitate the purpose of producing meaningful data (Mason 2002, p.62). The interviews with resettled refugees were in-depth, covering different themes going through their entire experience of displacement. As Sánchez-Ayala (2012, p.123) points out, the idea behind this type of interview is to get the most possible information about their perceptions, life experiences and physical surroundings. We discussed their lives in their country of origin, the reasons why they fled, life and dynamics in the first country of asylum or refugee camp and the last displacement and experiences in the country of resettlement. With the rest of informants, the question guide started exploring their role and involvement in resettlement, diverging from that point into specific and emergent themes related with the design and implementation of the resettlement programmes in each country. At the end of each interview I would ask if there was anything else the participant wanted to add or if they felt there was any question missing. This provided a space of self-reflection about the interview process but also space to emphasise their concerns. In the case of refugees, this last question also provoked interesting considerations about what the questions meant to them or how they viewed their own displacement story. For the informants this question was the opportunity to add information related to their own interest and agenda.

Interviews with resettled refugees in each site varied between 40 and 120 minutes with an average of 60 minutes. Interviews with other actors varied from 40 to 60 minutes. All the

interviews were audio-recorded after approval to record was given and two copies of the consent form were signed (see Appendix VII). In addition, I took notes after conducting the interviews, including reflections about the initial data obtained. The interviews were conducted in Spanish, Portuguese or English, depending on the language with which the participant felt more comfortable<sup>59</sup>, and they were transcribed and analysed in the language in which the interview was undertaken. In the context of cross-cultural research exploring transnational experiences, language played a crucial role in how participants created meaning<sup>60</sup>. By analysing the interviews in the language in which we communicated, I wanted to capture both how participants expressed themselves and how they constructed experiences through language. For instance, the adoption of Portuguese words during an interview in Spanish provided insights about how Colombians learned the language, but also how language permeated their translocal experience (see Chapter 6). It must be noted that I translated into English specific quotes that I used throughout this thesis as part of my argumentation after analysis.

Most of the interviews with the refugees were conducted in their family homes. A few of the interviews were also conducted in participants' workplace or in other spaces such as cafes or food courts. The interviews with the other participants were mostly conducted in their professional settings including government offices, NGOs and other organisations' premises, municipalities' buildings, and some in public spaces such as cafes. Place and territory have a pivotal role in the refugee experience (Sánchez-Ayala 2012), and having access to some of the private and public spaces where the resettlement experience takes place was also an opportunity of additional observation. Ten of the interviews were conducted with more than one person present at the same time (i.e. spouses or other family members), either by request of the participants or as a result of specific circumstances, such as when one of the participants' husband was at home on sick leave. In some of these cases, participants tended to focus on their collective experience as family, which provided interesting reflections about the nuances of the integration process

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<sup>59</sup> In Chile the official language is Spanish and in Brazil, Portuguese. With Colombian refugees I always communicated in Spanish. With Palestinian refugees I communicated either in Spanish or Portuguese depending on their host country. Some participants, refugees or members of the programme preferred to do the interview in English.

<sup>60</sup> Krzywoszynska (2015) explores extensively the role of language and translation in cross-cultural research and different spheres of meaning.

within the household. However, in all the interviews I made sure to also interrogate and uncover participants' individual experiences and perceptions.

### **Sampling Strategy**

The interviews were based on purposive sampling. For the interviews, my aim was to select an illustrative sample rather than a representative one (Valentine 2005, p.112; Arber 2001). As Bryman (2012, p.418) states, this non-probability form of sampling is conducted following criteria for the selection of participants that will enable the research questions to be answered. As I have suggested in this chapter, one of the main premises of this research is to capture different experiences that can illustrate the multiple spaces and factors that influence the resettlement process. In this sense, the aim was not to implement a quota system, but instead to gather an adequate range of participants encompassing multiple perspectives. The latter contributed to the answering of the research questions, but also to the enhancement of the credibility of the research (Kvale & Brinkmann 2008; Baxter & Eyles 1997). Within the context of the purposive sample, I used two main recruitment strategies to contact participants: gatekeepers and snowballing. Reflections about these two approaches are explored in Section 4.5, since they are also related to issues of positionality and access.

Drawing from the research aims and questions, the criteria of participant selection was defined by my knowledge of the area and the aim to capture the diversity of actors involved in resettlement. Besides the resettled refugees, I identified three main groups of people in each country that I needed it to include as part of the group of informants: the governments, the UNHCR and the NGOs. In the field, I encountered another layer of actors involved: religious leaders, municipality officers and civil society organisations. In this sense, most of the participants considered to be actors within the resettlement programme are individuals who are part of specific institutional and organisational spheres and who accomplish different roles within the structural resettlement experience.

In the case of resettled refugees, in particular, the aim was to accomplish diversity in the specialist knowledge that refugees have about their own experiences. Therefore, I was more concerned in accessing a wide range of individual perceptions rather than achieving a

specific number of participants (see Sánchez-Ayala 2012, p.128). Some scholars have suggested that the label of 'refugees' is problematic in terms of institutionalising a status (Zetter 1991) and homogenising a social group under a bureaucratic category (Colson 2007). In an attempt to avoid the de-naturalisation of the refugee persona, I aimed to consider refugees' different identities in relation to gender, age, place of origin and place of resettlement (see list of participants Appendix III). The urban characteristic of this population, revealed while I was conducting the surveys, became a central issue during sampling. Discrimination and segregation, together with the agency of Colombian and Palestinian refugees to look for better opportunities, are some of the reasons why most refugees are a hyper-mobile population within cities and even within the countries of resettlement. In this context, recruiting participants was a real challenge. In Chile, for example, I found it difficult to locate participants in a city where I had lived for more than 8 years. In Brazil, the distance and the widespread distribution of the population were two immediate barriers I overcame by dividing that fieldwork into three stages as discussed earlier.

Another challenge, that I had anticipated prior to entering the field, was the possibility of research fatigue (see Clark 2008) among the Palestinian communities. This fatigue emerged at an early stage during fieldwork in the first research site. Some Palestinian refugees, particularly the ones that spoke better Spanish or the first ones who had managed to get jobs, were interviewed repeatedly by the local and international press, by the UNHCR and by local researchers. Refugees who did not want to participate in the research were extremely polite but firm in their decision. During the research process I met a Palestinian lady that I had interviewed as part of a newspaper article back in 2010. I realised that it was her, when I went to her house to interview her son. When I asked if she also wanted to be part of the study, she said no. She added: "To be honest, I am just tired of talking about my life. I just want to live. I don't want to remember anymore". Like her, at least four Palestinians in Chile and another three in Brazil declined my invitation to be part of the study, citing their "tiredness" from being questioned. In addition, they did not see any long-term benefit or feedback from the projects in which they previously have participated (see discussion in Hugman et al. 2011). This 'research fatigue' among Palestinian refugees provided useful insights about how the resettlement programmes managed access to refugees in both countries, the extractive nature of research and the

different interest (and focus) that Colombian refugees received in the resettlement countries. Other ethical issues related with access participants are explored in Section 4.5.

#### **4.4.4. Making sense: Data analysis and interpretation of findings.**

The indexing and retrieval of data obtained from interview transcripts was conducted using NVivo 10, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). The programme facilitated the segmentation of a large data set and supported rapid and comprehensive searching, assisting the management of the data (Basit 2003; Mason 2002). NVivo 10 has different features useful for ‘interrogating the text’ such as cross-tabs and word searcher. The use of software was not a substitute for analysis, but rather an instrument to facilitate the process of making sense of the data (see Welsh 2002; Hutchison et al. 2010; Bazeley 2013; Basit 2003).

The analysis of the qualitative data was a lengthy process that took me through different stages. During this period I took (non-structured and non-periodic) notes about the process and the decision making, following Bazeley and Jackson’s recommendation of creating a journal<sup>61</sup> (2013, pp.30–31). Both the use of NVivo 10 and the research memos were essential to keeping track and organising the process of making sense of large and messy amounts of data. I decided to use thematic analysis as a “sense-making approach” (Mills et al. 2010), since it would allow me to explore the data, combining the theoretical approach to refugee integration with the results and the richness of the multiple sites and actors that contextualise this multi-sited study. Thematic Analysis involves a rigorous “reading and re-reading of the data” (Rice & Ezzy 1999) in order to identify themes that emerged and were grounded in the data (Guest et al. 2012; Mills et al. 2010).

Firstly, all the interviews were imported into NVivo10 and organised by country (Chile and Brazil) and by group of reference (Palestinian Refugee, Colombian refugees, and informants: UNHCR officers, government officers, NGO staff and other relevant actors). The analysis was then done through successive stages of reading and coding of each transcript. According to Charmaz (2006, p.3), coding means attaching “labels” to segments

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<sup>61</sup> My approach was less structured than the one suggested by the authors. My note taking was not a periodic exercise but an eventful one that responded to relevant changes, discoveries or questions that emerged during coding.

of the data that indicate what that segment is about. This “distils data”, helping to sort them and make comparisons with other segments of the data. In practice, coding involves highlighting individual words, phrases or sections of the transcript with codes (labels) with different degrees of abstraction from participants' own words (Jackson 2001). Coding the data involved an iterative process between inductive (open and line by line) coding, in order to keep proximity with the data (Charmaz 2006), and more analytical codes related to the conceptual discussions (integration, citizenship, belonging, politics of resettlement) on which the research is based.

Given the main focus of this study, I started with an initial round of inductive coding with the refugees’ interviews. This process considered specific words used by the participants, besides actions, situations and feelings. During this first stage of coding, I also wrote some analytical notes and developed some higher-level nodes<sup>62</sup>. In doing this, I shared Jackson’s (2001) assertion that it is difficult to approach the data without simultaneously reflecting on the theoretical ideas that emerged before and during the analysis. At the same time, many analytical concepts that guided this study arose from the data itself. Frequently during the coding process, paragraphs included more than one node and these sometimes overlapped. Each code had a name and a definition that were changing during the process, since nodes were constantly revised for redundancies. Some of them were re-organized under other nodes. The initial codebook ended with 168 nodes (see image 4.5).

**Figure 4.5. Excerpt image of 1<sup>st</sup> stage codebook from NVivo10.**

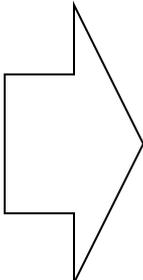
Name	Source / Referen	Description
Refugees Agency	7 34	Participants accounts of their individual or collective actions, practices and attempts to lead their own process of resettlement.
Safety	7 26	These node makes reference to the participants notion of safety in the resettlement host country.
Citizenship	8 13	These account tell us about situations related with formal citizen status but also other types of citizenship construction.
Job situation	8 12	These paragraphs make reference to people's jobs situation. The detail will provide type of job specifications and quality of job conditions.
Resettlement optio	8 9	This text make reference to the moment that resettlement appears as an option.
Expectations	9 21	Text coded to topics around the expectations they rearding the host cuntry.
Housing	9 57	Participants reference to their problems finding a house to rent, to the economic situation that didn't allow them to rent a house, or any problem related to the condition and si
Identity	9 19	Notions of identity, either related with personal feelings, perceptions, need of nation, etc.
Networks	9 22	Reference made by participants' in relation to the networks that they have developed in the host country and the ones that they have left either at the Country of Origin or at t
Religion	12 51	The node refers to the role of religion in resettled refugee's lives in different ways, whether as a strategy for integration, a support net, or as a space of practice and expressio
Family	13 45	These selected paragraphs are related with family issues, concerns or other aspects related
Persecution and th	13 66	Any evidence of the reasons that made the participant to leave their country originally.
Language	14 24	Participants' reference to the importance of knowing the local language in their daily life, the difficulties of learning a new language and what facilitates or troubles the learnin
Difference	18 30	These peragraphs make reference to the perceived differences between the resettled refugees and the host society. They can embrace a wide range of aspects as cultural di

<sup>62</sup> In NVivo10 coding is stored in nodes. A node is made for each topic or concept coded from the data. In the thesis, I used the term nodes and codes interchangeably to refer to the ‘labels’ derived from coding.

The second stage involved a process of data reduction (Guest et al. 2012), with the intention to organise and group the data to draw out conclusions. Charmaz (2006) identifies this process as 'axial coding', in reference to the process by which the researcher starts to delineate relationships by grouping codes into categories that bring the data "back together" (see also Corbin & Strauss 1990). At this stage, I reviewed the codes, highlighting similarities and differences. I then started to conglomerate codes into thematic categories that depicted the data and framed the analysis. I identified these categories by putting nodes in clusters relating to certain categories, through a process of noticing pattern, co-occurrences and frequencies (Mills et al. 2010; Schweitzer & Steel 2008). These categories were the base of emergent themes that would provide a reading of participants' views and experiences. Each theme was discussed in detail and related to the theoretical concepts of refugee integration and belonging. I kept comparing data against codes and categories, while I was recording some interpretative insights on the research memos. Through this inductive analysis, I started to develop what Mills et al (2010) describe as a "complex exploratory and descriptive" analysis grounded in the multi-cases used (two communities, two countries) in the research.

Eight prominent themes (clusters of categories and nodes) were identified as outcomes of the second stage of analysis: citizenship, sense of belonging, uprootedness, mistrust, power relationships, refugee agency, translocality and uncertainty. Each of these themes was individually analysed through memo writing and an 'initial findings report' that allowed me to develop theoretical insights, and to organise findings by relating themes to research questions (see Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2. Main themes emerging from the analysis**

<b>Research Aim</b>	This thesis aims to explore how resettled refugees from different origins (Colombian and Palestinian) experience 'integration' in Chile and Brazil.			
<b>Research Questions</b>	RQ1. What are the main dimensions influencing resettled refugees' 'integration' in Chile and Brazil?	RQ2. How do Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees negotiate the emotional dimensions of resettlement and to what extent do they develop a sense of belonging at the resettlement country?	RQ3. What are the relationships and tensions among the different actors involved in the resettlement programme in each country? How do these relationships influence the resettlement experience?	RQ4. How do practices and social policies in relation to resettlement shape the experiences of refugees' citizenship?
<b>Themes</b>	Sense of Belonging Citizenship Uprootedness Power relationships Refugee Agency Mistrust Translocality Uncertainty	Sense of Belonging Translocality Uprootedness	Expectations Mistrust Power relationships Uncertainty	Citizenship Politics of Access Refuge Agency Instability
<b>Categories</b>		Language, Friends, Networks and Social Capital, Achievements, Religion and faith, Keeping own traditions, Family division, Difference	Expectations Unfulfilled promises, Frustration, "They took us, brought us and abandon us", "Refugee mentality", Uncertainty.	Agency, Rights knowledge and claims, Residency and Naturalisation, Refugees' Organisation.
		Displacement, Journey, Threat, Persecution, Family Division, Being a foreigner.	Power and bureaucracy, Aspirations and Self-Sufficiency, Authority and Humanitarianism	Programme design, Self-Sufficient Approach (Neoliberal integration), Calculated solidarity, Paradoxes in Resettlement.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the embedded multi-sited research design enabled simultaneous application of the methods of data collection, but independent analysis of the data. Therefore, data obtained from the surveys, participant observation and interviews was analysed separately and then brought together through triangulation. The results of the survey were used to enhance and provide context and depth to the main themes that emerged from the qualitative analysis. On the other hand, the data that

emerged from the participant observation was used to contrast and compare participants' narratives – which emerged from the interviews – with the dynamics, practices and relationships I observed in the field. Triangulation has been recognised as a useful way to compare and contrast data gathered through different methods and to validate research findings (see Johnson et al. 2007; Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Somekh & Lewin 2005; Jick 1979; Denzin 1978). The data collected in this research through different techniques and from different perspectives was useful to provide some complementary findings. Nonetheless, these different data sources also shed light on each other, revealing inconsistencies between the views of participants, particularly between refugees and members of the resettlement programme, reinforcing the nuances (and contradictions) of the resettlement process.

#### **4.5. Positionality, access, ethics and fieldwork challenges.**

*“Access. This word has been persistent in my mind and in my notes since the fieldwork in Chile. Access at different levels. Access as negotiation and sharing. Material access... For example, when some participants decided to open the doors of their houses and the door to their stories, this usually came with food. And it makes sense. Not that they thought I needed it, but because opening the details of their experiences for sure needs to come with something else, like food, a sort of instrument that takes out the tension, that gives us proximity and put us at the same table despite all our differences. Food opened space to share the memories.”*

(Field journal, January 2014)

Access to participants was challenging and fascinating at the same time. Approaching multiple participants in multiple locations was both a physical and a reflexive challenge. The negotiation of that access revealed data related to control and relationships between the actors involved in resettlement. It also triggered deep reflections about my positionality and identity as a researcher and as an individual. As stated in the previous section, I used different strategies to reach participants, mainly gatekeepers and snowballing. I have previously outlined that accessing refugees through the NGOs was an effective use of gatekeepers, but sometimes problematic (Section 4.4.3). The literature also recognises some risks in this approach, such as gatekeepers trying to impose their own agenda by directing the researcher to a specific selection of participants (Valentine 2005) or that the researcher may be seen as affiliated to a particular organisation (Kawulich 2005). In the case of this study, the use of gatekeepers meant I was confronted by both

concerns. At the beginning, the NGOs tend to provide the contact information for refugees regarded as success stories – the same contacts that they provide to the UNHCR and the press to write their stories. After assessing my persistent request to access a wider range of refugees, both NGOs gave me access to a large, unsorted and outdated list of refugees' contacts (see Box 4.2). This meant that I had to cold call many refugees who filled the categories identified in my purposive sampling. The process was time consuming for me and intrusive for the refugees (Valentine 2005; see also Phillips & Johns 2012). I had to make extra efforts to explain the research over the phone, request the interview and clarify that, even when I got their contact through the NGO, I was not affiliated to them.

The other strategy implemented was through snowballing (Bryman 2012). This technique of engagement through another contact proved to

be effective in providing refugees with more confidence in their decision to participate in the study. After I explained the research and the participant agreed to meet me, a second negotiation took place. I was a total stranger knocking at peoples' doors. Considering refugees' traumatic experiences, their encounter with strangers is already problematic and I had to ensure extra care in making them feel secure. In this sense, the information sheet and consent form played a pivotal role. The information sheet, translated into Spanish and Arabic (See Appendix VI), gave participants a sense of security. At the same time, the formality of the consent form also gave participants a sense of control and a guarantee of anonymity (Valentine 2002; Mason 2002). All participants were given time to read the information (or have it explained orally if they were illiterate or had visual impediment) and ask questions of me. They also signed a consent form (or gave oral consent on a recorder if they were unable or unwilling to sign) where they agreed to be part of the

**Box 4.2. Ethical dilemmas and power relationships.**

In both countries, the NGOs were the main gatekeepers to refugees. During the fieldwork I found myself questioning the criteria upon which institutions control refugees' contact details and decide what information they provide or not. I felt that the criteria were based on portraying successful stories instead of refugees' security. At some point, both institutions in both countries offered me access to refugees' files in order to get their contact information. I perceived that by doing that, both NGOs were trying to show transparency about their work. However, I found it problematic that the consent to explore those files – that include extensive and detailed information about people's displacement and personal history – was given without the consent of the refugees themselves. I decided that this was an ethical issue and I decided not to use or review refugees' files. However, I did use the unsorted Excel sheet with people's contact details, knowing that this also represents an intrusive practice. My reasoning, however, was that by contacting the refugees directly, they would be the ones to decide if they wanted to share their experiences or not.

research. They were assured anonymity and were made aware that they could withdraw from the study at any point. Usually each visit would take me between two and four hours.

After they exhausted all their questions about the research project, a more personal encounter took place; an encounter that was necessary for the establishment of trust between myself and the refugees, and crucial to the success of the proposed methodology. As Hynes (2003) asserts, refugees are the experts on their own experience and access to that expertise depends to a great extent on how the researcher handles issues of mistrust. Many of these encounters took place through sharing food. As I reflected in the segment of my field diary that opens this section, food became an instrument to recognise our differences and sameness, allowing us to share stories and experiences at a 'neutral table'<sup>63</sup>. At the same time, sharing 'their' food enabled a shift in the power relations embedded in the interview. Through their cooking, refugees evoked and shared their memories of home (Law 2001) while at the same time they took ownership of our encounter (see Figure 4.6). I did not ask them to cook and it was not considered as part of my methodology. When that happened, the cooking was their proposal of intervention within the interview process.

**Figure 4.6. Palestinian sweets shared by Riad and Malika in Rio Grande do Sul.**



**Source: Author.**

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<sup>63</sup> Literature on migration has recognised the role of food in its ability to evoke places or imaginaries of home (Law 2001). At the same time, there is an emergent trend in human geography that uses a 'visceral approach' to enhance the understanding of migrants' experiences and to explore questions of bodies and embodiment (Longhurst et al. 2009; Probyn 2000; Hayes-Conroy & Hayes-Conroy 2008).

In this negotiation of access, my own multiple selves became relevant. I identify as a Chilean woman, migrant, activist, feminist, mestiza and atheist, who has moved and travelled to different places during the course of my life, driven by a passion to learn and supported by the privilege of access to scholarships and family support. I have close family that went into exile during Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship and I have grown to know my cousins on the other side of the world through Skype and Facebook. My own life has been built translocally between the place(s) that I call home and the ones that have shaped me in different ways. I have struggled learning other languages and negotiating membership in new environments. However, I have never been displaced, I have a 'low risk' passport and I have been able to visit my family from wherever I am in the world. I am a strong advocate of mobility as a choice, not as a privilege but as a right.

Participants wanted to know about me as much as about the research. Usually their questions addressed my identity as an immigrant, as a woman or as Chilean. By sharing my experience living abroad as a minority and my experiences with a different language and culture I was not losing my 'objectivity' as a researcher. Instead, the participants and I were engaging in a mutual recognition of our subjective beings (O'Connell Davidson & Layder 1994). Despite our common membership of the global community of border crossers, the privilege of my migration by choice and not by persecution – among many other privileges – also reinforced our differences. This left us in an in-between space that challenged the dichotomy of insider versus outsider status, as suggested by Dwyer and Buckle (2009). Each of the refugees and I have multiple selves and identities, unfolded and reproduced during the interview process (Valentine 2002), which provided common ground or reinforced our differences.

This recognition also highlighted the dilemma of how my own multiple identities played out across different scales of the research process, framed within a refugee system marked by power and privilege. While I was creating rapport with refugee participants and obtaining valuable access, I was also 'othering' them in the same research process, by accessing them through the NGOs or by assessing the programme through their experiences (see Villenas 1996). This took me through a process of rethinking my research questions and my research approach in general. Overall, I believe that the reflexivity that emerged from the encounters with the participants allowed us to explore tensions and

recognise our multiple identities, producing rich conversations in a situated context based on mutual respect. At the end, as Sigona (2014, p.378) asserts, the interview process is a “performance in which the meanings of questions and responses are contextually grounded and jointly constructed”. However, as reflexive as my encounters were, I cannot claim to have produced non-problematic research. Power relations were embedded in those encounters since the moment I obtained their numbers and called them without them being aware.

The importance of researchers’ positionality has been one of the main contributions of feminists and other critical geographers (Kobayashi 1994; England 1994; Valentine 2002), whose work has asked researchers to be self-critical and think about how our various identities shape “research encounters, processes and outcomes” (Hopkins 2007, p.387). This critical stance also shaped my other encounters with participants from NGOs, governments and international organisations<sup>64</sup>, as they also have multiple identities, despite being enclosed within the limitations and particularities of their institutional affiliation. This positionality in-between shifting identities also played a role while accessing, interviewing and observing other actors involved in resettlement. My diverse identities played differently depending on the institution or country that I was reaching at that moment. While I was in Chile, my memories of having lived there most of my life definitely gave me a closer knowledge of the institutional bureaucracies in place. But also, as an immigrant living in another country I was sometimes unaware of some deep changes in Chilean society. In some places access was facilitated by my stance as an international student in an UK institution or by my previous work as a journalist.

In Brazil, my institutional affiliation seemed to be perceived as proof of ‘research rigour’, giving a non-spoken validity to my project. In both research sites, I sent introductory letters (see sample in Appendix V) by email to potential participants months before the fieldwork. I followed up with further emails or phone calls when necessary. Since the first contact was by email, in Brazil I recognised some confused faces among officers when they saw a very typical South American researcher come through their doors instead of a European

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<sup>64</sup> These contacts were also accessed through snowballing, gatekeepers and cold calling. Each of them received the same consent forms and information sheet (available in English, Spanish or Arabic) that were presented to other participants.

woman. In both research sites, I also found the knowledge I had about the programme based on previous research an advantage, as with the conversations that I had prior to my trips with a local researcher in Chile and two local researchers in Brazil<sup>65</sup>.

My multiple 'selves' also shaped my encounters with different participants. My commitment to refugee and migrant advocacy and activism (which goes beyond this project) also played a role within the research process. For example, in some interviews I found people expressing offensive or problematic views about refugees or other migrants that go against what I stand for. I decided to challenge these views by questioning back and requesting further elaboration in those statements. Despite this, while I did not legitimise interviewees' problematic statements by collusion (Valentine 2005) I decided not to confront them either. Instead, I explored those comments in a way that questioned the implied assumptions, while at the same time providing some interesting, albeit problematic, insights about the refugee experience and dynamics.

The last point I would like to raise in relation to my positionality during the research, is the role that emotions and feelings played in the research process. During and beyond the fieldwork, I faced what I considered 'problematic situations', but also sometimes I felt overwhelmed by the stories of suffering and resilience that my participants shared with me. On many occasions I felt powerless in front of their realities and ashamed at the same time for reproducing a 'victim-saviour' mentality through my daunting experience of their lived realities (Bakewell 2008). As Stanley and Wise (1993, p.157) recognise, independently of the type of research we are involved with, most of the time this is done through the medium of the researcher and our feelings and moods are always involved. In this sense, I subscribe to the emotional turn in geographic research (Laliberté & Schurr 2015; Lorimer 2005; Bondi 2005; Golubchikov 2015) and argue that similar critical engagement with emotions is needed in refugee studies<sup>66</sup>. Reflexivity involving our multiple identities and also our shifting feelings during the research process could enhance our understanding of

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<sup>65</sup> These conversations held over Skype were fundamental to map the field before both extended visits took place. I met one of the researchers during a seminar I attended in Chile and she introduced me to the academics in Brazil.

<sup>66</sup> An exception is Jonathan Darling (2014), also a geographer, who has explored the issues of emotions and encounters in his research in the UK with asylum seekers.

research ethics and positionality to the benefit of the participants and their own experience within the research.

#### **4.5.1. Ethical considerations**

The research was given ethical approval by the University of Sheffield ethics committee before the beginning of the fieldwork. As discussed in previous sections, all the interviews and surveys were conducted after informed consent was given. All participants' personal details have been stored on a password protected computer and the surveys have been kept in a secured cabinet. The information sheet given to participants included details about the objectives of the study, reasons why they have been chosen to take part, what would happen if they decided to do so, clarifications about not providing any material incentive for their participation, information about dissemination, ethical approval and sponsor details<sup>67</sup> (see Appendix VI). The consent form asked participants to confirm informed engagement in the study, guaranteed confidentiality, requested their permission to use data in this thesis and in related articles and presentations, and ensured their right to withdraw at any time (see Appendix VII). Pictures were only taken when explicit oral consent was given. On some occasions, participants also shared with me their own pictures and oral consent was considered.

All the data provided by the participants has been treated confidentially. In order to protect refugees' identity and confidentiality, their names have been replaced with pseudonyms<sup>68</sup>. Personal information was also changed when there was a risk that the data could reveal facts that endanger or distress refugees. Other precaution measures were taken in order to avoid participants' psychological distress during the research process, taking into account the trauma situations many of them have faced. During the interviews,

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<sup>67</sup> This PhD has been financed by a scholarship granted by Conicyt (Comisión Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica de Chile). For the fieldwork done in Chile I received funding from SLAS (Society of Latin American Studies) and SIID (Sheffield Institute for International Development). For the fieldwork in Brazil I was granted the Slawson Award by the Royal Geographical Society with IBG.

<sup>68</sup> In order to facilitate the reading of the text, all the quoted extracts have been given a code next to the person's fictional name (in the case of the resettled refugees), or participants' role and institution in the case of other informants. In the case of refugees the codes include: a) All codes start with PT = participants; b) country of origin P= Palestinian and C= Colombia; c) country of resettlement \_BR= Brazil and \_CH Chile and d) participant' number 1,2,3, etc. For instance, PTP\_BR154 means Participant Palestinian Refugee in Brazil No154.

Informants: a) Participant = PT; b) Country where is based: BR= Brazil or CH= Chile, and c) Participants number. i.e. PTBR95 Participant in Brazil No95. The full list of participants with the codes and other relevant information can be found in Appendix III.

I reminded participants that they were free to refrain from answering questions or disclosing information they were not comfortable talking about and they could pull out at any time. In this context, my previous experience working with asylum seekers and refugees allowed me to frame questions in a way that minimised distress for participants<sup>69</sup>. Emotions were a central part of participants' interviews; however, when refugees needed extra support I was able to refer them to the institutions and civil society organisations that could provide professional support.

The names of officers and staff members of institutions related to the resettlement programme in each country also have been anonymised. However, their role and affiliation has been kept as part of the study, since the comparative multi-sited nature of the research required mapping different actors (institutions and organisations) involved in resettlement in each country. In a small number of interviews, participants requested to talk off the record about particular features of the programmes, specific refugee cases or when they wanted to provide a personal opinion contrary to the institutional response. This off the record information was not transcribed and excluded from the codification and thematic analysis. However, it provided extra insights to contextualise the analysis.

#### **4.5.2. Quality and credibility of findings**

I have strived to pursue quality and credibility of claims, interpretations and findings during the different stages of the research process<sup>70</sup>. Through the application of a rigorous methodology and analysis process, I have intended for coherence between my research aims, conceptual framework and findings. Reflection about the quality of the research relies on clarity of purposes and questions, and the appropriateness and adequacy of methods used in the study (Bazeley 2013; Bernard 2006). In addition, the relevance of findings relies on a continuous process of questioning data and checking interpretation against data (Charmaz 2006; Kvale & Brinkmann 2008).

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<sup>69</sup> I have been interviewing refugees since 2004 for different press articles and for research about forced migrants in Chile. I also have worked with asylum seekers and refugees in the UK volunteering for different organisations such as Student Action for Refugees (STAR), Conversation Club, Asylum Seeker Support Initiative Short Term (ASSIST) and South Yorkshire Refugee Law and Justice (SYRLJ).

<sup>70</sup> I understand 'credibility' from Baxter and Eyles (1997) conceptualisation, who based on Lincoln and Guba, define it as "a degree to which a description of human experience is such that those having the experience would recognize it immediately and those outside the experience can understand it". At the same time, I consider the explanations provided by the research "is only one of many possible "plausible" interpretations possible from data" (Corbin & Strauss 2008, 302).

Decisions taken during the research process, as discussed throughout this chapter, have been taken in order to increase the credibility of the research findings, to maximise methodological rigour and secure ethical standards (Bloch 2007). More specifically, this research has aimed to enhance credibility by methodological transparency through continuous memo writing as an 'audit trail' through the research (Bazeley 2013, p.402). In addition, the research has been guided by the premise of exploring the resettlement experience from different perspectives. The use of multiple sources of information has been recognised as a measure for enhancing the credibility of research findings (Guest et al. 2012). In this sense, the decision to include the opinions of resettled refugees and other actors involved in two Latin American countries enables the comparison and contrast of participants' accounts. Similarly, the use of multiple methods of data collection and triangulation have been identified as strategies to increase credibility of research results (Creswell & Plano Clark 2011; Patton 1999; Kawulich 2005). However, as Baxter and Eyles (1997) state, the use of different methods alone does not necessarily guarantee more rigorous results. That is why the research clearly discusses the multiple sources (different actors and countries) and methods (semi-structured interviews, survey and participant observation) implemented in a lengthy fieldwork (see Table 4.3), and how the findings have emerged from the corroboration of constructs derived from different methods. Finally, I have aimed for an open reflexivity through the entire research process, with clarity about my positionality and how this may have influenced and shaped the research (Philip 1998; Baxter & Eyles 1997).

All these strategies were implemented to achieve interpretations and findings that are empirically grounded and in line with the academic literature. Although the experiences of resettlement on this study are situated within particular contexts and specific dynamics, the findings enable the opening up of a debate about refugee integration and resettlement in high middle-income countries not only in Latin America but also in other regions.

Table 4.3 provides a summary of the methods of data collection, samples and activities undertaken in each country of data collection that I have discussed in this chapter.

<b>Table 4.3. Summary of methods of data collection, sites and samples</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Chile</b>	<b>Brazil</b>
<b>Method</b>	December 2012 – April 2013	October 2013 – March 2014
Participant Observation	Main Space: Vicaría Time: 30 days  <b>Events and activities:</b> Resettlement evaluation day Refugee children book launch Refugee Scholarship review UNHCR Standards and Indicators Report	Main Space: ASAV Time: 30 days  <b>Events and activities:</b> Families visit with IKLM organisation Pick up resettled family at the airport Accompany family to Federal Police Meetings of the Forum de Mobilidade Humana do Rio Grande do Sul Catedra Sergio Viera de Mello
Survey	Surveys Colombian refugees (N=38) Surveys Palestinian refugees (N=19)	Surveys Colombian refugees (N=20) Surveys Palestinian refugees (N=9)
Semi-structured interviews	Interviews with Colombian resettled refugees (N=11) Interviews with Palestinian Refugees (N=12) Interviews with UNHCR officers (N=1) Interviews with Vicaría staff (N=5) Interviews with government officers (N=2) Interviews with other actors involved (N=7)	Interviews with Colombian resettled refugees (N=12) Interviews with Palestinian Refugees (N=9) Interviews with UNHCR officers (N=2) Interviews with NGO's staff (N=6) Interviews with government officers and public servants (N=4) Interviews with other actors involved (N=9)
	Participants N=72	Participants N=53
Total number of participants across the research = 126*		
Total number of cities visited= 15*		
*This number includes 1 more interview done on a visit to Quito, where I conducted a non-recorded interview with the UNHCR resettlement officer in Ecuador.		

## 4.6. Conclusions

Researching 'the refugee experience' carries two great risks. On the one hand, there is a tendency to place refugees under an "undifferentiated, essentialised and universal" uniform category (Eastmond 2007, p.253). On the other, the generalisation can also elude the fact that refugee experience is constructed within a specific social system and dynamics of power. This research has opted for a qualitative-driven mixed-methods approach in order to explore experiences of refugee resettlement in Chile and Brazil, recognising the particularities and the situatedness of each refugee experience. By using

diverse methods of data collection, the findings explored both individual and collective accounts of these experiences. At the same time, the inclusion of multiple actors enabled a dialogue between Colombian and Palestinian refugees' narratives and those of the people working in the institutions that implement the resettlement programme in each country. This approach did not seek for a convergence of narratives. Instead, the research locates these constructions within the 'multiplicities' that characterise the experiences of refugees, in terms of levels, scales and realities. In this regard, I do not claim to be speaking 'for refugees'. Instead, this empirical research aims to explore refugees' narratives about their experiences of resettlement situated in a specific context and in relation to the discourses of governments and international agencies and the NGOs.

The research opted for a complex matrix of variables that included two countries and refugees from two distinct communities, in order to explore how resettlement unfolds in Latin America (showing strengths and weaknesses in existing programmes) and how this is experienced by people coming from inside and outside the region. Despite the strengths of the approach, the research process was not unproblematic. Besides the questions of "who speaks for whom?" (Kobayashi 1994, p.78), who can speak and upon which interests (Spivak 1988) and positionality, the study took place within material and discursive spaces embedded within power imbalances, where I found myself reproducing and/or reacting to some of these practices. Another limitation that needs to be acknowledged, already discussed in this chapter, was the issues of sampling that limited statistical generalisations from the survey results.

Finally, the research approach has not been aimed at 'measuring' refugee integration. What is more, the study is critical of the current models intended to ensure those aims, particularly because of their geographical narrowness and hegemonic assumptions of integration. Instead, the exploratory nature of the study highlights and questions the lack of theorisation and methodologies produced according to the local context and the lived-experiences of refugees. The multi-sited data collected through this research design can offer a starting point.



## CHAPTER 5

### Politics of Resettlement: Expectations and unfulfilled promises

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#### 5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the negotiations and power relationships between the actors involved in the resettlement process. I do so by identifying and discussing the tensions among different actors (refugees, UNHCR, NGOs and governments) and asking how their relationship affects the resettlement experience. In order to explore these dynamics, the chapter aims to ground the politics of resettlement by tracing everyday encounters and perceptions between refugees and the institutions running the resettlement programmes in Chile and Brazil. I argue that both resettled refugees and the resettlement programme<sup>71</sup> in each country created a set of expectations around resettlement even before refugees arrived. The chapter discusses how these expectations varied (or not) between groups and host countries, and how they shaped the resettlement experience when those expectations were unmet. The argument that I put forward is simple, but based on complex connections: refugees' expectations of resettlement turned into claims of 'unfulfilled promises' generating frustration and mistrust between refugees and the resettlement programme. I argue that, due to the tensions that emerged between actors and refugees' disappointment in the host country, refugees' radical uncertainties (Horst & Grabska 2015) created by displacement and conflict, extended into resettlement, shaping their experience as one of unsettlement.

In the first section (5.2), I briefly discuss how the expectations of Palestinian and Colombian refugees were constructed during the displacement and how this influenced their decision-making about resettlement. In the next section (5.3) I explore how these expectations turned into 'unfulfilled promises', prolonging uncertainties and creating tensions between refugees and the resettlement organisations in Chile and Brazil. The chapter then moves on to discuss the expectations created by the institutions and people involved in the programmes (5.4.1 and 5.4.2), while the following section (5.4.3) outlines some discrepancies amongst the organisations themselves. I conclude by highlighting how

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<sup>71</sup> I use 'resettlement programme' as a general descriptor referring to all the organisations and individuals involved in the design and implementation of resettlement.

the analysis of the complex relationships within the programme contributes to the understanding of unsettlement as part of the integration experience of resettled refugees.

## **5.2. Displacement and the construction of expectations**

Leaving the first country of asylum or the refugee camp and arriving in the resettlement country is an experience full of anxieties and expectations. The construction of expectations emerged as a constant theme in the narratives of resettled refugees both in Chile and Brazil. These expectations emerged as important in shaping refugees' decisions to take up resettlement as well as through their actual experiences of resettlement. In this section, I briefly discuss how these expectations were constructed in a context of uncertainty, and then explore how they turned into 'unfulfilled promises'.

Expectation is usually understood as a strong belief that something will happen (*Oxford English Dictionary* 2007). As Morgan (2006) argues, expectations are based on "realistic appraisals rather than idealistic goals". Although by definition expectations seem to be different from aspirations, Morgan states that in practice, expectations and aspirations are used and operationalised in similar ways. In the experiences of the refugees I interviewed, there was a blurred line between both, since refugees based their expectations about third country resettlement on what other people said (organisations and other refugees), but also on the meanings that they created from their own experiences – including hopes and aspirations. From the interviews with both Colombian and Palestinian refugees, I identified four key factors playing a role in the construction of refugees' expectations pre-departure: the emergency that framed their resettlement decision (see also Kenny & Lockwood-Kenny 2011), the lack of clear information provided in the first country of asylum or in the refugee camp, the information given by family and friends resettled in other countries (see Horst 2006), and time spent in the places where they were first displaced. These factors that framed refugees' expectations (or lack of them), also shaped their uncertainties pre-departure. Uncertainty, which is discussed in Chapter 3 as related to the "imperfect knowledge of current conditions" and to the "unpredictability of the future" (Williams & Baláž 2012, p.168), appeared in refugees' narratives as a constitutive element of their experiences of displacement (Biehl 2015) but also as predominant during the events prior to departure for the resettlement country (El-Shaarawi 2015). That is to say, expectations of refugees were generated in a context of long-term uncertainty (Horst & Grabska 2015).

Rabah's experiences pre-departure help to exemplify how some of the factors above, and the uncertainties surrounding them, shaped expectations in the context of Palestinian refugees. Rabah is one of the 108 Palestinian refugees resettled to Brazil from the Rwaished camp (see Chapter 2). He, like the other refugees in that camp, knew that at some point it would be his turn to leave. They were the last group in the camp and they witnessed with resignation others who had already been resettled. They had to be next, but the waiting became unbearable and the initial hope turned into hopelessness. Before going to Brazil, Rabah was on the list to go to Canada and Denmark, but none of those options materialised and the prospect of the resettlement option became another source of uncertainty. During the five years' wait in the camp, Rabah experienced all the factors mentioned above, creating double-edged emotions, from great happiness to anger:

I was sitting there, waiting every day. Seeing how my friends were taken to Canada, to other countries and I was still there [...] One day, they called us for a meeting and that day I couldn't take it anymore and I took the chair and broke it on the floor. I was so angry because of waiting! I am telling you this from my heart, because I think is very bad what they did with us, they cannot treat us like that. We are humans! The thing is that if you lie to me I won't be able to trust you anymore, never! So when that lady [UNHCR officer] came to a meeting to talk about vegetables and cleaning, I told her 'we need neither vegetable nor cleaning, we just need to get out of here! I don't want to die here! I am going mad'. I didn't want to argue with her. I was nervous, angry... I broke the chair and I felt sad because of that. After that, she came back and told me about the opportunity of Denmark, and sent me to go to the Italian hospital in Jordan to take the medical exams. When they sent you there it meant that you may go soon. She left me dreaming, living again! I knew about Denmark because I had a friend resettled there. That night I couldn't sleep thinking about going there, dreaming... I was so happy! So they took me to the hospital and did the exams. When the group from Denmark came to the camp they didn't know about us [Palestinians], they had come for the Kurds. Why did she lie to me? They told me that just to calm me down?!

(Rabah, PTP\_BR151)

I was interviewing Rabah in his shop near the city centre of Mogi das Cruces, in Brazil. Although he was trying not to raise his voice, to avoid scaring customers and his two year old baby, his tone could not hide his frustration. In his narrative, he explored the different sources of uncertainty experienced in the refugee camp in relation to resettlement, such as inconsistency and lack of information, sudden changes in resettlement options, unclear selection criteria and the diverse information that they received from refugees who had already left. As a result, Rabah described constant feelings of anxiety about the possibilities of leaving the camp, desperation at not knowing how or when, and resentment because of

what he perceived as the “UN’s constant lies”. Rabah’s desperation responded to the bureaucratic system that decided his resettlement. As El-Shaarawi (2015) explores through her research with Iraqi refugees in Egypt, the resettlement process pre-departure becomes another source of uncertainty that is both spatial and temporal, since refugees are uncertain of where they will go or when. The uncertainty experienced by the Palestinian refugees while waiting at the Rwaished camp revealed that refugees constructed their expectations abstractly, around the need to leave the camp and the sparse information they received, instead of around their aspirations of resettlement in Brazil. This is also because when the possibility of resettlement in Brazil was presented, there was no other real option and otherwise they would have to stay in the desert.

Waiting (Brun 2015; Khosravi 2014) and uncertainty (El-Shaarawi 2015; Horst & Grabska 2015; Biehl 2015; Griffiths 2013) also characterised the pre-departure resettlement process of refugees who came to Chile from the Al Tanf camp (see Chapter 2). Although their decision was also framed by the need to leave the appalling conditions in the camp (discussed in Chapter 6), they did not have the extra pressure of being the last group there. Instead, their main doubts were related to accepting resettlement in Chile, or waiting, again, and for an indeterminate time, for the option of resettlement in another country. In the case of both Palestinian groups, the information that the refugees received about the host countries was crucial in their decision to take the resettlement option, considering that most refugees told me they knew nothing about Chile and very little about Brazil.

In this context, another difference between each Palestinian group in each country was their source of information about resettlement. For Palestinians resettled in Brazil, there was no selection mission (see Section 2.4.2) and the information was provided by members of the UNHCR in Jordan. These Palestinians were the last group in the Rwaished refugee camp and the local authorities were keen to close the camp as soon as possible. According to the Coordinator of ASAV, the cases were presented to Brazil in a dossier together with a 15 minute video that showed the dreadful conditions that Palestinians were living in at the refugee camp. CONARE accepted all of them without visiting the camp or interviewing the refugees. In the case of the Palestinian refugees resettled in Chile, they received information about the resettlement country directly from the institutions involved in the programme who participated in the mission to Al Tanf camp. In both cases,

the information received in relation to the entitlements of the resettlement programmes framed their expectations about the host countries. The accounts of Aziza (resettled in Chile) and Mouna (resettled in Brazil) facilitate discussion of the context of these expectations:

We had a meeting before the interview. We went, sat in front of a big screen and saw Chile. What did we see? They showed us Viña del Mar, Las Condes, Vitacura, La Reina [*all upper class municipalities*]. They also showed images of the south of Chile. We didn't see more than that... we saw the beach, kids playing, everything pretty. We asked about the programme and they said that they would give us around US\$500, and that would be enough because you can eat and rent. And that we all would get a passport as well.

(Aziza, PTP\_CH42)

They showed us pictures and a video, showing a simple life, but they didn't show that much. They promised us that we would own a house. They said that life in Brazil was simple; if you worked you would get it and that our needs would be covered.

(Mouna, PTP\_BR152)

Most Palestinian refugees built their expectations about resettlement around what they referred to as the 'UNHCR's promises'. Refugees recognised that those 'promises' were ambiguous but did ensure that all their basic needs would be covered, that they would have access to housing, language classes and, eventually, naturalisation. Interviewees also referred to the 'promise' of family reunification, which emerged as the opportunity of being reunited with family members still in Iraq, in other refugee camps or in other countries of asylum, by facilitating their arrival to Chile or Brazil (see discussion about family division in section 6.2.3). Refugees, in both countries, also told of being promised that the monthly stipend they received would be enough to cover their basic needs and that access to rights would be guaranteed. In the case of Chile, Aziza's account illustrates that the basic information provided was framed by the images of a prosperous and modern country shown on video, which could have also contributed to raising refugees' expectations. In addition, resettlement also sparked aspirations, independently of the host country, since it was perceived as the only 'solution' to finally leave the camp and hope for a better future.

Despite the differences in the patterns of displacement between Palestinian and Colombian refugees (see Chapter 2), similar factors influenced Colombian refugees'

expectations about resettlement. In most of the cases, the resettlement option came as the last resort when persecution found them again in the first country of asylum (see Section 6.1.2). Expectations were therefore constructed in a context of emergency and fear, where Chile and Brazil did not represent the most attractive options but were indeed the only options. The narratives of Paula (resettled in Chile) and Daniela (resettled in Brazil) illustrate how these elements framed their expectations:

After we received death threats we told everything to the authorities and they moved us almost immediately here. It was very fast, less than two months. The only delegations that came to Ecuador at that time were Chile and Brazil... and I was a bit disappointed because my dream was to go to another place, I don't know, like Canada or Sweden. But when I realised that those weren't an option, we thought we will just take whatever comes because we need to protect our children. And the Chilean delegation came first, so we accepted.

(Paula, PTC\_CH23)

We didn't know how we were going to get here, we only knew that we will have some guarantees because they told us 'you will arrive and get financial support for a year', I think... yeah, for a year, 'you will have access to studies, you will have a temporary house and you will be able to get your own house'. They told us many things, everything very pretty. Based on that we decided to accept [go to Brazil].

(Daniela, PTC\_BR109).

Similar to the Palestinian refugees, Paula and Daniela described how they built their expectations about resettlement in Chile and Brazil in the context of an emergency and based on vague information about the programme. Unlike Palestinian refugees, Colombians did have some knowledge about Chile and Brazil. These countries would not have been their first options, which is why the information provided by the resettlement organisations, even if vague, was key in their decision to accept the offer of resettlement. Being resettled within Latin America – a region without consolidated structures of refugee protection and characterised by inequality – generated another source of uncertainty and the information provided by the resettlement organisations was the only resource for people to cope and manage these uncertainties (Griffiths 2013).

In the case of the Colombian refugees, their expectations were also influenced by the time spent in the first country of asylum. Most of the Colombian refugees that I interviewed in Chile and Brazil had spent between 2 and 8 years in the first country of asylum (Ecuador, Costa Rica or Venezuela), and despite the barriers to local integration and the persecution

that they faced in those countries (as discussed in Chapter 2 and 6), some of them enjoyed their life there. They identified similarities with Colombia in relation to food and weather, and they also had created strong social and support networks, some of them even had family living in the same country. As Milena, a Colombian refugee resettled in Chile told me, “I didn’t want to leave Ecuador. I would have stayed, because I liked it there. My mum and my family were there. We were doing fine, with jobs and everything. But we had to leave because we were in danger”.

In the case of both Colombian and Palestinian refugees, the expectations created were related to the aspirations of socio-economic stability and security, firmly relying on what the organisations offered as part of the resettlement programme. While in the case of Colombian refugees, security was related mainly to physical protection, in the case of Palestinians it was understood as the guarantee of their rights. Both groups aspired to have a stable living standard. It is relevant to note that expectations were more or less similar across different genders. Table 5.1 draws on the interviews to summarise the expectations of each group and the context that framed their construction.

**Table 5.1. Colombian and Palestinian refugees' expectations pre-departure**

	Interviewees Resettled in Chile		Interviewees Resettled in Brazil	
	Colombians	Palestinians	Colombians	Palestinians
<b>Main expectations</b>	Immediate needs covered, security, stability, and socio-economic stability.	Immediate needs covered, housing, language, naturalisation, family reunification and socio-economic stability.	Immediate needs covered, language support, security, stability, and socio-economic stability.	Immediate needs covered, housing, language, naturalisation, family reunification and socio-economic stability.
<b>Factors influencing refugees' expectations</b>				
Time and place of displacement	Between 2 and 8 years (Ecuador or Costa Rica).	2 Years in Al Tanf Camp.	Between 2 and 8 years (Ecuador, Venezuela and Costa Rica).	5 Years in Rwaished Camp.
Context	Emergency as result of persecution or lack of local integration.	Emergency as result of living in a Refugee Camp.	Emergency as result of persecution or lack of local integration.	Emergency as result of living in a Refugee Camp. They were the last group before the camp closure.
Who provided the resettlement information	'Mission': Government, UNHCR and AREVI	'Mission': Government, UNHCR and AREVI	'Mission': CONARE, UNHCR and NGOs	UNHCR staff in Jordan.
Role of family and friends in providing Information	It did not emerge in the interviews.	Yes, family and/or friends in traditional resettlement countries.	It did not emerge in the interviews.	Yes, family and/or friends in traditional resettlement countries.
Perception about resettlement country	Colombians perceived Chile as stable politically and economically.	No	Colombians perceived Brazil as an insecure country.	No

The refugee studies literature has largely referred to the different range of expectations that refugees develop about their resettlement experience, both in Latin America (Bessa 2006; Bijit 2012) and in other contexts (Kenny & Lockwood-Kenny 2011; Westoby 2009; Marete 2012). In addition, the UNHCR and service providers have recognised that one of the biggest challenges of resettlement is what they refer to as 'unrealistic expectations' (UNHCR 2011a; UNHCR 2010; van Selm 2013; Stein 1981). The typology proposed enhances the understanding of how refugees frame their expectations, the pivotal role of the information provided in the first country of asylum or displacement and what these

expectations are. The next section explores how these expectations turned into 'unfulfilled promises', affecting the relationship between actors and the resettlement experience.

### **5.3. Unmet expectations**

Refugee expectations generated pre-departure clashed with the socio-economic realities of the host countries and, soon after arrival, they turned into complaints of 'unaccomplished promises', a prominent theme that appeared in the interviews with both Palestinian and Colombian refugees. In both countries, the complaints about unfulfilled promises went back to the information they received in the refugee camp or in the first country of asylum and were mostly related to the assistance of the programme, unsatisfied material needs and barriers to accessing certain rights or services. As the Palestinian groups in each country arrived roughly at the same time in 2007-2008, their perceptions post-arrival in Chile and Brazil seemed to be more standardised than Colombian refugees, whose perceptions were far more diverse.

#### **5.3.1. 'If we had known, we wouldn't have come': refugees' disappointment**

In the case of the Palestinian refugees in Chile, their complaints focused on the lack of accuracy of information given to them in the Al Tanf camp by the Chilean commission (composed of members of the UNHCR, the government and AREVI), and how this contrasted with their socio-economic situation in the resettlement country. Hafid and Rahal highlighted some of the main issues:

Look, I am going to tell you the truth because there is nothing to lose now. They talk to us over there in a completely different way to what they told us here. They said that in five years I was going to have a Chilean nationality. That including the children will get it. Over there they said that I could live with 150.000 pesos (around US\$250). But when I arrived to La Calera, I rented a house for 110.000 pesos. That house was actually cheap, but what can I do with only 40.000 pesos left? Why did they tell me that 150 would be enough? (...) We didn't know. In the refugee camp and here they cheated us, they lied.

(Hafid, PTP\_CH36)

Here it is different to what I thought it would be. Very different... I thought that in this country I would have a good situation and that I could live fine. I mean that you could work and have everything. But when we arrived, finding a job was difficult and we worked so much for very little money. Two months for less than 500 dollars.... That is just not enough.

(Rahal, PTP\_CH91)

While Palestinian refugees criticised the lack of accurate information, staff from the resettlement programme in Chile stated that all the information was given, but that refugees may have misunderstood what was said in the camp. According to one of the interpreters who worked in the programme in Chile (a Palestinian descendant who joined the programme two weeks before the arrival of the first families), the issue of 'interpretation' was due to the lack of experience of the organisers and the mistake of not taking someone to the camp who spoke Arabic and understood the idiosyncrasies within Chilean and Palestinian culture. According to the interpreter, information may have got lost in translation. Regardless of the reason, unmet expectations had a direct impact on refugees' experiences of resettlement and their relationship with service providers. Refugees perceived that the organisations lied to them about the country, particularly in relation to the high cost of living and the stipend that they would receive. This perception created mistrust towards the institutions involved in resettlement and added a layer of tension to their daily relationship<sup>72</sup>.

Palestinian refugees faced their unmet aspirations with fears of further downward social and occupational mobility after two years in the refugee camp (see also Bloch 2002; Cheung & Phillimore 2013; Coughlan & Owens-Manley 2006). According to the results of the survey conducted among 19 Palestinian refugees in Chile, 6 held a bachelor's degree, 1 had a technical qualification and 11 had completed primary or secondary school. Most of them had jobs and a stable socio-economic situation in Iraq, indicating mixed levels of human capital (Bevelander 2011; Bevelander et al. 2010). However, after years of displacement, Palestinian refugees faced a new beginning in Chile with the difficulties of learning a new language (as discussed in Section 6.2.1) and with the challenges of finding stable and middle-wage (both skill and unskilled) employment (see also Guglielmelli-White 2012; Bijit 2012).

As with their counterparts in Chile, Palestinian refugees in Brazil showed great frustration in relation to unmet expectations, but also great disappointment with their current life in Brazil. Mouna was one of the youngest Palestinian refugees who arrived in Brazil, she was 19 at the time of the interview and 14 when she left the Rwaished camp. Mahfoud, on the

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<sup>72</sup> For a more comprehensive discussion about the issue of 'mistrust' within the asylum and refugee system please see Griffiths 2012; Hynes 2003; Daniel & Knudsen 1995.

other hand, was one of the oldest Palestinians in Brazil, at 67 years old. As with other Palestinian refugees in vulnerable situations, Mahfoud was uncertain about his future or where he was going to live after the announcement that the UNHCR would stop supporting elderly and vulnerable Palestinians at the beginning of 2014. Both remembered in similar terms the promises made by the UNHCR staff in Jordan and their frustrations over the unmet promises:

We came here, then my dad started to work and he earned less than the minimum wages, and what can you do with that? He has two daughters, we are four. What can you accomplish with that? Even the Brazilians that work don't get it [a good life]. Life is hard here, so imagine how it is for us... I have a younger sister and my dad is now too old so he doesn't work. They didn't accomplish what they promised us. We don't have a house, we don't have a salary, we don't have anything! [...] After more than 5 years living in the refugee camp, we just wanted to have a better life! If we had known, we wouldn't have come. But I always say that is not the fault of the Brazilian government, is the UN's fault. It is their fault because they told us all those things.

(Mouna, PTP\_BR152)

They told me, 'look there in Brazil you are going to study Portuguese, you will find a house, you will have a job, everything'. And nothing [was accomplished]! Nothing! What can I say? This programme... if I say how bad it was nothing would happen, it won't make any difference whatsoever. If I complain or not, it doesn't change anything. The programme is the programme. Just that [...] The problem is the UNHCR, nobody else. The UNHCR doesn't want to help us, they don't want us to work, they don't want anything with us, and they just want to leave us here. If we die, we die. If we live, we live. The UNHCR just wants to steal. 200 reales per month? What am I? A cat? I am not a cat, I am a man!

(Mahfoud, PTP\_BR140)

Mahfoud and Mouna's narratives underscore how the mistrust towards the UN, developed pre-departure in the refugee camp (see Rabah's story in Section 5.2), extended into the resettlement country once refugees faced the unfulfilled expectations. Palestinian refugees in Brazil blamed the UN agency for providing unclear and misleading information about the resettlement country, but they also criticised the UNHCR approach in relation to their current situation in the resettlement country. These accounts emphasise that the mistrust inculcated towards the UN system goes beyond the boundaries of the specific places of displacement and develops translocally, shaping the complex relationships and dynamics between refugees and service providers (see Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013; Hynes 2003). For Mahfoud, as for other Palestinian refugees in both study sites, the unsettlement

experienced during displacement did not end with reaching a durable solution in Brazil and instead became a constant. While in the camp, uncertainties were related to when and how to leave, in the resettlement country they were related to everyday material needs and also to their aspirations about the future. Mahfoud's case was particularly acute since, at his 67 years, he felt powerless. His major frustrations were related to the lack of self-sufficiency, precisely one of the main goals of the resettlement programme in the country. He was not able to sustain himself, did not have permanent housing and he was living dependant of other people. "Another Arab man from Sapucaia helps me with food. This is not life! One gives me one thing, the other gives me another. This is not life", he told me. Therefore, it can be argued that the accounts of Palestinian refugees in Brazil illustrate how the uncertainty and instability that they felt during their displacement in the refugee camp stretched through their six years living in Brazil, extending the temporal and spatial limits of uncertainty (El-Shaarawi 2015).

In his research on Sudanese refugees resettled in Australia, Westoby (2009) found that refugees expressed a deep sense of relief and joy upon arrival that turned into distress soon after when they made sense of their new reality, marked by unemployment and poverty. In the case of Palestinian refugees in Brazil and Chile the process was similar; although Latin American countries were not their preferred choice of resettlement, they were hopeful and excited by the prospect of leaving the refugee camps but once in the countries of resettlement they felt disappointed with their livelihood situation (see also Fanjoy et al. 2005). Nacira, resettled in Brazil with her family, stated that if the resettlement organisations had provided accurate information from the beginning they could have made other decisions:

If they had clearly showed us how things are here, people could have decided if they wanted to come or not. You will have this, this and this. And then it is your decision. When people went there [to protest outside the UNHCR office in Brasilia], the UN people said: 'if you don't like it you can then go back to live at the desert'. And some people wanted to go back to the desert! 'Please take us back!' But they said: 'We are not sending you back, if you want to go it has to be by your own means'. But how? We don't have a document to go out! We don't have a passport! It is as if we are in a massive prison here! So, it would had been better for us not to reach that point if they had talked truly, otherwise they need to do at least the minimal things you need to do to receive refugees. Help is not always related to money, there are other ways to help. Like orientation for example.

(Nacira, PTP\_BR154)

Nacira's account sheds light on the role of refugee agency when coping with unsettlement. On the one hand, she suggested that if they had received detailed information about the resettlement country, they would have been able to better assess their decision of taking the resettlement option – referring to the voluntary nature of this durable solution. Although resettlement is a discretionary decision taken by the states to accept refugees (Fredriksson 2002), refugees can also decide to take it or not (J. Fischel de Andrade & Marcolini 2002). However, in the case of the Palestinians who were in the Rwaished camp they did not have any other real option, they either went to Brazil or stayed in the middle of the desert without the protection of the UNHCR. On the other hand, Nacira's narrative illustrates how Palestinian refugees used the unfulfilled promises as a negotiating tool with the resettlement organisations, by constantly referring to the promises made in order to try to improve their conditions in Brazil (see Chapter 7). Palestinian refugees in Chile also used similar strategies.

Palestinian refugees' descriptions of their frustration towards the resettlement experience also illustrated the precarity they experienced in Brazil. Among some of the main issues that I explore in the later chapters of this thesis are: the lack of permanent housing (Section 7.3); difficulties obtaining naturalisation (Chapter 7); the complexities of family reunification (Chapter 6); vulnerability of the elderly, limited access to mental health care, and difficulties accessing higher education. From conversations with refugees and with staff from the implementing agencies both in Porto Alegre and Guarulhos, I knew of some Palestinian refugees with alcohol and drug addiction, two of whom were sent to rehabilitation institutions on several occasions. It was unclear if they developed their addiction in Brazil or at the refugee camp. However, some interviewees suggested that these addictions were a clear outcome of the precarity experienced in resettlement and the difficulties involved in coping with the extended uncertainty and instability.

In the case of a small and specific number of Palestinian refugees in both countries, the 'unfulfilled promises' resulted in such deep disappointments and anger that officers in both countries told me they had received violent threats from some refugees.

They complained because the money was not enough, because they did not like the country. They complained against the jobs they could get. They were demanding all the time. Demanding and threatening us. They directly threatened my team and me.

(Former Coordinator AREVI San Felipe, PTCH80)

Many times, I received death threats; many times, I was waiting in the office in Mogi das Cruces until the police arrived to be able to leave the office. Luckily none of those threats materialised but they affected the team psychologically and our dynamic as a group.

(Former resettlement Coordinator CARITAS, PTBR146)

The threats did not result in physical violence in any of the resettlement countries. These acts can be interpreted as desperate attempts used by some refugees to provoke a change or to demand the accomplishment of the promises made. Sometimes, these threats were understood by the resettlement organisations as the fraught expression of refugees' frustration. In others, staff reproduced stereotypes arguing that the violent behaviour was the result of refugees' 'culture and religion'. Additionally, these threats revealed that organisations were not adequately prepared to deal with these situations and some of the staff developed stress and anxiety. In addition, there were few legal actions brought by refugees in both countries, in relation to the unmet promises in both countries – in relation to documentation, stipends or housing. In Brazil, one of the NGO administrative staff told me that the organisation also summoned some refugees to court, after they refused to leave the properties rented by the programme once the financial period of coverage was over.

While the expectations of Palestinians in Chile and Brazil were similar, created in a context of emergency, transit, waiting and uncertainty (see Brun 2015), their conditions in the resettlement country after five or six years of arrival were the opposite. While most of the Palestinian families interviewed in Chile were relatively socially and economically settled, those interviewed in Brazil, particularly the elderly, were unemployed and living in conditions of societal marginalisation (no secure income, lack of access to some social programmes, risk of being homeless and poor language). Palestinian refugees in Chile had most of their immediate material needs covered and had at least one source of income per household. In addition, all the families had their own house (Section 7.3). In Brazil, only one of the Palestinian families I interviewed managed to access a housing subsidy. Some young families and single refugees seemed to be doing better in Brazil, having secured jobs

and built important social networks (see Chapter 6). It is worth noticing that the organisations involved in resettlement were aware of the precarious situation faced by vulnerable and elderly Palestinian refugees and one of the NGOs, ASAV, was working with other partner institutions and local municipalities to facilitate access to certain social programmes. Palestinian refugees welcomed those efforts, but stressed that those considerations should have been taken in advance since access to most of these services and social programmes were promised before arrival. As in Chile, the focus of their anger and apathy was the UNHCR and the implementing NGOs and, to a lesser extent, they also blamed the government.

In the case of Colombian refugees in both countries, perceptions about the accomplishment of expectations were more diverse than in the case of Palestinian resettled refugees. However, there was a consensus that the information given by the resettlement organisations was rather superficial and inadequate in relation to the reality of the resettlement countries, as discussed by Patricia, resettled in Chile:

I think that [what they promised] wasn't accomplished. It was very superficial information. And because I don't really know how these things work, I didn't ask that much either [...] In Costa Rica they show us a video, it was La Serena maybe... of how some refugees were working, some of them working doing construction. They didn't show the capital, but instead life in smaller cities. So that is what they showed us and they told us about the job opportunities. They also talked about accommodation, about the chance of getting our own house... but not of all the time that it may take. Same in relation to higher education, they told us that there were channels to access, but not about all the barriers to gain that access.

(Patricia, PTC\_CH34)

Colombian refugees in both study sites stated that the limited information was not enough in a context of emergency in which they had to decide whether or not to take the resettlement option. Some of the participants argued that the information was misleading and portrayed both countries' socio-economic situation and access as better than they really were. Colombian refugees also found a pronounced gap between the information given (and their expectations pre-arrival) and their experiences in the host country, particularly in relation to housing and jobs (Chapter 7). Colombian refugees in Chile also highlighted issues related to cultural differences and discrimination (see Chapters 6 and 7,

and also Marete 2012), while Colombians in Brazil focused on the poor quality of the Portuguese classes (explored in Chapter 6) and the barriers to accessing higher education. Some refugees in both countries also spoke about their security concerns due to the arrival of large numbers of Colombians in both host countries (Section 6.2.1).

Colombian refugees, similarly to their Palestinians counterparts, also expected to find the same or better standard of living that they had known either in the country of origin or in the first country of asylum. For example, Milena, a Colombian resettled in Chile, stressed how the resettlement organisations did not consider personal differences among refugees while delivering inaccurate information and how that affected their experience in the host country:

They should explain to the people they bring what is the reality of living here [...] I have always said that this country can be amazing for some people. But they [the programme] have to consider that we are not all the same, psychologically or even our educational level. I told them in Ecuador, 'if you are taking me there to be safe but I will starve please don't take me. I want something stable. Don't take me to somewhere worse. Please come to see how I live here, because I wouldn't be looking for protection if it wasn't because I need it, because here I live fine and I don't want to leave'. And then what? I found myself living in a country that doesn't like me, in a single room with my entire family, in a neighbourhood that I don't like.

(Milena, PTC\_CH14)

In the conversation that I had with Milena and her husband Luis, disappointment with their life in Chile and the programme in general, was reinforced by the constant comparison of their current experience with the social and economic opportunities they had in Ecuador, their first country of asylum. Milena and Luis needed protection but they did not want to live in precarious conditions and their main aim was to reach stability. In the interview with Milena, as with most Colombian and Palestinian refugees, the idea of resettlement as 'instability' constantly emerged in relation to the lack of opportunities and downward social mobility, being linked to, or being a reason for, uncertainty about the future. Refugees' references to instability can be related to what Griffith (2014) discusses as instability caused by rapid change, but also by the lack of change. Milena and Luis had been living in Chile since 2009 and, during that time, they had different short-term jobs and experienced serious issues finding housing (see Section 7.3). In total, they had experienced almost 5 years of constant changes in jobs, houses and neighbourhoods, without any change in their socio-economic positioning, linking instability with uncertainty

as pivotal dimensions of their 'unsettlement' experience (see discussion in Chapter 3). For Milena, the unmet expectations, together with the extension of instability and uncertainty in the resettlement country, translated into anxieties and depression.

Other refugees suggested that specific information was necessary in relation to the cost of living, the way of life, the importance of carrying birth certificates or validated diplomas (in the case of pursuing higher education) and even information about the weather. Some Colombian refugees in Chile, such as Andres, also felt that moving from rural areas to a big urban city like Santiago was poorly informed, and resulted in a challenging experience:

My perception is that here in Santiago, if you are not prepared you have to live with a minimal wage or less. You practically live like a slave [...] we have to leave Santiago and try in another city; I cannot take it anymore.

(Andres, PTC\_CH49)

Like Andres, many Colombians lived in rural areas both in the country of origin and in the first country of asylum, and felt that an urban city such as Santiago imposed too many pressures and restrictions on his livelihood strategies. Nonetheless, Andres' account of moving to another city also illustrates refugee agency and how they constantly seek to improve their situation (Shrestha 2011). At the same time, Andres obtained support from his religious group to move to a rural area in the south of Chile to work on a new livelihood project doing farming, suggesting that his coping strategies, involving social networks and social capital, developed in the resettlement country (See Koser Akcapar 2010; Strang & Ager 2010; Griffiths et al. 2005). Other issues raised both by the resettlement programme and the refugees themselves were related to the barriers imposed by the legislation in relation to peddling and street commerce – one of the main activities developed by Colombians in their first countries of asylum.

It is important to note that some Colombian refugees felt that their situation was better in the resettlement country, despite the uncertainty felt upon arrival and the complications in their daily lives due to economic limitations, their foreigner status or their race (see Chapter 7). Felipe, for example, told me about how his resettlement experience in Bento Gonçalves, a small city in Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, changed his livelihood for the better:

I think all my expectations were accomplished, because of the support that I received from the implementing agency. That support was key [...] I am doing well, very well here, I cannot complain. The small mistakes I have made here are because of my own fault. But now I enjoy Brazil, in my job I benefit from the Brazilian economy, I like the people here – at least most of them – I like the home I have today and the woman that I have next to me [...] The Felipe that came out from Ecuador doesn't exist anymore.

(Felipe, PTC\_BR121)

Felipe experienced a change in his profession and an upgrade to his economic situation, developing a career as a sommelier. He divorced his Colombian wife, and his kids spent their time travelling between Colombia (during the academic year) and Brazil (during holidays). At the time of the interview, he was living with his Brazilian girlfriend. In his narrative, Felipe refers both to a change in his material conditions as well as to the transformations of his identity and membership in the host country. Despite this positive outcome, Felipe made constant references to his experiences of racial discrimination and explained that he coped with these incidents by improving his socio-economic position in the city and extending his social and economic networks, suggesting that he attempted to overcome racial discrimination by strengthening his membership of a higher social class. Felipe's account reveals a personal recovery from the instability, trauma and anxiety generated by his displacement from Colombia and his asylum in Ecuador. During the interview he described different strategies and opportunities he took to 're-possess' his life in Brazil (Ryan-Saha 2015).

The diversity of opinions among refugees from both groups, in relation to how their expectations were accomplished or not, was made explicit through the results of the survey conducted across both countries. In response to the statement "*This country met all my expectations*" (Q.65), refugees from both communities shared a variety of opinions about their experiences in the host country (see Table 5.2). For example in Chile, 50% (N=19) Colombian refugees and 52.7% (N=10) Palestinian refugees were undecided or disagreed with the statement. In Brazil, on the other hand, 85% (N=17) of Colombian refugees and 77.72% (N=7) of Palestinian refugees disagreed or were undecided whether the country had accomplished their expectations.

**Table 5.2. Palestinian and Colombian refugees’ expectations in Chile and Brazil**

<i>Q65. This country met all my initial expectations</i>	Completely disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Answer	Total
<b>Colombians in Chile</b>	3 (7.9%)	7 (18.4%)	9 (23.7%)	11 (28.9%)	6 (15.8%)	2 (5.2%)	38
<b>Palestinians in Chile</b>	1 (5.3%)	3 (15.8%)	6 (31.6%)	7 (36.8%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0.0%)	19
<b>Colombians in Brazil</b>	5 (25%)	7 (35%)	5 (25%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)	20
<b>Palestinians in Brazil</b>	2 (22.2%)	3 (33.3%)	2 (22.2%)	0	0	2 (22.2%)	9

\*Data source: Survey implemented in Chile and Brazil during 2013 and 2014.

The findings provided by survey data, reinforced the idea that the perceptions about expectations varies among groups in each country. That is to say that refugee expectations are dynamic and impacted by factors that range from ethnicity and class to patterns of displacement, aspirations, information given and the terms of the resettlement programme (Biehl 2015).

In addition, expectations, from how they were constructed to how unmet expectations were confronted, demonstrated that refugees are not static within their own experiences. Refugees’ expectations were revealed as coping mechanisms and expressions of hope, as suggested by Horst and Grabska (2015), but also as a negotiation tool of resistance against the bureaucracies of resettlement, and they were central to refugee claims and active forms of organisation (see Chapter 7). In all these forms, expectations were at the centre of the sometimes tense relationship between the resettlement programme and the Palestinian and Colombian refugees in both countries. Expectations, as shown in this chapter, are another translocal expression of the refugee experience, as they were spatially developed in one or multiple places and they shaped the communication with the organisations involved pre and post resettlement (Westoby 2009; Fanjoy et al. 2005; Shrestha 2011). Refugees talking about, claiming and recognising their unfulfilled expectations not only cast light on their diverse experiences and sometimes precarious conditions, but also showed the spectrum of refugee negotiations of their own experiences of resettlement.

In comparison with refugees’ expectations researched in other resettlement countries (Kenny & Lockwood-Kenny 2011; Shrestha 2011; Fanjoy et al. 2005; Westoby 2009; Marete 2012), it can be suggested from this research that issues emerging from ‘unmet

expectations' are not necessarily related to the emergent and fragile refugee structure in Chile and Brazil and, instead, can be associated with complexities and discontinuities of resettlement and the way agencies communicate and are accountable to refugees; ideas that I explore in Section 5.4.

Furthermore, the analysis of refugees 'unmet expectations' provided some insights to start building the notion of 'unsettlement' as part of the 'integration' process of resettlement. So far, I have suggested that unsettlement is characterised by uncertainty and instability, developed first during the displacement and then normalised during resettlement. It is important to address the fact that the refugee experience, as with any other life experience, will always involve some level of uncertainty and/or instability. In this sense, Williams and Baláž (2012) correctly points out that even if a refugee receives completely clear information (pre and post resettlement), they will always face some elements of uncertainty about how to adapt to new environments and social networks. Williams stresses that the extent of uncertainty varies over "space and time and perhaps over the course of the migration cycle" (Ibid 2012, p.168). Thereby, unsettlement as part of 'integration' is not built in opposition to being 'settled'. Instead, 'unsettlement' emphasises that 'integration' is not a process but instead an experience and as such is dynamic, multifaceted and involves multiple scales and spaces, addressing both functional and social aspects of 'integration' (see Korac 2003a). The notion of unsettlement builds on the literature on uncertainty within refugees studies explored in Chapter 3 (Horst & Grabska 2015; Williams & Baláž 2012; Griffiths 2013; Norman 2005). However, I argue that other dimensions such as instability, power imbalances, translocal belongings and refugee agency, are also part of (or a response to) unsettlement. As I will argue through the next chapters, unsettlement reveals 'integration' both as experience and as negotiation, where refugee integration is not only a policy goal but actually a lived-experience.

### **5.3.2. 'They took us, brought us and abandoned us': Perceptions about organisations**

As discussed above, the distance between what the programme offered and how it unfolded in the resettlement countries created tensions and mistrust between refugees and the organisations. These frictions materialised in concrete criticisms and perceptions about people and organisations involved. I briefly discuss two main perceptions that

emerged from the data that illustrate these tensions: the perception of being neglected and accusations of corruption suggested by some refugees.

The feeling of being abandoned emerged in the narratives of some resettled refugees in both countries. This materialised through complaints about the programmes' lack of communication after the last financial allowance was delivered. Some refugees were unsure if the programme should keep in contact or not, while others perceived that the lack of contact did not allow the organisations to become familiarised with their socio-economic situation. Liliana, a Colombian refugee in Chile, and Mouna, Palestinian refugee in Brazil, emphasised that:

Since we arrived, people from the Vicaría told us that they would come 'to visit to see how you live'. They never came. We always told them, 'please come and see how we are living'. And they always said that they would come, but it has been 7 years since we came and they never showed up. They never came to visit us.

(Liliana, PTC\_CH32)

Where is the UN, ah? They took us, brought us here and abandoned us, forgetting about everything [they promised]. They could come around and see, at least they could call, keep the contact.

(Mouna, PTP\_BR152)

While Liliana's complaint was addressed directly at the NGO, Mouna's account referred to the UN more broadly. Palestinian refugees in both countries emphasised the pivotal role that the UNHCR had in their resettlement option (or lack of option) and the responsibility they assumed the UN agency had for their resettlement. During the fieldwork I constantly heard service providers complaining about refugees' demands based on the argument that 'they brought us here'. Some of the organisations even felt that refugees 'treat us as employees', in opposition to refugee claims of lack of attention. Refugees' perceptions of being abandoned were predominant among those whose financial support had ended, but it is important to emphasise that not all refugees interviewed shared the same perceptions. Some of them negotiated close relationships with specific members of the resettlement organisations. While working in both NGOs I was given permission to look at the records of visits to families. These records showed that after the first few months, the frequency of visits diminished once the money disbursed was finished. In Brazil, however, NGOs still visited refugees living in cities where new arrivals were taken, depending on time available and the agenda in each city. In Chile, contact was kept with refugees

through some activities that the NGO organised such as creative writing workshops for male refugees, a music workshop for children and training workshops for women. The programme also invited some families to the evaluation day. However, none of the NGOs kept a comprehensive and updated record of refugees' contact details (see Chapter 4).

Some refugees also raised accusations of corruption within resettlement organisations, suggesting that some of the funding aimed for them was missing. These allegations were mostly made by Palestinian refugees in Brazil, who knew that the resettlement programme brought a huge amount of money to the agencies (Chapter 2) and who claimed that they did not receive what they should have. Rabah's account illustrates some of these comments:

They told us 'you will be received in Brazil and you will have UN support for two years'... but then another business started. They said that we would have a rented house during that time and that you would receive money to eat. They said that those over 65 would be supported by the government. They did say that the two first years would be with the help of the UN and that after we would receive help from the government. But then we came here [and he makes a gesture of washing hands] and nobody does anything. They said in the newspaper that the programme costs nine thousands dollar per refugee. That is what we cost to the UN! But what do I receive from that? I got R\$350 for rent and y R\$350 for food... 700 reales in total. So the UN gives me 9 thousand dollars but how much did I receive? Where is the money? They stole from us!

(Rabah, PTP\_BR151)

The resettlement of Palestinian refugees to Chile and Brazil received much press coverage and refugees contrasted the information received from external sources with their own unfulfilled expectations and sometimes precarious living conditions, constructing the perception that NGO and UNHCR staff were stealing money allocated for their resettlement. Although most Palestinian refugees interviewed in Brazil told me about it, when I asked them where they got the information, they never gave a clear answer. According to one of the programme's former workers the main problem was that refugees had more information about resettlement than the host organisations themselves:

The Palestinian group that came here knew a lot about the resettlement programme globally. They knew too much and I think that also was a problem, because they even knew more than those involved in the programme in Brazil.

(Former UNHCR officer PTBT145)

The issue is that the information should have come from the programme itself in order to avoid this type of perception. During the five years in the refugee camp, Palestinians heard diverse information about how the resettlement process worked in general (El-Shaarawi 2015; Horst 2006), constructing their own knowledge about what the durable solution meant and what they were entitled to. The more refugees found their aspirations about resettlement unmet, the more trust was eroded. These perceptions, accusations and assumptions, created through a lack of clear communication, show that the experience of resettlement starts from the day that the refugee receives the option to be resettled. It is shaped even earlier for those refugees awaiting a 'durable solution' at a camp. The first encounter plays an essential role in the expectations formed by the refugee and the resettlement actors. The next section explores the expectations and discourses constructed by the resettlement programmes in relation to refugees.

#### **5.4. Representations and power relationships within resettlement**

Following on from the previous section that highlighted the ways in which service providers and other actors were perceived by refugees, this section explores the way in which refugees were discursively constructed by members of organisations involved in resettlement. While some expectations were based on the programme's objectives, the assumptions about refugees' behaviour were shaped by hegemonic discourses about what 'refugeeness' should be. While the first section explores some concrete examples of how these representations play out in relation to the programme's aim of 'self-sufficiency', the second section discusses the different understandings around the notion of refugee protection. The third part of the section briefly explores some of the tensions that emerged among the UNHCR partners on resettlement, arising from the programmes lack of clear information and structural 'discontinuities' (Shrestha 2011; Ong 2003), as discussed later. In this chapter, I emphasise the nuances of the relationships between refugees and resettlement institutions, arguing that their complexity goes beyond the simplification of over-victimising refugees and demonising resettlement organisations. Each actor held their own perceptions, based on their experiences and rationale, together with structural (and budgetary) constraints that framed the aspirations and assumptions they had about each other. In addition, the relationship between refugees and the

resettlement programme is based on power imbalances embedded in the refugee system that shapes dynamics, attitudes and the politics of resettlement.

#### **5.4.1. 'Refugee Mentality' and the hegemonic discourses about 'self-sufficiency'**

During fieldwork at both research sites, I interviewed 20 people directly involved in the resettlement programme as staff (or former members) of the organisations in each country<sup>73</sup>. All of them expressed commitment to refugee protection and highlighted the well-intentioned aims of the resettlement programme – together with recognising many of the challenges of it. However, some of the staff members held contradictory views about refugees. These representations of refugees, based on personal understandings or institutional views, affected and shaped their work, resulting in either a victim-saviour approach (Harrell-Bond 2002) or the need to overcome what they called 'refugee mentality'. These two ideas emerged in the interviews in both countries and were evident while exploring the expectations held by the resettlement programme in relation to the refugees' integration process. For example, one of the goals of the resettlement programme in both countries was refugee self-sufficiency, which was understood by the implementing agencies as economic autonomy and refugees finding employment as key to their integration. This notion of self-sufficiency was even considered during the selection process, as both countries recognised that one of the criteria was 'integration potential' (see Chapter 2). NGO staff in Chile and Brazil explained that this 'potential' was assessed in terms of previous experience, personal relationships, family composition and willingness (and capacity) to work. As the resettlement coordinator of one of the NGOs in Brazil told me:

We have to select people with a perspective of fast integration. So if there is a woman with five children and two of them are of working age we defend their case (...) Against our will we are discriminating against families with high vulnerability because we don't have the capacity to work with them. At the moment of the selection we privilege people that after a year can be economically self-sufficient.

(Resettlement Coordinator ASAV, PTBR135)

This account highlighted that by being economically independent, refugees would not rely on the agencies and they would be able to sustain their own livelihoods. It is worth

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<sup>73</sup> I also interviewed another 16 informants who were involved in refugee assistance or related to the programme – either through formal or informal partnerships (see Chapter 4).

noticing that the expectations held by the resettlement programmes in relation to self-sufficiency and access to the labour market, were not different from what the refugees themselves wanted. However, there was a gap between the assumptions of refugees and the programme about what type of job they should access and how and when they should get it. In the case of Palestinian refugees in both countries and the Colombians in Brazil, language was an explicit barrier along with the type of employment (sometimes completely different to refugees' previous experience or aspirations). Additionally, refugees faced obstacles validating previous academic degrees and other issues related to age, gender barriers or family dynamics that may have delayed their access to the job market. In the case of Colombian refugees in Chile, they also had to deal with discrimination experienced in different workplaces, as the AREVI coordinator told me.

Furthermore, there was a difference in what the institutions and refugees understood by self-sufficiency beyond the neoliberal approach to economic stability<sup>74</sup> by reducing the role of the state and promoting economic self-sufficiency. For refugees, self-sufficiency involved economic autonomy as well as agency and ownership of their own resettlement process. For example, refugees raised demands in relation to what they considered unmet promises (discussed earlier) as well as a desire for citizenship and equal access to rights (see Chapter 7). This 'attitude' was sometimes considered as 'ungrateful' by the resettlement organisations and explained away as due to their 'refugee mentality'. The notion of 'refugee mentality' that emerged from the interviews with service providers, was associated with the belief that refugees were used to being assisted and unable or unwilling to develop their own livelihood projects. This rhetoric was more common when referring to Palestinian refugees, but was also used to explain the behaviour of some Colombian refugees. The quotes below show how this idea was framed in the narratives about the programme in each country:

There was a change in the attitude of the [Palestinian] beneficiaries that I placed around the second half of 2009. Because Palestinians always had a refugee mentality, you know, that the 'international community own us'. That 'we are refugees and also that we will return'. So, at the beginning there was a constant asking and asking. There was no will. But when they realised that cuts were being made and the stipend was

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<sup>74</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3, I use the term 'neoliberal approach' in reference to the ways in which the resettlement programmes in Chile and Brazil base their projects of refugee integration on measurable outcomes such as 'self-sufficiency', proclaimed by the organisations working with refugees with the liberal aim of creating self-regulating subjects under specific conditions (Gray 2011; Root et al. 2014; Lippert 1998).

running out in two years, 'se pusieron las pilas' [they started to be more proactive]. They found jobs. When they saw that the housing subsidy was real they started to be more involved because they were going to have a house. There was a change.

(Resettlement Analyst, PTCH84)

You have that Colombian refugee that was so long in Venezuela; I don't know... we usually said that those are the most likely to return or the ones that want to extend the financial assistance. Because when they are in the first country of asylum, they are being assisted as well, so they don't want to stop being assisted. They are used to it. But resettlement is exactly about producing that break. What we want is that they don't have any dependency! [...]. They don't plan that, but they want to keep being assisted. Doesn't matter what we offer here, it never is going to be enough. If you are dependant in one place, in the world, in life... because being dependent is bad indeed, but also very comfortable. So when people are for a long time living under assistance they lose the capacity to look for their own resources.

(Resettlement Coordinator ASAV, PTBR135)

Although refugees had financial support, maybe that was not enough for their expectations. But then you wonder, but did not these people come from a refugee camp? But their entire life was not in the camp. And they received great amounts of subsidies within the political framework where they were.

(Labour Liaison Officer, AREVI, PTCH100)

In the case of Palestinian refugees, the resettlement organisations associated their 'refugeeness' with living in a refugee camp, because *'they were getting all their basic needs covered there'*. This view focuses only on the basic assistance refugees received, decontextualizing that help from the appalling conditions in which refugees were living in the middle of the desert, unwillingly and unable to leave. As Malkki (1996) argues, these types of views depoliticise refugees and remove them from their historical context, reducing them to humanitarian subjects. I argue that in the case of Chile and Brazil, depending on refugee compliance in what was expected from them, their 'refugeeness' made them either 'universal victims' worthy of help and protection (Rajaram 2002) or 'ungrateful' subjects (Moulin 2012) who were used to claiming and unwilling to integrate. As the first quote reveals, the government officer argues that Palestinian refugees stopped acting with a 'refugee mentality' when they started to work. However, no consideration was given to the fact that, after two years in Chile, refugees knew the language better, built social capital and had a better understanding of how the country's bureaucracy worked.

The narratives that construct refugees as recipients of assistance (Rajaram 2002; see also Sigona 2014), do not account for how refugees themselves construct their own identities and agency (Sommers 1994). Most of the Palestinian refugees that I interviewed constructed their 'refugeeness' in relation to their own narratives, relational settings and historical processes, with being part of the Palestinian diaspora displaced from their homeland (Doraï 2002). Indeed, their collective 'refugeeness' was not only a humanitarian issue, but also a political issue that demanded recognition, and a solution, from the international community. Their identification as refugees was also personal, with individual connotations of what it meant to be a refugee for most of one's life such as the consequences of family division (see Chapter 6) and their desires to be settled or their aspirations, for example, of having a passport (Chapter 7). In this context, their refugee status was used as an instrument of negotiation and resistance to claim part of the life they have lost. However, refugees did not see their 'refugeeness' as being linked to continuous assistance, but indeed as a reminder that their lives were disrupted and put on hold because of a displacement that they did not want. As Mouna, the young Palestinian refugee that I interviewed in Brazil, told me: *"It is not our fault that we came here without [work] experience, without having worked before! We spent five years, even more than that living in a refugee camp. There is nothing I could have done"*.

It is interesting that despite strong criticisms by service providers of what they called the culture of dependency and 'refugee mentality', their social intervention model reinforced this idea. As one former officer in Brazil told me, "it is necessary to consider a more comprehensive and integral rights approach and not only a money delivery approach". NGO staff in both countries acknowledged the limitations of their model and advocated a reflexive consideration about the design implemented around refugee integration. A report prepared by AREVI, in Chile, stressed that one of the main issues faced by the resettlement programme is short-term processes guided by stipend delivery:

[There is a] struggle between the *asistencialismo* [welfare dependence] generated by short-term programmes that do not manage to generate inclusive process v/s the collaboration between institutions and interlocutors. It is easy to fall in this situation when the programmes are designed around the financial support received, instead of privileging the processes. (AREVI 2012, p.26)

#### 5.4.2. Protection v/s integration: framing the 'good refugee'

Expectations surrounding what constituted the 'good refugee' that emerged from the organisations' narratives were also related to the resettlement programme's main objective: refugee protection. This notion of protection is mainly understood as "legal protection" (Helton 2003) in line with the requirements of the 1951 Refugee Convention. While the UNHCR defines protection as "all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual, in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e. international human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law)" (UNHCR 2012b), the resettlement programme in both countries understood protection as the re-establishment of basic rights by taking people out of dangerous or appalling situations in the context of an humanitarian emergency. This emphasis is evident in the narratives of AREVI and ASAV staff members:

I don't know how they lived in Iraq, maybe better or worse. Some of them said they had two cars, more than one property, that they had certain things and that they had to leave everything behind. Ok, I agree that you had to leave behind relatives, parents, brothers, I don't know, friends, your life and a particular environment... but the programme is not designed to provide you the life you used to have. The programme is there to save your lives, you know? And, little by little, offering the conditions for developing your life here. But first the programme is saving your life, is bringing you to a safe place, no? Where your kids can go on the streets without problems, where you can go to the supermarket without having a bomb exploding next to you. That is the aim of the programme.

(Former Interpreter AREVI, PTCH85).

When you asked me for the main objective of the programme I told you about the goal of autonomy, mainly through insertion to the labour market. However, thinking in the bigger picture, the main aim before anything else is the one of protection. And that is pretty much something that they can get in Brazil.

(Staff member ASAV, PTBR136)

According to these accounts, protection is understood in relation to refugees' safety in the host state, the recognition of refugee status and the state's decision to grant them a residency permit. This understanding of protection that prevails as the main goal of the resettlement programme in both countries conveniently dismisses refugees' demands in relation to their substantial integration. The accounts of implementing agencies focused on the idea that refugees were safe in the host countries and therefore should be thankful. Indeed, refugees were thankful for Chile and Brazil's protection, but they understood protection as needing to include the rights that they could not access and the

accomplishment of unfulfilled promises. In this sense, it can be argued that refugees' enhanced understanding of protection goes beyond obtaining legal status in a safe place, and is in line with what Hathaway (2006) considers the orientation of refugee protection as "creating conditions of independence and dignity". Between both understandings of what should be the scope of protection emerged the well-known paradox between refugee protection and refugee integration: legal status does not necessarily guarantee substantial citizenship and/or belonging (Da Lomba 2010; Hyndman 2011) (discussed in Chapter 7). As I discuss in this thesis, resettlement as a durable solution does not necessarily mean the end of the refugee cycle and many refugees found themselves living in a condition of prolonged unsettlement.

Furthermore, in both countries narratives emerged about the "ungrateful subject" (Moulin 2012), those refugees that appraised the *gift* of humanitarian protection as not sufficient without equal access to rights and services in the host country. Moulin (2012) argues that refugee resistance goes against the gratitude expected by hosts in relation to the *gift of protection* granted by the sovereign authority. In her analysis, the author argues that expectations of gratitude by hosting societies are based primarily on a tension between two rights: freedom and protection.

[...] the freedom granted to refugees is above all, the freedom to be free from the fear of persecution and its consequent physical violence. Therefore, it is assumed that refugees must, given the lack of such barriers, be self-sufficient and, at some point, promise to be obedient and respectful of the rules established by the hosting country in exchange for these minimal liberties (Ibid 2012, p.59).

The suggested trade-off between protection and refugee compliance to the "laws of gratitude" suggested by the author, marked the relationships that the organisations established with refugees and shaped some of their processes and communication channels. This tension was not exclusively between Palestinian refugees and the resettlement programme. Colombian refugees were, to a lesser extent, also regarded under the lenses of the 'good and thankful refugee'.

Before exploring how the notion of the 'ungrateful subject' developed discursively to also make reference to Colombian refugees, it is important to highlight that the resettlement organisations in both sites assumed that the integration of Colombian refugees was easier

than for those from outside the region. One of the staff members of the governmental officers in Chile explained:

It is easier in the case of the Colombian refugees, because there are many Colombians in the country already. They [resettled refugees] don't arrive asking how Chile would be. Also, there are many Colombian migrants that are not refugees [...] they even speak the same language.

(Resettlement Analyst, PTCH84)

This view assumes that there is a 'cultural proximity' as well as the existence of networks of Colombian compatriots in the host country, particularly in Chile. However, as shown by the narratives of the Colombian refugees through this thesis, sharing a similar language and the presence of a large migrant community in the receiving country do not necessarily ease the integration experience. Refugees faced discrimination in some spaces, particularly in Chile, because they were part of a large migrant community, where their refugee status was neither recognised nor understood. In addition, the assumption of 'easy integration' does not recognise refugee fears and security concerns in relation to other Colombians (see discussion in Chapter 6).

In a context characterised by the assumption that refugees from within the region would integrate easier, refugees who complained about unmet promises or who requested more attention from the organisations, were deemed as 'problematic', 'ungrateful' or as having the previously discussed 'refugee mentality'. An example of this rhetoric was the case of Eugenia and her family, who developed a tense relationship with one of the NGOs in Brazil when the family actively demanded written communication, either on paper or by email, from the NGO. The first letter the family sent to the NGO was in May 2013, one month after their arrival in Brazil. In the missive written in Spanish, they thanked the programme for the support received until then, and requested to know on which date they would be able to start the Portuguese classes that the NGO was coordinating through the local municipality. The next letter the family sent to the programme was seven pages long and used UNHCR documents and reports to justify three main points:

- The consequences of the delay and bad quality of the Portuguese classes;

- “The lack of strategies that allow full and clear communication with the refugee, that allow you to establish a better understanding of our needs – not only economic ones, but also sociocultural needs”;
- The NGO’s lack of knowledge about the access to extra Portuguese courses and processes to access higher education.

Eugenia ended the letter by saying that because of all the reasons above they requested voluntary return to Colombia. They gave the document to the UNHCR officer who together with two ASAV staff members visited them in October 2013, seven months after their arrival. I discussed this case several times with members of the NGO and they thought Eugenia and her family were ‘making noise’ to get more assistance. They told me that they never before received such a request for written communication from other refugees and that they did not have time to answer her directly. In those letters, Eugenia and her family were not asking for more money, their only request was clear information, formal communication channels, and better quality support given by the NGO. As Eugenia told me:

I told them [the NGO] that I felt that the organisation didn’t exist, because there was no communication between the staff. You talked about one thing with people that came here to visit us, but quite another thing was the decisions taken there [at the office]. When the answers came they were totally different to what we have asked for. [...] and we have told them everything. I have the back-up of all the written communication that I have had with them. Once over the phone they told me that my case was exceptional because nobody asked for written responses. But that is the only way I know, everything is written. I even talked with the coordinator and requested her to answer my emails, she refused and she didn’t. So I told her, ‘well, I do have lots of time so I will keep writing to you because I don’t trust in your type of communication. You send me two people here, but then you take decisions there about my case that doesn’t consider what I said to them’. After that, we started losing communication with them.

(Eugenia, PTC\_BR113)

A year later, in October 2014, Eugenia wrote another letter to the UNHCR. This time, the 4 page letter was written in Portuguese. In the letter, Eugenia explained that the resettlement programme “does not guarantee a platform that allows our integration, whether cultural, social or economic, or facilitates professional qualification”. As a result, her mother, sister and nephews decided to return voluntarily to Colombia with the

financial help of one of their relatives. Eugenia stated that she was now working as a Bilingual Technical Support Analyst in one local municipality and stayed in Brazil with her daughter. In the letter, she requested support from the programme that could allow her to start a degree in Rio Grande do Sul and reminded them, one more time, about all the previous unanswered requests for information.

Eugenia's request for written communication was not outside the possibilities of the NGO. During my time observing the implementing agencies in both countries, I learnt about the great job they did trying to negotiate refugee access to social programmes, their advocacy work and how they dealt with daily administration duties. However, the number of resettled refugees is small in comparison, for example, with the number of asylum seekers that other similar humanitarian institutions assisted. As far as I observed, staff of the NGO in Brazil had time to respond to Eugenia's questions and demands in writing. However, there was no interest in doing so. This case, and the service providers' narratives, showed that, on the one hand, there is mistrust in relation to the true intentions of the refugees' demands (Shrestha 2011; Daniel & Knudsen 1995). On the other, none of the NGOs involved in resettlement expressed the need to be accountable to refugees (see Harrell-Bond 2002; Hyndman 2000). They were to the UNHCR, the donors and the governments through different types of reports and daily communication, but not to the beneficiaries. In our conversation, none of the staff members of the NGO in Brazil reflected on the possibility that written information may have provided the refugees with some reassurance that their opinions were heard and that the information they received was correct. Clear information could have stimulated a relationship of trust between refugees and institutions, as well as supporting feelings of certainty to help them navigate the bureaucracies of resettlement (see Caplan 2000).

The NGO's refusal to provide the information in writing as requested by Eugenia, resituated her in the position of *waiting*. This waiting leaves refugees expecting information from others, unaware of how long they may have to wait and uncertain of what they should or should not wait for. Waiting, even if it is for short periods, makes refugees' lives "unpredictable and uncertain" (Khosravi 2014; see also Brun 2015). The wait for clear information puts the refugee on hold and unable to be in control of their own experience. As Bourdieu (2000, p.228) argues, waiting implies submission and is "one

of the ways of experiencing the effects of power [...] making people wait, [...] delaying without destroying hope [...] is an integral part of the exercise of power". That is to say, to be a refugee is to be subordinated to the will of others (Auyero 2012): the countries, the international organisations, the host society and even the NGOs.

Some staff members unintentionally reinforced this exercise of power and governmentality during their daily encounters with refugees by providing (or not providing) specific information or by taking decisions that changed some of the terms and conditions of the programme. Refugees were constantly reminded that the resettlement programmes set the dynamics of their relationship, since they were the ones facilitating mobility into the country, providing their subsistence allowance and enabling, for example, their applications to certain entrepreneurship credits or benefits. In this context, control over information was crucial to define the power structures within resettlement (See Hyndman 2000; Harrell-Bond 2002; Harrell-Bond 1999). As one former staff of the programme told me, "access to information is a right, but in the context of resettlement is treated as a privilege". In Brazil, some organisation members recognised the need to improve and standardise the information provided to resettled individuals in the host country and to make transparent the criteria used for specific decisions, because the ad-hoc approach in place was guided by the personal affinity between staff and certain refugees. In Chile, the delivery of information was also weak and also needed to be harmonised. One refugee, Paula (49 years old), told me that in order to know what was happening she used to go to AREVI's premises every week to check if there was a new service, information or activities available. Basically, information was indeed provided, but on request only. For example, when AREVI in Chile closed as UNHCR's implementing partner, there was no established procedure to inform refugees that the NGO would stop supporting refugees or to provide the contact details of the new service provider.

In this section, I have explored the perceptions and assumptions that NGOs reproduced in relation to refugees and how these affected the use and absence of information within the resettlement programme in both countries. These findings support suggestions that the humanitarian structure around refugee protection has institutionalised, depoliticised and silenced the figure of the refugee (Nyers & Rygiel 2012; Rajaram 2002; Malkki 1996) and has exacerbated the power imbalances between the resettlement organisations and

refugees (Hyndman 2000; Harrell-Bond 1999; Lippert 1998). Consequently, the processes and interventions of NGOs have been shaped in a way that encourages the mistrust and resentment expressed by refugees. The performance of the resettlement organisations in Chile and Brazil *vis-à-vis* refugees exemplifies what I call the paradoxes between the politics of humanitarianism and the politics of belonging. The resettlement programme has been designed and implemented around the emergency and the need, expressed by the organisations, to provide immediate relief to victims of displacement, in line with common understandings of humanitarianism (Barnett & Weiss 2008). At the same time, however, the programme demanded that refugees adopt the passive role of a humanitarian subject that complied with the logic of gratitude and the responsibility of self-sufficiency as the main means of integration.

#### **5.4.3. Structural constraints and tensions between resettlement partners**

Each organisation involved with the programme in each country also had their own expectations about resettlement besides the ones generated in relation to the refugees. For example, the governments of Chile and Brazil considered that taking the lead on regional resettlement would position them as good players in relation to international cooperation and humanitarian burden-sharing. As a former member of the UNHCR told me “everything related to refugees is political. The assistance may be humanitarian, but the drive is political. [...] There was an ambition by both Brazil and Chile, to be the first ones offering resettlement in the region” (PTBR145). In the case of Brazil, as a former programme worker suggested, resettlement was also considered an extra step to strengthen its campaign for permanent membership on the UN Security Council. According to UNHCR officers interviewed for this research, resettlement in these two emergent host countries represented an opportunity to strengthen their refugee structures and eventually secure internal funding to run the programme without the financial support of the UN agency. This expectation was based on both countries’ macroeconomic stability and growth, considering that Chile is a member of the OECD (OECD 2015) and Brazil is the seventh largest economy by nominal GDP in the world, as of 2015 (World Bank 2015). The NGOs, on the other hand, expected to be able to reinforce their social intervention programmes, to influence sectorial policies, to fulfil institutional aims in relation to humanitarian assistance, and to secure funding.

The different expectations and distinctive roles that each organisation had within the resettlement programme show the structural complexities of this durable solution, involving different institutional rationalities, goals and constraints. At the same time, this design of cooperation clearly shows the different levels where resettlement is negotiated, and therefore experienced, at the international, national, and grassroots levels. Both Chile and Brazil described the resettlement programme as a tripartite cooperation model between the UNHCR, the government and the NGOs (AREVI 2012; Sampaio 2010). Although each organisation remained autonomous, there are specific power dynamics within this loose assemblage of agents and organisations (Lippert 1998). While the NGOs were the ones directly in contact with refugees and implementing the resettlement agenda, the UNHCR provided the main funding for running the programme, including the payment of some NGO staff's salaries. Chile and Brazil, on the other hand, granted the decision to resettle refugees together with providing specific funding contributions. This general context highlights that the NGOs had to be accountable to both the UNHCR and the government through constant communication and that they had to accommodate their plans to the other institutions' specific budget systems and timelines. The complex association of all these different institutions did not develop free of tensions. I identify here three main areas of conflict: lack of coordination and clear structure, perceptions and assumptions about other organisations and budget constraints.

One of the tensions that emerged in both countries was the lack of coordination and clarity around macro and micro features of the programme. On the macro level, a former programme officer in Brazil argued that resettlement needed a clearer objective in which "the state needs to define if resettlement is a State policy and what is the aim of this policy". The comment underscored one of the main issues in both countries: the lack of specific policies directed towards refugees around areas such as housing and pensions (see Chapter 7). In addition, the inclusion of different ministries within the coordination of the resettlement model, such as the composition of CONARE in Brazil and the vulnerable cases group in Chile (see Chapter 2), did not really signify substantive changes to the programme. In Brazil, the composition of CONARE clashed with the complex structure of the Brazilian federal state in which policies need to be approved at a local level. In Chile, the Commission on vulnerable cases brought all the actors together, except refugees, and discussed issues emerging from the programme. However, instead of looking at policies

that could benefit the entire refugee population, that commission focused on solving issues as they arose case by case.

Furthermore, according to staff members in both countries, the resettlement programme needed to clearly define their aims and processes. An evaluation report undertaken by the resettlement programme in Chile suggested that there was a poor conceptualisation of terms:

“There is a lack of conceptual density in relation to some of the terms and the epistemological framework from where these are taken and used (i.e. family autonomy, integration process, process of intervention, etc.)” (AREVI 2012, p.10)

In practice, the unclear definition of the aims, means and methodologies of resettlement translated into decisions taken on an ad-hoc basis. This approach generated constant changes in the programme, while also generating comparisons among refugees when one received a certain benefit that the other did not. Furthermore, when problems emerged, particularly with the Palestinian programme, the resettlement institutions contradicted themselves. Some refugees perceived this lack of coordination and saw an opportunity to approach specific actors either to address issues related to the unmet promises or to solve particular requests. During the interviews, I noticed that some refugees sometimes confused the different organisations involved in resettlement, while other refugees knew the exact role of each organisation, how to contact them and who to address regarding specific demands. This created tension among the organisations, as recalled by one of the resettlement officers in Brazil:

At the beginning we had lots of problems with people complaining about things that didn't happen or about what the person from the UNHCR said before they came. And at that point it was quite confusing because there was no real coordination between what the UNHCR and the NGOs were telling refugees. And that created other problems because the UNHCR position was that we can sort things on the way. But that doesn't work properly because we didn't know what to tell the refugee and when the information wasn't what they expected they said 'then, we are contacting the UNHCR directly'.

(Staff member ASAV, PTBR136)

In some cases, NGO staff considered the involvement of the UNHCR as an 'intervention' to the work they did with refugees and as an interruption of their communication channels. Besides the tensions between organisations and the delimitations of their roles, the teams

within each organisation suffered from internal fractures and stress. As a former officer told me:

I think the Palestinian programme created a stress in all the organisations. We had one NGO with more experience than the other one. In Sao Paulo they even had differences within the team. When the problem came to the UNHCR, it came with all the stress. I do believe that the organisation talked with some partners more than other ones. The resettlement programme always has been tripartite, but with the Palestinians nobody wanted to take the problem.

(Former worker Brazil, PTBR145)

The disagreements within the teams were also due the lack of training some staff received, particularly the staff hired by the NGOs for the Palestinian programme such as local coordinators (in the case of Chile) and teachers and interpreters (in both countries). I spoke with former staff members of the programme in Chile and Brazil and none of them received specific training on resettlement, how to handle vulnerable cases or conflict resolution. In some teams, tensions emerged when some staff decided to be available 24 hours for refugees, using their personal time and their own resources to solve their needs. These decisions created further tensions between team members with different views about the services they should provide and between some officers and refugees when the latter did not receive the same responses from all the staff.

Resettlement in Chile and Brazil was also characterised by the perceptions, assumptions and questions that organisations involved had about each other. For example, NGO staff in Chile and Brazil told me to have doubts about the selection criteria used by the UNHCR offices in the first country of asylum. As one staff member stated, they 'had a weird relationship' with the UNHCR in the first country of asylum. Additionally, some of the programme staff assumed that the problems of communication or attitude towards refugees were due to the elitist composition of the UNHCR in the resettlement country and their lack of contact with the refugee population. As one NGO's member told me, "in one of the coordination meetings there was a running joke saying that members of the UNHCR in Brasilia only dealt with refugees directly when the Palestinian refugees camped outside their offices". Furthermore, UNCHR staff were represented in other service providers' narratives as either people who tended to 'romanticise' the programme or who considered refugees as just being a number and evaluations a check list of accomplished tasks.

In both countries the programmes faced budget restrictions that constrained the services delivered. While in Brazil one of the NGOs was increasing their own financial contribution towards the programme, in Chile the budget was drastically reduced. Between 2010 and 2011 the cuts reached 25% in Chile. By 2012 the cuts rose to 48% (Agar Corbinos & Pefaur Dendal 2013). It could be argued that the budget constraints faced by NGOs may explain the 'abandonment' identified by refugees (Section 5.3.2); however, from what I observed in both countries, it was a mixture of funding restrictions (which led to lack of staff during some busy periods), lack of will and unclear communication.

As can be expected, there were practical consequences to all these structural problems. In Brazil, for example, the NGO staff emphasised the need for better evaluation mechanisms. The only qualitative evaluation in place was when one of the UNHCR members visited some of the families. This process also aimed to assess the role of the implementing partner. However, the UNHCR carried out the evaluation with the NGO staff in the same room. Even the report of the visit had to be written by the NGO. One of the ASAV members found this particularly problematic.

It is a very uncomfortable situation. I am ok with the UNHCR talking with the refugees alone; here there is nothing to hide. But it is uncomfortable for the refugee to answer questions about our work with us in the room. So, they [UNHCR] established some rules that they then themselves don't follow. We raise this issue every year.

(NGO officer Brazil, PTBR136)

In Chile, on the other hand, AREVI managed to establish a comprehensive evaluation system that included the resettled refugees. However, those processes and methodologies accomplished over a period of ten years, were lost when the NGO closed their refugee unit in 2013. I was there when the programme started to gradually cut its staff. At the time of transferring the files to the new organisation in charge of the programme, there were only two people working in AREVI. Although beneficiaries' files were transferred, there was no systematic transfer of methodologies, instruments and strategies.

Overall, the perception among the organisations involved in the programme in both countries, is that resettlement is an emergency programme and that the experience of implementation is building up. However, as many actors recognise, resettlement may not

be sustainable over time, as it is not integral to the migration policies and strategies of Chile and Brazil and therefore depends on budget and political will. Officers involved in the programme in each country illustrate some of these difficulties:

Brazil does not have experience on resettlement; this is an experience that has been building on the way. [...] We need better preparation. Also, the UNHCR needs to be clear about what is the financial assistance and for how long that assistance will last. But also we need to clarify responsibilities, both rights and responsibilities.

(Former resettlement Coordinator Caritas, PTBR146)

Yes, we managed to establish a programme. Now, how sustainable is it, in a country with our characteristics, to make such effort? I don't know. I mean, that is the question really. It requires a political willingness, a sensitivity to the topic, to make it a priority. (...) Also, I wouldn't say that there is a regional programme. I would say that there are different attempts in different countries to respond to an issue, but not articulated in a regional approach.

(Resettlement Analyst DEM, PTCH84)

The resettlement programmes in Chile and Brazil have accomplished significant progress over the years, but also considerable setbacks due to gaps and discontinuities in their aims and structure. As Stein (1981, pp.320–321) stated over two decades ago, “refugee problems are viewed as temporary and unique events”, and as a result it is difficult to coordinate, evaluate and learn from the past. Moreover, Shrestha (2011), based on Ong's (2003) research, states that the paradoxes of resettlement are “structural discontinuities” that can be understood as institutional and procedural ambiguities that end up imposing barriers to refugee integration. The data collected in Chile and Brazil supported the notion of structural discontinuities in resettlement, while shedding light on the power imbalances that also permeate the structures of resettlement. As explored in this chapter, both the structural discontinuities and the power imbalances in resettlement produce refugees' uncertainties while regulating how these uncertainties are 'framed and made sense of' (Biehl 2015, p.70). This discussion adds new dimensions to the refugees' experiences of integration by shifting the focus from solely the refugee responsibility to consideration instead of the interactions in resettlement and the role of organisations as part of the resettlement experience (Gidley 2014).

## 5.5. Conclusions

The findings I discuss in this chapter show that the tensions and power imbalances in the relationship between the refugees and the organisations running the resettlement programme are pivotal to understanding some of the dimensions and scales within which the resettlement experience is negotiated. The chapter explores how refugee expectations developed pre departure as a result of the uncertainties produced by the displacement, and how they turned into unfulfilled expectations in the resettlement country. Unmet expectations built mistrust between actors and extended the sense of uncertainty into the host country. The findings suggest that Colombian and Palestinian refugees faced different types of uncertainties and instabilities in Chile and Brazil, including coverage of immediate needs, socio-economic situation, access to social programmes and lack of clear information and communication channels. All of them framed the resettlement experience as one of unsettlement and this will be discussed further in the next two chapters. The analysis suggests that the experience of resettlement is influenced by resettlement organisations while still in the first country of asylum or in the refugee camp, and that it does not end with refugees' arrival in the resettlement country, questioning the means and temporal limitations of durable solutions (see Shrestha 2011). Lack of clear information reinforces refugee mistrust in the asylum agents and institutions, leading to the creation of certain perceptions about their role and behaviour. At the end, the resettlement institutions that were supposed to facilitate refugee integration became one more front of negotiation within the resettlement experience.

The second part of the chapter discussed the expectations of the resettlement organisations in relation to refugees. These sections explored the representations and discourses that organisations in both countries reproduced about refugees and the structural gaps in resettlement, which encouraged tensions with refugees and also within the organisations involved. I suggest that both the representations of refugees and the structural gaps in resettlement seem to emerge from the paradoxes of two main views that frame resettlement as a durable solution, through the politics of humanitarianism and the politics of belonging. While resettlement is considered an emergency measure to solve situations that demand immediate relief, it is also regarded as an end, assuming that resettlement will lead to citizenship while refugees comply with their role of 'humanitarian

subjects'. However, grasping the nuances of resettlement and the relationships between the actors involved shows that this perspective reinforces hegemonic discourses about refugees and leaves resettlement framed under the temporality of the emergency, under-theorised, with an incomplete implementation and lacking proper assessment. The paradoxes, exposed by the narratives of refugees and organisations, revealed how the politics of resettlement influences different scales of the refugee experience. In the next chapter, I explore the social dimension of refugee integration, arguing that this is experienced as multi-situated belonging.



## CHAPTER 6

### Translocal Belongings: between longing and (re)making 'home'

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#### 6.1. Introduction

In previous chapters (3 and 5), I have suggested that in order to explore refugee integration as an experience – and not only as a process, as a goal or as a policy outcome – this research must discuss both social and structural dimensions of 'integration'. This chapter focuses on the social and emotional aspects of the resettlement experience. Guided by the research question *'How do Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees negotiate the emotional dimensions of resettlement and to what extent do they develop a sense of belonging in the resettlement country?'*, I argue that the process of refugee integration in both countries was also marked by translocal belonging, with constructions of 'belonging' existing simultaneously in the resettlement country and in the material or symbolic representations of 'home'. The experiences of resettled refugees in both study sites revealed that 'belonging' ranged from personal accounts of 'place-belongingness', influenced by relational attachments, cultural factors and identity reformulation, to everyday experiences of negotiation of difference and resistance to social dynamics of inclusion/exclusion (see Antonsich 2010; Yuval-Davis 2010; Yuval-Davis 2006). The chapter does not limit 'belonging' to spatial or temporal experiences in the resettlement country, since 'belonging' was also constructed in relation to past experiences, in connection with multiple locales and marked by the experience of displacement (Christou 2011). The experiences of both resettled communities are situated and explored within each theme, highlighting similarities and differences between each group and each country.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, I explore experiences of 'uprootedness' and how the 'integration' process is influenced by the particular experience of displacement, persecution and family division (Section 6.2). Second, I discuss different aspects that marked refugees' sense of belonging in each country of resettlement, by looking at the key issue of language, the role of religion and faith and refugees' accounts of their social ties, friendships and networks (Section 6.3). Finally, Section 6.4 explores how these categories interconnect with each other and allow us to understand translocal belongings as part of the unsettled experience of integration.

## **6.2. ‘We didn’t choose this, the exile, the displacement’: Uprootedness**

A cross-cutting theme emerging from the interviews both with Colombian and Palestinian refugees was the sense of ‘uprootedness’ as a consequence of displacement. According to Bello (2001, 8) to be displaced:

[...] means to have lost ‘your place’, to stop being and living in the place where you have been; to be displaced is synonymous with uncertainty, rootlessness, anonymity, pain, anger, and the stubborn and obstinate presence of the memories and the constant effort of forgetting<sup>75</sup>.

In the case of forced migrants displacement is not a voluntary option, but the result of persecution and threat (see Chapter 2). Therefore, the duality of remembering and forgetting, that Bello identifies, is a constant that marks the experiences of both Colombian and Palestinian refugees. The sense of ‘uprootedness’ that emerged in the narratives of the 44 resettled refugees interviewed for this study was characterised by three dimensions: displacement and the loss generated from leaving well-known contexts, persecution, threat and trauma produced by these situations, and the consequences of family separation. I argue that the implications of this sense of ‘uprootedness’ in the life of the resettled refugees also affected the process of arrival and settlement into a third country.

### **6.2.1. ‘In the next 100 years I don’t want to change country again’: Displacement**

Despite differences in persecution and patterns of migration, the marks of displacement were constant in the accounts of both Colombian and Palestinian refugees. The presence of the displacement is twofold. On the one hand, it emerged as a constant reminder that the refugees did not choose to leave their place. In the case of the Palestinian refugees, most of whom were born in Iraq, this is the proof that they were even born ‘out of place’ (Said 1999). On the other hand, displacement emerged in the interviews as the movement itself; the refugees made constant references to the journey whether within the country of origin, to the first country of asylum or the resettlement country.

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<sup>75</sup> Translated from Spanish. Original quote “Ser desplazado significa haber perdido ‘su lugar’, dejar de ser y estar en el lugar en que se ha sido; ser desplazado es sinónimo de incertidumbre, desarraigo, anonimato, dolor, rabia, presencia terca y obstinada del recuerdo y esfuerzo del olvido”.

Members of both communities have been affected by long-term and unexpected displacement; however, as I explore next, the characteristics of each group and their patterns of displacement showed some differences. For example, Colombian refugees resettled both in Chile and in Brazil have experienced persecution in more than one place and more than two displacements, moving through different cities within Colombia before crossing the borders to the first country of asylum – Ecuador, Costa Rica or Venezuela – and then to the resettlement country (see Chapter 2). Carmen’s account of her displacement illustrates the type of journey faced by most of the Colombian resettled refugees. She used to live in a residential area in Medellin with her youngest son. Their life was ordinary but pleasant, with a stable routine between jobs and school. In 2005, the family started to receive threats from ‘milicianos’, as Carmen describes the guerrilla fighters in the city. They wanted to take her son, 13 years old at that time, as revenge against her ex-husband, who got involved with the woman of one of the guerrilla fighters. Carmen tried to contact her ex-husband but he had already disappeared. At first, she and her son stayed in the house of one of her uncles, but the guerrillas found them there as well. Then they moved between four different cities before they left Colombia:

We hid for one year first, and my son went without formal education all that time. From mid-2005 to 2006 we fled to different places. After a year we went to a city called Envigado, close to Medellin, to the house of one of my friends. [...] We stayed there one full year without going out to the street. Some people would bring us books to study and read. [...] My family kept telling me about people looking for us so I called my brother who lived in Buenaventura and went there. [...] After that we moved to Bogota. We only stayed there a month to renew my passport. And then my only option was to go out to Ecuador. My son and I went out by land, by Pasto, and then we crossed to Ecuador.

(Carmen, PTC\_CH31)

Carmen stated that as a consequence of the displacement she lost her ‘social position’, her job, her house and her routine. The multiple displacements meant, for them, hiding in different ‘borrowed’ houses, constantly alert and ready to go again. When they were not on the move, Carmen and her son’s routine was indoors, transforming all their activities and social relations. At a similar time to Carmen’s displacement, but in another part of Colombia, Eugenia was also on the move. She and her family relocated to so many different cities that she recalls they “went almost through the entire country”, before they crossed to Venezuela. For Eugenia, her mother, sister and now her daughter, the displacement marked most of their life and restrained their activities and relationships:

As long as I can remember, our life has always been a life of constant movement because our family had three members that were part of armed groups and that caused a number of consequences for us, as a family [...] We started to move from the places where we lived because our security was at risk, you see? So, although we tried to maintain an apparently normal style of life, because we studied, worked and had friends, the constant need to move was there. We knew that at some point we would have to move to another place. So if you analyse our entire family, most of us have jobs not being completed, unfinished studies, because we have left and returned to so many places because of that permanent displacement.

(Eugenia, PTC\_BR113)

As Eugenia asserted, displacement disrupts different aspects of people's lives. The 'normality' they tried to give to their life in displacement came with the conditionality of being 'temporary', meaning that all their daily activities, people and places were known to be transitory. Furthermore, refugees' perceptions also expressed a common sense of projects without completion, whether personal, studies or job related, usually linked to the 'unexpected' character of their long-term displacement. During the interviews, it was commonly stated that the displacement, both from the country of origin and from the first country of asylum, was 'unintended' and a 'difficult decision', as the following quotes from Andres and Milena demonstrate:

We have started again so many times... so many times, that I say to my wife, look at where we are now? All this is like taking a fish and dropping it into the desert, or taking a cow and putting it into another completely different environment... that is how we felt, but we had to. We didn't choose this, the exile, the displacement. The circumstances of life had taken us to this and then you don't have any other choice than taking the decision [to flee].

(Andres, PTC\_CH49)

We had a life there [in Ecuador]. That was our second country. So we went back to start from scratch, forgetting everything. And then... maybe that is why it has been so painful, because you say 'Thank God I finally managed to lay some foundation', because it is difficult, because finally I have found a place. But no, again we had to leave and go to another place.

(Milena, PTC\_CH14)

Andres's account emphasised the inherent difficulties of arriving into a different context, but also their agency and capacity to restart in a new place even when they felt out of their environment. Milena, on the other hand, had a difficult time accepting the process of resettlement. In her case, she, her partner and son spent almost six years in the first country of asylum, Ecuador, and did not envisage leaving. They only decided to move when

the persecution began again in Ecuador. Taken together, the perception of Colombian refugees interviewed in the study shows that experiences of displacement shaped a sense of uprootedness, reflected in the feelings of being taken from 'your place' (either the 'original' place or the constructed place in the first country of asylum) and being 'out of place' as a consequence of the dislocation. Interviews with Colombian refugees in each study site revealed similar attitudes about their displacement experiences. Colombian refugees told me about the difficulties of the uncertainty produced by the displacement, the feeling of 'loss' as a consequence of leaving behind family and friends and the feeling of vulnerability as a result of leaving their familiar spaces due to everyday violence (see Mcilwaine 2014).

The process of Palestinians' displacement follows different patterns from those of Colombian refugees. Most of the participants were born in Iraq (Chapter 2). The ones born in Palestine, Kuwait and Lebanon had lived for many years in Iraq. However, none of them had been legally recognised as Iraqis and they identified themselves, and were identified by the Iraqis, as Palestinians (Wengert & Alfaro 2006). When I visited Zoheir in his house in San Felipe, in Chile, he was eager to explain this duality:

Over there [Iraq], my country is not my country. I also lived as a foreigner in Iraq because it is not my country. My country is Palestine, right? But I was living there and I was born there.

(Zoheir, PTP\_CH92)

Zoheir's statement illustrates the dispossession that Palestinians resettled in both countries have experienced (see Butler & Athanasiou 2013). In the narratives of the Palestinians, the lack of roots was related to the loss of the homeland and with the political struggle for a historical territory where they belonged but that they could not visit or had never seen (Mason 2008). In this sense, I argue here that their displacement, even if it started from Iraq and not from Palestine, is the lived experience that links them to the diaspora they belong to. Moreover, their life in the refugee camp in the middle of the desert was the embodiment of not having a place and being trapped in 'no place'. The broken roots, as a result of dispossession, did not only cause the longing for the 'homeland' but also signify physical separation from family members (Section 6.2.3).

Interviews with Palestinian refugees in each study site revealed three common attitudes towards displacement. First, the uncertainty produced by the journey. Second, the feelings of despair as a result of both having their entrance denied to neighbouring countries and their arrival at the refugee camp as a last resort. Thirdly, there was a common desire to settle in a place with better conditions than the ones they had experienced in the refugee camp. Most of the interviewees left Iraq trying to cross the borders either to Syria or Jordan. Jabar was 17 years old when he and his family left their house in Bagdad as a result of the threats they received for being Palestinians. Their aim was to reach Syria. They were scared, they knew of militias controlling the borders and of thieves that used to rob travellers on their journey to other countries. Despite their fears, the only option was to leave. He, his parents and his sister travelled in one car to the border, in another car was his brother and their baggage. Jabar recalled that day in the following way:

The car left us on the Iraqi border and then we had to walk towards the Syrian border. Nobody said anything to us until then, when a Syrian officer asked us 'where are you going? And show me your papers'. When he saw that we were Palestinians, he kicked us out. We explained the situation to him, about the death threats and all... and he said 'I don't care, go back!' So then the officer in charge of the Syrian border let us stay at the border for a while until we could get access to the refugee camp.

(Jabar, PTP\_CH41).

Jabar explains that Syria did not allow them entrance because of security concerns. He asserted that the Iraqi border was not safe and they feared that terrorists might infiltrate. However, he added that the main reason was because they were Palestinians: "we are not allowed to enter any country, because our papers are not valid". The same situation happened on the border with Jordan. Mouna was nine years old and her sister seven when they left Iraq with her parents, but the memories of those days are still fresh.

I remember everything. The truth is that we didn't want to go to the refugee camp. We wanted to get into Jordan, but Jordan closed their doors. [...] There at the border, the Jordan police told us 'we don't accept more Iraqis or Palestinians in our country'. Then my sister and I started to cry because where could we go?! We couldn't go back to Iraq! [...] My dad begged and pleaded, but they didn't let us in. So we went into the refugee camp.

(Mouna, PTP\_BR152)

Both Jabar and Mouna thought of those days as full of stress and anxiety. Despite the fact that they were children when they were first displaced, their narratives and memories

resonated with those of the other 18 Palestinian refugees interviewed. They escaped from violence and, after a long journey, their entrance was denied. They felt powerless and violated one more time. As I explored in Chapter 2, after Syria and Jordan closed their doors, Palestinians managed to get into the camps of Al Tanf, on the border between Syria and Iraq, and Rwaished, located in Jordan's desert (see Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2). I argue that life in a refugee camp, one of the main components of the Palestinians' narratives of displacement, acts as the embodiment of years of exclusion. They were born in someone else's land, they were expelled from Iraq and then had to spend between 2 and 5 years in the refugee camps. The harsh conditions lived in the 'middle of nowhere', in a space that is not claimed but controlled and closed, is a vivid mark of being excluded, 'not valid' and 'out of place'. As such, the experiences in the refugee camp as an embodiment of dislocation is a major argument to validate their demands for better conditions in the resettlement countries. Table 6.1 draws on refugees' narratives to portray their arrival to the camps and living conditions in both refugee camps.

**Table 6.1. Palestinians’ experiences at the refugee camps in the borders of Jordan and Syria**

Al Tanf Camp	Ruwaished Camp
<p>For around two years, Palestinian resettled refugees in Chile lived in the Al Tanf refugee camp, located between Syria and Iraq (Al-Khalidi et al. 2007).</p>	<p>For more than five years, the Palestinians in Brazil lived in the Ruwaished refugee camp, located in Jordan’s desert, 70 kilometres from the Iraqi border. (UNHCR 2006).</p>
<p><b>Arrival</b>  <u>No-man land:</u> “We waited in the desert three days without tents, water or food. After that UN people came to talk with us. We told them we wanted to get into Syria, they said no because we didn't have travel documents. So they brought the tents and yes, we made the camp in the middle of the desert. Where? Not Syrian land, not Iraqi land. In the middle, three kilometres from Iraq and three from Syria. And like that we started the camp.” (Moktar, PTP_CH43)</p>	<p><b>Arrival</b>  <u>Lack of knowledge:</u> “After they took the President out of power, things got very dangerous and we went to Jordan. There, we found the UN and they took us to have physical exams done, documents and those things. And they took us to the camp. We didn't know what the camp was. When we got inside that place, we didn't know what was awaiting us. We had a small tent. Each tent had 4 people. We always thought that we would leave soon.” (Rabah, PTP_BR151)</p>
<p><b>Conditions inside the camp</b>  <u>Extreme weather:</u> “The first year, life at the camp was very hard and difficult because the heat was stifling. Very hot in the morning and very cold at night. With little food and no drinkable water. There was a lot of suffering.” (Jabar, PTP_CH41)</p> <p><u>Fire dangers:</u> “It was very dangerous because there were many snakes, scorpions. So many kids and woman got bitten on the hand, the legs. And oh yes! My tent? Everything burnt. Everything! There was nothing left! [...] I had to run to take my baby out of the fire. Two seconds and nothing else was left”. (Aziza, PTP_CH42)</p>	<p><b>Conditions inside the camp</b>  <u>Harsh conditions:</u> “There was no life, no life... Just people alive inside. Without jobs, nothing. We just sat in the tent and sat in the tent all day long! They just left us there! [...] Food? There was no food. Little water. 20 litres per day to drink, cook, toilet and everything.” (Mahfoud, PTP_BR140)</p> <p><u>Living as prisoners:</u> “After they (Jordan police force) gave us authorization to do some shopping, they would take us in a police car. It was like we had committed a crime! You know? They treated us as if we were prisoners. They shouted at us. [...] They didn't have any respect for us”. (Fouzia, PTP_BR104)</p>

**Figure 6.1. Palestinian refugee and her children at the Rwaished Camp.**



**Source: Nacira (PTP\_BR154)**

**Figure 6.2. Palestinian refugees at the Rwaished Camp.**



**Source: Nacira (PTP\_BR154)**

After more than four years in Chile and Brazil, Palestinian refugees' reflections and feelings about their displacement culminated in an expression of their desire to settle in the host countries. Nazim demonstrated that feeling in the following way:

The truth is that in the next 100 years I don't want change country again. Where can I go? For example, if I want to go to Canada, change language, the weather... Ah! I don't want the same problem that we had when we arrived in 2008, no language and no job, being without anything. No. Now my children speak Chilean and Arabic, I like the school, the hospital, they got used to us. I don't want to change country anymore.

(Nazim, PTP\_CH93)

Nazim's words show the tiredness that the displacement causes in the refugees. However, it is not only the movement from one place to another what makes them exhausted. Most of them were also tired of starting again all over, particularly when finding employment or learning another language becomes more difficult as they get older. Despite being much younger, Mouna experienced similar feelings. She and her family have been living in Brazil for more than five years now, and despite all the difficulties they have faced in the resettlement country, she is reluctant to have a new start.

We want to live well... I mean... because we have tolerated many years, and then came here and suffered again. One day my father said that he wanted to go back to Iraq. I asked him 'How? Why? How are we going to return to Iraq after more than 5 years living in the camp? We stayed, endured and then came to Brazil to start everything again, and you want to move again?'

(Mouna, PTP\_BR152)

Mouna verbalizes one of the recurrent demands emerging from Palestinian refugees in both countries: in the absence of their place, they do not want to settle in any place, but aim for a 'good place'. As discussed in Chapter 5 and 7, refugees expected, at least, the resettlement country to allow them to have a house, documentation and other citizenship rights and access to basic services.

Despite this physical lack of link with their place of origin, the 'Palestinian identity' among the interviewees seemed to be intact, even among the youngest participants, built on collective memory and the expectation of one day having a nation again. As Malkki (1992) suggests, identity is mobile and the result of different processes of self-constructions, categorisations, status or conditions. In the case of Palestinians, the lack of citizenship

recognition in Iraq, their permanent refugee status, their displacement and their history and struggle, construct them as Palestinians.

The experiences of both Palestinian and Colombian refugees show that displacement dramatically changed the definition of 'normality' as understood by resettled refugees in their daily lives. Cresswell (1996, p.27) argues that 'normality' in a geographical sense is understood by "what and who belongs where", one of the first understandings that the forced displacement dislocates. I argue that 'normality' is associated with the place where we feel we belong, constructed by the daily practices, encounters and people (see Massey 1994;1991; Darling 2009). Forced displacement generates a loss of 'normality' and therefore an uprootedness from the place(s) the refugees feel they belong.

The emphasis on displacement as a violent and imposed act emphasises my understanding of 'uprootedness' in relation to being removed or displaced from the place a person considers 'home'. However, I am not thinking about uprootedness under essentialist understandings of the relationship between people and place, where to be uprooted is related to losing one's culture or identity (see discussion in Malkki 1992; Brun 2001). Instead, in this section and in those to come, I explore uprootedness in relation to its cause, highlighting the consequences of displacement. I do recognise that the relationship between place and identity is fluid and in constant change and that refugees do indeed create a sense of belonging in the places that receive them, but those belongings exist simultaneously with belongings in other places and cannot be decontextualised from the experiences of exile. That is to say, displacement acts as a restriction to a person's rituals and relationships in certain places; however, the sense of belonging to those locales remains, even if the person does not go back to those places (Selasi 2014).

### **6.2.2. Persecution and Threat**

The exile of both Palestinian and Colombian refugees has been triggered by acts of violence and persecution that left displacement as the only option. The general contexts that precede these violent episodes have been discussed in Chapter 2. In this section, I review some of the participants' experiences of persecution and threat and discuss how

violence and safety concerns continue to affect refugees' perception of the 'other' and of the country of origin.

In the case of Colombian refugees the persecution was experienced both in Colombia and in the first country of asylum, whether Ecuador, Costa Rica or Venezuela. While still in Colombia, one of the most common types of persecution was faced by people living in rural areas with agricultural businesses or those working as drivers, particularly people living in red zones. In the case of the farmers, the guerrillas and paramilitary would pass asking for animals, until business became unviable. When the farmers denied provisions to either group, they started to be threatened. Diego described the situation in the following way:

One day the guerrillas came and I told them that I couldn't give them more chickens because I had lots of debt. They said 'Ok, can we take your motorcycle then?' I said 'no' because I needed it for the services, to buy medicine for the chickens and to transport my wife. They left and the threats started to arrive. They left a paper under the door saying that I had 48 hours to leave the place. Then another one saying that we had only 12. So I spoke with another guy and he told me about his neighbour that also received the threats and stayed; they killed him with a chainsaw. So that night, with just the clothes we had on, we left the place, leaving everything behind.

(Diego, PTC\_BR110)

Participants also described persecution as a result of witnessing a murder, or for being a direct family member of an important target such as a politician or a local authority. Colombian refugees also experienced persecution in the first country of asylum, all of them neighbouring countries of Colombia. For instance, Paula and her family were living for almost 8 years in Ecuador when they were persecuted again. "We adapted and we were doing fine", Paula told me, until one day they met another Colombian family at the Catholic organisation that supports refugees in that country. They started to visit each other until one day the lady of that family came to their house asking a place to stay, saying that she had divorced her husband. She stayed there for a while, although she was always nervous and would hide when someone knocked at the door. The family got suspicious of her behaviour until she said that her husband had witnessed the death of a guerrilla member and now he was being accused of the crime and she needed to hide. The family decided to help her until the woman finally left the city, but visited them regularly. After a while Paula and her family moved to another house and she found them again.

She told me that I had to give her 'posada' [let her stay] again. I had to? Why? Then I said, 'I am very sorry, but I cannot host you anymore. You've got into too much trouble and I have helped you enough'. Then she threatened me. 'I am not asking you a favour', she said, 'you have to help me'. And when I said 'no', she said that my life was in danger. What really happened was that her husband was a guerrillero! [...] After it came out on the news that he had kidnapped people. He was practically a commander in Ecuador! So I went to the Episcopado [Episcopate] and told them. [...] And then they called me asking if I wanted to move to another country and I said 'yes'. I didn't care where, but it had to be as quickly as possible.

(Paula PTC\_CH23)

During the interviews, most of the Colombian refugees referred to feelings of fear and anxiety while talking about the different types of persecution they faced. For some of them, the persecution and violence left permanent marks. Andres experienced both, the physical and psychological marks. The first time I visited him and his family at his house in Santiago, I noticed how formally he was dressed, with a long sleeved shirt in the middle of the hot season. The next time we met, he showed me the scars on his arms and hands. He hides these scars under the shirt, despite the heat of the Chilean summer, when he works selling roasted peanuts on the public transport system. In Colombia he was a community leader and a farmer, when the paramilitaries told him that he should work for them, in order to use his skills in organising people and his connections.

They told me that I would have to leave if I didn't work with them. But I didn't want to go because I had... my life project was already running! The farm was running. We had chickens, viticulture, food cultivations. [...] But the extreme point was when I suffered an attack. [He took his sleeves up] These scars that I have in my body, in my hands... all these were a clear signal to leave.

(Andres, PTC\_CH49)

He fled to Ecuador, where some years later the paramilitaries found him again. This time it was his wife who suffered the consequence: she lost the baby they were expecting due to the stress caused by a new attack and the new dislocation that took them to Chile. The violence and persecution, because of which Colombians have to leave their territory and their constructed places, generates a profound mistrust of the 'other', even other refugees, of the state and of institutions. Colombians have been persecuted by other Colombians. According to some of the interviewees, compatriots who pretended to be friends have been proven to be infiltrators. Luis, for example, told me that he was scared

of denouncing the persecution to the authorities because of their connections with the guerrillas.

I witnessed a murder and I had to leave. The first reason is because 'no se abre el parche' (you shouldn't open your mouth) like we say there, because you have to run away from the police and the guerrillas. Because if the Police catch you, they are going to ask you everything and you will have to say everything and then they will kill you. And if the guerrillas catch you they also will kill you because you saw. So I had to leave.  
(Luis, PTC\_CH15)

The same feeling of mistrust was shared by Andres, who explained that the infiltrators were not only within Colombia but also in the first countries of asylum. In Ecuador, Andres recalled that some fighters would pretend to be asylum seekers and penetrate the refugee community. When Andres denounced one of these infiltrators, the police found out that the man was a paramilitary member with a fake identity. As result of the information he provided, Andres suffered the attack that displaced him from Ecuador. These episodes have consequences for the way refugees perceive 'others', including other Colombians or authorities, having a big impact on the way they relate to their compatriots in the resettlement country. Andres described this in the following way:

When you feel fear, because we still feel fear... even more with our Colombian compatriots... You try to get away from Colombians. And you became very reluctant to make friends, very mistrustful.  
(Andres, PTC\_CH49)

In line with the contribution of other Latin American scholars (Villa Martínez et al. 2003; Oliveira 2014; Osorio 2007), I suggest that the violence separates Colombians from other Colombians, since they link persecution and violence to other compatriots, the government and even different institutions that aim to protect them. As Villa Martínez et al (2003) suggest, fear is a feeling that responds to a real or imaginary threat. Oliveira (2014) adds that in the Colombian context, fear as a social construction is also a process of socialisation that establishes when, how and whom they should fear. This feeling extrapolates into the resettlement country, and refugees in both countries were concerned by the arrival of "too many Colombians", fearing that they may be persecuted again. Despite this fear, their connection with the 'homeland' remains, longing for the idealised image they have of the country they remember before the persecution started and the one they wish to return to one day.

The Palestinian refugees left Iraq as a result of the aggressive persecution they experienced after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in April 2003, as discussed in Chapter 2. Participants' accounts show that the persecution took the form of threats, targeted attacks and betrayal by neighbors and friends. Other reports also recalled kidnapping, abduction, torture and extra-judicial killings (Amnesty International 2007; Human Rights Watch 2006b). The narratives emerging from the interviews show how Palestinians were pushed to the margins of their fragile legal status in Iraq, and went from being not fully recognised as citizens because they were Palestinians to being persecuted for being Palestinians. Even when legislation granted them a range of rights<sup>76</sup>, in practice they were prevented from accessing those rights as part of the persecution they suffered from some of the Iraqi population and from the army, after Saddam Hussein's regime was overturned (Bijit 2012; Wengert & Alfaro 2006). The following accounts describe the type of violence experienced:

We started to receive some messages, threats to my uncles and to other family members. Even my dad received threats at his job. The message said things like 'leave your job, go out from Iraq or we will kill you, your kids and your wife'. That message really scared my dad, also because his cousin received another one written with red ink that told them to leave the country and they named all the members of the family, where they studied and worked. The message had a stamp, the symbol of a Shiite militia. The danger was evident.

(Jabar, PTP\_CH41)

My friends, my own friends, started to write on the walls outside my house saying 'you leave now or we kill you'. I didn't want to leave Iraq, but it was my mother who persuaded me.

(Riad, PTP\_BR106)

The persecution left the Palestinians feeling powerless and extremely scared. As a result, most of the Palestinian interviewees decided to leave, cutting their ties with the country of birth or the one in which they had been living for decades. The violence and persecution Palestinians experienced in Iraq deepened the feeling of uprootedness by deterritorialisation. They were denied access to their country of origin but also violently excluded from the country where they grew up. Fouzia, a Palestinian woman resettled in Brazil, describes how the situation changed and they started to be an 'unwanted' group:

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<sup>76</sup> The Iraq decree 202 of 2001 established that Palestinians who had residency in Iraq should be treated as 'Iraqi citizens in rights and duties', enjoying rights to work, health care and education. The exception was the right to obtain the Iraqi nationality.

They intimidate us, kill our people. They throw bombs, doing everything to force us to leave. They didn't want us anymore. We were there because of Saddam, who was good to us. He treated us similarly to them. But after the war, they didn't want us anymore and started to bother us.

(Fouzia, PTP\_BR104)

Similar to Fouzia's account, most of the Palestinian narratives interpreted persecution as the end of the fragile acceptance they had under Saddam Hussein's regime, highlighting their conditions as 'second class citizens'. They felt betrayed by their Iraqi friends and violated because of their ethnicity. Since then, with the rise in insecurity throughout Iraq, they have been the target of persecution and violence, with militant groups (mostly Shia) targeting them for (what the militant groups claim to have been) preferential treatment they received under Hussein's Ba'ath Party rule.

In this sense, both Palestinian and Colombian refugees' dislocation from their 'homelands' is not only physical, but also symbolic: refugees feel neglected by a state (or by the lack of one) and by the society that fails to protect them. In the case of the Palestinians, the rootlessness they experienced through violence and displacement cuts their ties with the country of birth and strengthens their self-identification as part of the Palestinian diaspora. In the case of the Colombians, the violence of their experiences generates a profound mistrust of the 'other', as part of the social construction of fear as a key element of their displacement.

### **6.2.3. 'It has been 11 years without seeing my children': Family Division**

The research found that family division as a consequence of displacement is one of the main causes of feelings of solitude and longing experienced by Palestinian and Colombian refugees. This family division includes separation of nuclear family members or detachment from members of the extended family. While some of the refugees have left behind (back at 'home') or elsewhere (in other displacement places) parents, brothers and sisters, other refugees are also leaving children and spouses. Whether nuclear family or not, resettled refugees in Chile and Brazil have experienced family disintegration.

Segura Calvo (2010) identifies that, in the case of Colombian forced migrants, family separation starts when one of the members, usually men or boys, are taken by armed

groups or murdered; or when they are apart because of the displacement itself. In addition, the dislocation can change family dynamics and roles within the household, creating family breakdowns before or after the displacement (Rojas Rodríguez, 2000; 180). Participants' narratives provided accounts of the physical separation of their family members as a result of the displacement and how this increases the longing for the place and the people they recognise as 'home'. As these participants state, one of the most challenging experiences of the resettlement is the feeling of solitude:

Juan: That was very difficult when we left. Because we always have been a very close family, always together.

Liliana: Actually, I think that is why I got this (breast cancer) because of being so far away from my family. And I am so lonely here, so lonely.

(Married couple, Juan PTC\_CH44 and Liliana PTC\_CH32)

Well, I miss my family a lot. I miss them because here I feel very lonely. I do. But anyway, I don't know... It's not that I regret the decision of coming here, I don't think so.

(Patricia, PTC\_CH34)

Similar feelings are highlighted by other Colombian refugees in both study sites. However, the feelings of solitude were more common in the narratives of Colombian refugees in Chile. This can possibly be explained by the racial and class discrimination that participants refer to in the interviews and that I explore further in the section about social ties. In both countries, Colombian refugees have lost family members or have been living separated from them for a long period. Some of the participants stated that they have been missing important family events because of the distance (such as funerals, weddings and births), but that they communicate with their family over the phone or internet. Some of them, however, do not get in touch with their families because of security concerns.

We communicate very little. My mom prefers that we don't get in touch... because of fear. The family of my wife is another story. They (the paramilitaries) disappeared her brothers. And right now they are persecuting the other two brothers who are still alive. One of them used to be a military. He is on the run, internally displaced in Colombia.

(Andres, PTC\_CH49)

Andres' narrative emphasises how the scope of the persecution has affected family contact, and that the fear developed from violence and displacement still shapes their daily lives (Villa Martínez et al. 2003; Osorio 2007). Additionally, the story of his wife's family indicates that many Colombian refugees have already lost family members as a

result of the internal conflict or that their family has also been displaced. Other Colombian refugees, however, have been able to visit their families or to receive some members in the resettlement country. Because of the Free Movement and Residence Agreement among member countries of MERCOSUR<sup>77</sup> and its associate States<sup>78</sup> (MERCOSUR 2002; Portal Brasil 2014; Departamento de Extranjeria y Migracion n.d.) Colombian refugees can receive visits from their families and some Colombians have been able to go back to their country of origin as well. Colombian refugees interviewed in the study stated that their reasons for return for short periods varied from visits to family members, to receipt of specific medical treatment or work-related, emphasising the characteristics of Colombians as a transnational community<sup>79</sup>. Chile and Brazil ask refugees to give notice before they travel and warn that if they are out of the country for more than two years they can lose their refugee status (Sampaio 2010, p.35). However, only some family members have been able to return either because they believe their security will be in danger or because the family group cannot afford to travel.

Palestinian resettled refugees also experience family separation. In their case however, the lack of a passport imposes extra restrictions on visiting family members abroad. This lack of passport recognition brings both practical and subjective problems that I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 7. The division of Palestinian families is a characteristic of the Palestinian diaspora, considering that three-quarters of Palestinians are displaced and are not only refugees but also stateless (Rempel 2006). The family left behind is not physically 'back at home', because their homeland is occupied and they are displaced across the globe (Doraï 2002). Considering that many of them were born outside Palestine and have no civic recognition in the country of birth, the Palestinian 'community' takes shape across borders in an imaginary space built in different places where people have been displaced. The narratives of Malika, Zoheir and Riad illustrate their families' disintegration, with members living in places as far as Canada and Indonesia.

It is very difficult, every time we speak over the internet I start to cry. We have grandchildren that we haven't met. [We lived] 5 years in the refugee camp and 6 years

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<sup>77</sup> The MERCOSUR countries are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay – and recently Venezuela.

<sup>78</sup> Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Guyana, Perú and Surinam.

<sup>79</sup> Transnational communities differ from Diasporas because the relationship established with the homeland is real, while the diasporic relationship is generally symbolic (Portes et al. 1999; see also White 2003). In the case of Colombian refugees, their formation as a transnational community was facilitated by their hypermobility within the region.

here. Can you imagine? 11 years without seeing my children, my grandchildren. It is too difficult! My daughter lives in Bagdad and my son in Indonesia. And we don't have money [to visit]; they don't have money either.

(Malika, PTP\_BR124)

Now most of my family lives in Canada. I have one brother who lives in Turkey and another who lives in the Emirates. But my older brother, the youngest one, my sister and my mother, all of them live in Canada. [...] We talk over Skype, internet, Yahoo. With the mobile phone, any moment I want to talk to them I call.

(Zoheir, PTP\_CH92)

My father and his wife live in Syria and one of my sisters in United States. We speak over the phone but... I haven't seen them in 16 years! [...] My father is not doing well. My brother in Jordan neither. I wanted to bring my father but I couldn't because the UN did not want to help me. I didn't ask them to allow them in as refugees. I just asked them to help to bring them here. I could have paid the ticket, everything. But no, they said that they don't have a way of issuing them a visa, because they don't have passports.

(Riad, PTP\_BR106)

Participants' accounts describe the long time they have been separated from their family members, families that have changed and transformed during the time they have been apart. New family members have been born, new families have been formed and other members have died. Unlike their Colombian counterparts, Palestinians also have endured spatial limitations imposed by the significant geographical separation and the travel restrictions due to the lack of documentation (see Chapter 7). Most of the Palestinians in Chile and Brazil have been following these family events through the internet using communication software such as Skype or Viber. Among the 86 Palestinian and Colombian refugees surveyed for this research in Chile and Brazil, 86% (N=74) had access to the Internet in the resettlement country. 12.7% (N=11) had no Internet access. From this latter group, only 2 were Palestinians.

As Aouragh (2011, 4) states, Palestinian communities that are separated by boundaries or travel restrictions have found new forms of interaction through the internet. This became evident while I was visiting Palestinian families in both countries. Many of them would show me the family pictures they have recently received by email. After one of the interviews was over, Mabrouk, in Brazil, invited me to talk with his son in the United States over skype, so I could "meet the entire family". While I was visiting participants I also realised that it was common for the families to receive quick phone calls from relatives in Canada and Sweden to ask for a recipe or to have a quick chat, giving more 'normality' to

the dynamic of families separate by distance but 'united' through the internet (see Walker et al. 2015; Shklovski et al. 2014; Alonso & Oiarzabal 2010; Brinkerhoff 2009; Wilding 2006). Yet, that connectivity is limited and family members living in Palestine or Iraq did not have a broadband connection as good as the ones living in Europe or North America. Despite the benefits of the internet in connecting communities, that virtual transnational communication does not replace physical proximity in any case and some Palestinians have made different efforts to bring their families to both Chile and Brazil. They reported having little support from the UNHCR or local NGOs in the process of family reunification.

The research found that family separation had a significant impact on resettled refugees' daily lives and provoked constant emotional distress. Such findings support Rousseau et al's (2001) results which state that family plays a key role as an anchor of emotion and identity. In this scenario, the internet as an instrument to connect with family members has been crucial for the formation of virtual communities.

This study identifies displacement, trauma and family separation as three main components that contribute to resettled refugees' 'uprootedness'. The research does not problematise uprootedness as lack of roots related only to the lack of the 'homeland' as territory only. Drawing from Malkki's (1992, 38) argument that deterritorialisation and identity are closely related and that peoples degrees of self-identification vary between places where we live, the ones we remember and the ones we imagine, I suggest that roots are multiple and mobile – tied to places but also to spaces and people that shape our identity, attachment and self-identification. Although roots may change and/or develop, displacement because of persecution disrupts all these spaces of identification in such a violent way that it affects refugees' daily lives. Uprootedness is therefore related to the longing for the places refugees belong, a sense of loss that is increased by a displacement that was not an option.

The unintended nature of their departure explains why resettled refugees live in the constant duality of looking for security and a new start in the place of resettlement and the longing to come back to the place that they identify themselves with. Patricia's reflections about the conflicting idea of returning, provides an example of this uprootedness:

If I could go back, I will. Is true that the older you get, the less opportunities you have. And the health issues don't help either. But you always look for your place, the one where you belong, where you want to be. So maybe, in that sense we would return. But we also need security. If in Colombia or Costa Rica we can live and have something, we would go.

(Patricia, PTC\_CH34)

This research did not intend to explore in depth the psychological traumas and distresses that uprootedness provokes in Colombian and Palestinian refugees<sup>80</sup>. However, the study provides valuable insights into refugees' perceptions about displacement, persecution and family separation; and how these construct the uprootedness that 'unsettles' their experience of belonging in the resettlement country.

### **6.3. Sense of Belonging**

The uprootedness that marked the lives of Colombian and Palestinian refugees did not preclude them from developing social relationships and networks in the resettlement country, while keeping the connections in other localities. In this context, social encounters, here and there, emerged in the interviews as pivotal dimensions of refugees' sense of belonging. The narratives of Colombian and Palestinian refugees in Chile and Brazil revealed belonging as related to place-belongingness (Antonsich 2010) and the continuous and transnational process of making 'home' (Freund 2015). The findings shed light on some of the main areas where the participants "want to become and want to belong" (Probyn 1996), related to the learning and use of language, religion and faith, networks and social ties, and refugees' efforts to keep traditions and cope with changes in their family dynamic as part of the displacement. All of these are explored in this section. The main themes identified in the research fit with some of the factors that Antonsich (2010) suggested contribute to generating the emotional feeling of 'being at home' such as autobiographical, relational and cultural factors. Additionally, these experiences indicate that belongings are not static. Instead, refugees negotiated what Wood and Waite (2011) described as "multi-layered, contested or competing" senses of belonging at different spatial and social scales.

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<sup>80</sup> There are important empirical contributions to the study of refugee mental health in relation to resettlement (Pahud et al. 2009; Steel et al. 2002; Good 1996; Becerra & Altimir 2013; Reed et al. 2012; Fazel et al. 2012).

### **6.3.1. 'If you don't speak the language, you don't relate to others': Language**

From the 86 participants surveyed for the study, more than half (55.8%) did not speak the dominant language of the resettlement country. They identified the learning and use of a new language as one of the main factors affecting their integration experience. From this group, 81.3% (N=39) attended a language course within the first three months of arrival. 21 had already finished the Spanish/Portuguese course at the moment of the survey. Interestingly, 20 had started but did not finish the course and 4 did not take it. Most of the reasons why people did not take or finish the course were related to work commitments or because they did not like the lessons or the teacher. Besides the use of language in the resettlement country, use of the language of origin as part of belonging also appeared in the interviews as a key practice to preserve the 'original' identity and as an element of intimacy within spaces like the home or where communities got together.

Learning the language of the host country serves different purposes in the construction of membership and attachment. For some refugees, learning the language was the first step to making friends and building relationships. For others, language was a necessary instrument that allowed them to find jobs and to manage access to services and avoid marginalisation (Hou & Beiser 2006; Warriner 2007; McDermott & Odhiambo 2010). Language acquisition and use has also been identified by the resettlement programme in both countries as one of the main lines of actions to achieve refugee 'integration' (ASAV 2012; AREVI 2012). In the case of the Colombians in Brazil, they were given only 36 hours of language training which was not enough time to learn Portuguese, according to the interviewees. In addition, they complained that the course was poor in quality with books badly photocopied, audios that did not correspond to the lessons in the book and classes without a differentiated teaching methodology for adults and children. The quality of the classes varied depending on who delivered them in each of the resettlement cities. Alberto (in Sapiranga) and Ana (in Mogi das Cruces) for example, stated that the classes they received were appropriate. Eugenia, on the other hand, summarised some of the opposite perceptions, stressing her frustration with the course she received in Sapucaia:

The language course left me demoralised, because I finished the 36 hours without knowing much. We didn't have conversations in Portuguese and by not talking you don't relate to others. And you close up. When you don't have that integration with

other people because you don't know the language, it affects many other psychological aspects in your life.

(Eugenia, PTC\_BR113)

To Eugenia, the issue of not knowing the language was a main barrier to interacting with others, highlighting how isolation through lack of language causes other types of distress. Daniela's reflection supports the idea of language as a practice that contributes to the construction of membership in the resettlement country:

I think that definitely the language is one of the things that makes the integration a bit difficult. I felt that a lot, for example, at the school, where many times we would go and we were all talking, I would have preferred other people to do the talking. I didn't talk much, because my Portuguese wasn't good then. Many people like to listen to you trying to speak; they say 'ah! You sound so nice'. But other people will make fun of you. That is an element that makes it difficult to integrate, to integrate with other people.

(Daniela, PTC\_BR109)

Daniela's comment stresses that not knowing the local language triggered an extra insecurity that hindered the 'connection' she might have established with the host society. Trying to avoid being mocked, she purposively changed the way she communicated and interacted with others, choosing to remain silent in some of her social encounters in spaces such as the school. The difficulties in learning the local language were perceived by the resettled refugees in both countries as mainly affecting them in the early stages of resettlement, compromising their access to social spaces and job opportunities (McDermott & Odhiambo 2010). According to Eugenia, the lack of Portuguese was an impediment for her to find a permanent job during her first year in the country:

I was doing a trial as replacement worker in a bakery. But more than anything I was cleaning all the time because despite my attempts customers didn't understand what I was saying [...] The owner paid me R\$30 each day, but then she never called me again. Those things made our life more difficult here. Because of the language limitations you are unable to improve your job and quality of life.

(Eugenia, PTC\_BR113)

The research findings support Hou and Beiser's (2006) argument that the lack of language endangers refugees' opportunities to participate in the power structures of the

resettlement countries. Language can, as Antonsich (2010, p.648) suggests, be a form of distinguishing the 'us' from 'them' that characterises the politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2011b). As suggested by Eugenia, the workplace is one of those spaces of power. Another structure of power was the resettlement programme itself (see Chapter 5). For instance, important information was not translated into refugees native languages, reinforcing the power imbalances in the interaction between refugees and the resettlement programme<sup>81</sup> (see Chapter 7).

Inside the home, Colombian refugees spoke in Spanish. From the interviews with different families it seemed very natural for them to do it in that way. The use of Spanish emerged as a distinctive marker of being 'Colombians'. The interchangeable use of Spanish and Portuguese among the Colombian refugees seemed to be easier due to the commonalities perceived between both languages once the refugee had learnt Portuguese. When I visited Cecilia at their house in Sapucaia, her children spoke Spanish and Portuguese, changing language in each phrase. However, Cecilia told me that the daily dynamic inside the house was always in Spanish, something crucial to teaching the language to her youngest son, who arrived in Brazil when he was three years old.

My son learned to read and write in Portuguese. He only speaks Spanish in our house. If he knows Spanish, it is only because we are speaking in Spanish all the time. Because otherwise, it would be a 75% probability that he would forget Spanish, because he arrived when he was just a baby.

(Cecilia, PTC\_BR127)

Cecilia stated that they do not want this younger son to forget "his roots". That is why Cecilia emphasised the importance of communicating in Spanish inside the house and within the Church they attended, where they have also met other Spanish speakers. The use of Spanish as part of their family dynamic, can be related to what hooks (2009, p.24) identified as the possibility to "return home" wherever she was making a 'homeplace'. By speaking their original language, Colombian refugees experienced belonging through language, which strengthened the unbroken ties to their place of origin. Colombian

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<sup>81</sup> It is worth noticing that the resettlement programme in both countries has been improving the communication with refugees by translating some documents into different languages. In 2014, the UNHCR and its implementing partners in Brazil published a 'Booklet for refugees in Brazil' (ACNUR 2014a), a book that included sections in 5 languages (Portuguese, English, French, Spanish and Arabic) providing basic information about the rights and obligations of refugees, how to obtain or renew documentation, how to apply for permanent residency, where to refer for specific questions and a list of useful contacts, including the contact details of all organisations involved in refugee reception.

refugees recognised the relevance of speaking the language of the host country in terms of affiliation to it, while, at the same time, language was experienced as a situated practice that reinforced their identity as Colombians within specific spaces (Valentine et al. 2008). Language, both the original and the acquired in the resettlement country, made them active subjects in the different localities to which they belonged.

In the case of the Palestinian refugees, the level of language proficiency seemed to vary depending on their age and their involvement in activities and social relations outside the house. For example, Jabar (24 years old) spoke Spanish with a Chilean accent and he knew the local expressions. Living in the same building two floors down, Yamina (23 years old) understood but struggled to complete a whole phrase in Spanish. They are similar ages but they interact in different social spaces. Jabar is finishing his studies as an English translator and, although he is blind, he moves with confidence around Santiago. Yamina, on the other hand, is in the house most of the time taking care of her two small children. She does not go out much, only to drop her kids at the school around the corner, when she goes to the Mosque and when she goes out with her husband. It can be suggested that in the case of Palestinian refugees, language acquisition is influenced by gender roles. This idea is reinforced by the fact that the groups that still did not speak either Spanish or Portuguese were largely elderly refugees and women. However, the determinants of language learning are complex and diverse even within that framework. Gender roles within the household, labour activities, age, personal characteristics and levels of literacy are some of the factors affecting the learning and use of a language (Anderson 2001). Additionally, the findings identified that the wide range of relational spaces (such as the house, neighbourhood, workplace, school) and even the effects of displacement can play a role in language learning. Jabar explains some of these reasons:

[Some Palestinians haven't learned] because they haven't been able... Beginning with the fact that some of them are illiterate in Arabic. They don't know how to write properly, neither speak Arabic perfectly [...] Some of them speak perfectly with 'Chilenismos', they speak very Chilean, even you cannot distinguish them as Palestinians. But they won't be able to do an interview or have a formal communication. [...] And some of them just didn't want to learn because they thought their stay here will be temporary so there was no need. Others thought 'oh well my job doesn't need that much Spanish so I am only going to learn what I need and nothing else'. And others said I don't want to learn full stop. (Jabar, PTP\_CH41)

According to Jabar's account, some refugees did not want to learn Spanish because they arrived in Chile thinking they would leave soon, seeking to be reunited with other family members abroad. In the case of the women, some of them did not learn because they felt they did not need the language, considering their perceived role and needs to be inside the house. Hafid uses this reason to explain why his wife did not speak Spanish:

Hafid: The women, most of them do not speak Spanish. Just a bit. They can go and ask about how much it costs for something, or where they need to go. Like my wife, she doesn't speak at all. Because she stays in her house.

Marcia: Did she take the language classes?

Hafid: We went one time, two times, three times... and after that she decided to stay at home. Look, someone who is 48 or 46 years old... she doesn't have the time. She doesn't think about reading.

(Hafid, PTP\_CH36)

The role of women within the household as a reason for some of them not to learn the local language has been identified in both countries. In some cases, however, it was not a choice. For example, Mabrouk's wife Chadia, in Brazil, did not leave the house due to a heart condition that limited her movements. As revealed in most of the interviews, a single factor cannot explain the learning, use or lack of language. Other women interviewed in this research had different experiences. From the Palestinian women interviewed (five in Chile and five in Brazil) at least seven of them spoke the local language and most of them sought their own strategies of learning. Nacira, for instance, stated that as part of this learning she also established a strong friendship with her neighbour.

I started to learn with my neighbour who is like my sister until today! We started practising around the second or third week after our arrival. She didn't speak Arabic or English and I didn't speak Portuguese. So I took two dictionaries, one Arabic-Portuguese and another one Portuguese-Arabic and we started to talk looking up word by word.

(Nacira, PTP\_BR154)

Nacira's statement suggests that language acquisition also acted as a facilitator of belonging. In her case, one process was constitutive of the other. Learning the language allowed everyday encounters that enabled language acquisition in addition to establishing social ties. In other cases, the use of the language in different spaces and in particular encounters may be a marker of belonging. This reinforced the idea that the "role of

language is as situated practice” (Valentine et al. 2008) shaped by different spaces and moments in which encounters with others occur. This was reinforced in the experiences of Palestinian men in both countries, most of whom stopped attending language training in both resettlement countries soon after they started, due to the need to find a job, or already having one. Therefore, language acquisition occurred at the workplace, in the street and through local people’s help. “Thanks to Brazilian people, all the Portuguese I know is because of them”, Riad told me. Many of them developed a sense of proximity with people with whom they related in their neighbourhoods, local services, supermarkets and other spaces where their daily activities took place. Nonetheless, like their Colombian counterparts, their limited knowledge of the formal use of the language, particularly during the first and second year of resettlement, had different consequences for the resettlement process. Among others, participants recalled difficulties finding employment that matched their expectations or qualifications, and issues dealing with local services such as health providers or schools (Ager & Strang 2008, p.173). Similar experiences were registered in both countries. Nacira described one of her most traumatic experiences:

Six months after our arrival, I lost my uterus and my baby. I arrived here and I got pregnant, because we thought ‘new life so let’s start it with a son’. But I had complications and I only spoke English at that time and nobody from the Agency or the UNHCR helped me, and I couldn’t communicate with the doctors properly [...] The hospital was negligent and we couldn’t do anything. After that I went into a long depression.

(Nacira, PTP\_BR154)

As in the case of Nacira, some of these episodes had devastating effects in the mental health of the refugees. The lack of language to face the politics of access and the resettlement structures in the host country further diminished the refugees’ already fragile situation at their arrival, exacerbating the power imbalances between the newcomers and the multiplicity of actors in the country. The findings suggest that the vulnerability that some refugees faced because of the difficulties learning the language delayed their sense of attachment in the new country and their self-identification with a place in which they were not understood. On the other hand, when language learning and use reached a good level, language as a source of membership into the receiving country was a symbol of pride and recognition of their own achievement in the resettlement process.

Similarly to the Colombians in Brazil, Palestinian refugees in both countries indicated that language had a double role in the creation of their sense of belonging. While learning the dominant language of the receiving country was a mark of membership, keeping the language of origin was an element that reinforced their culture and what the refugee considered the 'homeland identity'. In this sense, maintaining spoken Arabic in situated spaces such as the home or the Mosque, was a particular endeavour by which they kept and reproduced their original, cultural and religious identity. The concern was mainly raised by parents, positioning the mother tongue as an intergenerational negotiation of belonging and self-identification with the imagined 'home', and as a means to establish social bonds with other similar ethnic groups (Ager & Strang 2008). Zoheir in Chile describes this:

It is very important to speak Arabic inside the house, so the children don't lose it. We talk to our children about the Koran and what it says, this and this. We also teach them about our language, Arabic. And they learn little by little. What I want is that my children can understand their religion and language.

(Zoheir, PTP\_CH92)

Palestinian refugees preserved the Arabic as a way to maintain religious practices within the family, particularly with the children. Also for the parents, maintaining the original language was a way to keep the family dynamics and roles within the home. Even when many of the parents interviewed proudly discussed how fast their children learnt the dominant language in the resettlement country and how useful that can be for them, parents recognised that inside the home there were other rules and practices to be reinforced through the original language. In the case of some Palestinian families in Chile, they approached the Mosque in Santiago and requested them to help with their children's education and the preservation of Arabic. According to the member of the Mosque Al-Salam in Santiago, they did not run a formal school, but an 'educational project', where they taught children to read the Quran and prepared them to take free exams covering the national educational curricula<sup>82</sup>.

The findings suggest that keeping the original language, particularly within the home, contributed to the re-making of refugees identity in the resettlement country by

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<sup>82</sup> At the moment of the interview in 2013, the educational project was attended by 4 Palestinian boys and 5 girls, of a group of 30 children.

reinforcing those practices and elements by which they identify as Palestinians. Arabic, in this sense, meant reproducing a set of practices and habitual interactions that reminded them who they were and where they came from (Berger 1984). One of these daily practices, for example, meant that in all the Palestinian houses that I visited in Chile and Brazil, families had electronic devices and antennas that allowed them to watch TV in Arabic. As Ehrkamp (2005) suggested, satellite TVs act as sources of identification that go beyond national borders and connect refugees with their other localities.

In this section I have argued that language acquisition and use are pivotal dimensions in the construction of the sense of belonging in the receiving country. Yet, the use and learning of language is twofold in the construction of belonging. As shown here, the acquisition of the language spoken in the host country represented the first form of 'membership' sought by most of the resettled refugees. At the same time, the efforts to preserve the original language, particularly among the second generation, suggests the need to keep an intimate attachment to the refugees' original home, showing the dynamism of belonging and the translocality of refugees' self-identification.

### **6.3.2. 'God knows what he does': Religion and Faith**

Refugees in both study sites made constant references to religion, faith and God/Allah as triggers of belonging. When I started my fieldwork, I assumed that religion would be a distinctive marker of difference when exploring the experiences of Palestinian refugees. However, my analysis of the narratives of both Colombian and Palestinian refugees suggested that religion was much more than a marker of otherness. Instead, those practices and beliefs contributed to the understanding of individual and collective ways in which resettled refugees negotiated membership and identity in the host country as part of their integration experience.

The role of religion and spiritual beliefs in the process of displacement and 'integration' has been discussed in refugee and migration studies with interesting contributions about religion as a source of emotional coping, as a way to reinforce identity and a medium for community building, among other areas (Goździak & Shandy 2002; Mayer 2007; Yang & Ebaugh 2001; McMichael 2002; Dorais 2007). Some of these themes were also identified in

the interviews with Palestinian and Colombian refugees in Chile and Brazil. I argue that elements of spirituality illustrate that the sense of belonging is multi-situated, collective and individual at the same time. Through the practice of their faith, refugees generate membership and self-identification not only with their religious community but also with the rest of the host society. By strengthening their religious identity within societies with freedom of religion, such as Chile and Brazil<sup>83</sup>, refugees created attachment in a society with different beliefs but where they felt that their own was, at least by law, respected.

When I interviewed Diego in Sapiranga, Brazil, I noticed that in every single phrase he thanked God, even when he was referring to the most traumatic events of his displacement. Most of the Colombian refugees constantly refer to God, religion and faith in their narratives, emphasising the role of their beliefs in coping with distress and uncertainty; this shows the relevance of finding a religious community in the resettlement country and how religious practices help them to keep with cultural traditions. Appendix I reveals that the majority of refugees had a religious affiliation. The results are not surprising, considering that most of the Colombian population, similar to other Latin American countries, claims to have one<sup>84</sup>. What is interesting is the pivotal role that religion and faith played in the construction of belonging.

Colombian refugees highlighted two complementary aspects about the role of religion in their everyday lives: trust in God's will and the symbolic and material support they found in faith and religious communities. Resettled refugees attributed everyday situations to the will of God and used that belief to sustain decision making and challenges faced during the displacement. Diego's account illustrated the way he entrusted God with their decision to accept Brazil as a country of resettlement:

When they told me that we could go to Brazil, I said 'If my God goes in front with me, I will go'. And they sent me over here.

(Diego, PTC\_BR110)

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<sup>83</sup> The Constitution and other laws in Chile and Brazil provides for freedom of religion thought and practice. For more information see United States Department of State 2013b; United States Department of State 2013a; Berkley Center for Religion Peace & World Affairs n.d.; Chile 1980; Brasil 1988.

<sup>84</sup> Although the Colombian government does not keep statistics on religious affiliation, other reports estimates that around 80% of the population is Catholic, 14% is non-Catholic Christian, 2% Agnostic and 4% members of other religious groups (United States Department of State 2014).

Diego, like many other Colombian refugees, questioned whether coming to a resettlement country within Latin America would be the best option (Chapter 5). Most of them explained that they accepted the resettlement country, trusting in God's will for them. This 'submission to God', referred to by as Villa (2007, p.565), emerges from attitudes of resignation to their lived experiences. Faith, in this case, dictates that everything – persecution, displacement and integration into the new country – occurred for a reason related to God's will. In this sense, religion and faith seemed to offer a set of symbolic interpretations to provide meaning to the resettled refugees' experiences (Goździak 2002; Mayer 2007; Rios 2009).

Additionally, Colombian refugees' faith in God appeared to empower participants and allow them to explain positive outcomes of an originally difficult situation. Andres' accounts demonstrate the use of faith as a source of understanding:

We had a 'social break' as I called it. We were going to buy a house, we invested a lot and then we couldn't and we lost everything again [in the resettlement country]. And we thought about leaving the country then. But just at that time we approached this religious community and we asked God's direction. And we met them and we felt good there, accepted, supported. For me it is very important to know that my wife feels good and since we joined them she has changed, because she was very depressed before that.

(Andres, PTC\_CH49)

Andres stressed that by asking God's direction he managed to find a religious community that became one of his main sources of social capital in the resettlement country. In the interviews with Colombian refugees in both countries, the affiliation to religious organisations, either the same they had in previous countries or new ones, emerged as a source of support but also as an important social bridge. Ager and Strang (2008) argue that social bridges signify that 'integration' in the host country can be reached through participation in, and connections between, groups in shared activities such as community or religious groups, sports or political activity. In the case of refugees interviewed, membership of religious groups accomplished different objectives: in some cases refugees found attachment through common spaces of worship, in other situations they obtained important moral support provided by the community, while some found that membership to specific groups allowed them to create networks and grasp significant opportunities.

Natalia, her twin sister and her mother belong to the Christian and Neo-Pentecostal Church of God Ministry of Jesus Christ International, which they joined in their first country of asylum, Ecuador, and also in the resettlement country. Patricia, on the other hand, is part of the Jehovah's Witnesses community. Both emphasised the importance of the church in their resettlement process:

I think [the church] has been like the biggest help. Because we came with a super big faith and we found people that can understand that faith. There are also Colombians, because the church was born there, so that allows us to have a Colombian social circle. But there is everything... Mexicans, Chileans, Peruvians, [people] from everywhere. [...] Besides the manifestation of God, in social terms it has also been a great support.

(Natalia, PTC\_CH19)

[Our religious community] is extremely important for us, and is everything we've got here. In fact, because of them we managed to get housing. Because of them we have got the jobs we've had. Because of them we have got help when we were bad economically or emotionally [...] We see them as family. So, they fill that empty space in every aspect. Because I believe that without being in that circle we would have left a long time ago. I don't think we would have managed to cope here.

(Patricia, PTC\_CH34)

In the case of Natalia and her family, by finding a group of people with whom they share the same beliefs and worship practices, they have identified themselves as members of a transnational religious community that made them feel welcomed in the resettlement country. In addition, the church satisfied different social needs. On the one hand, they created links with other Colombian members of the church in whom they trust. On the other, in following a religion that attracts different migrant communities they found a space to establish ties with people from other nationalities with whom they can self-identify as part of a larger migrant community in Chile. In this case, the access to a specific religious group of transnational characteristics meant attachment to like-minded people, creating a dual sacred/social space where they could remember previous countries of displacement and create strategies to cope in the country of resettlement. Furthermore, the church enabled them to establish social ties with locals, opening other spaces of belonging in the receiving country, and the creation of relevant networks and opportunities such as housing (see also Koser Akcapar 2010; 2006). Natalia and her family managed to rent the place where they had been living since their arrival through members of the local church. Patricia had similar experiences, stressing the fact that without their

community support her family would have not being able to cope with the challenges, material and emotional ones, of resettlement.

Finally, narratives from Colombian refugees in Chile and Brazil showed that some religious practices allowed them to reinforce a sense of 'national identity', retrieved through different religious traditions. Marta, in Brazil, told me how important it was for her family to keep some of these traditions, such as 'el alumbrado' (the day of the little candles or lightening), by which they honour the Virgin Mary. Marta described how the celebration also created curiosity in her neighbours:

We always commemorate. For example for the 8th of December we celebrate 'el alumbrado'. And we buy candles and we do our own lightening. And I was laughing because some neighbours thought that we were doing 'macumba' [similar to voodoo] hehe... I found that very funny. So I explained to them about the tradition. In the day of the lightening all Colombia is full of light. That type of thing we miss.

(Marta, PTC\_BR102)

For Colombian refugees religious practices and traditions such as the one described above provided what McMichael (2002, p.186) describes as "continuity, a shared yet negotiated identity, and it is a 'home' built from practices that occupy, use, and make social sense of places and lives". However, as I have argued earlier, religion in Chile and Brazil seemed to also be a platform from which to connect with the local community.

In the case of Palestinian refugees, Allah, faith and the practice of religion had similar meanings in terms of belonging and social bridges such as the ones experienced by their Colombian counterparts, in the sense that religion enabled belongings that transcended both national and transnational barriers as means of 'translocal' place-making (Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013). Additionally, the practice of Islam in two countries where that religion is not predominant<sup>85</sup>, open up questions about the experiences of Palestinian refugees within private and public spheres. Although there were a couple of Christian families among the resettled refugees in each country, all the Palestinian surveyed in both countries were Muslim (see Appendix I). Palestinian refugees' narratives about religion and faith emphasised an intimate dimension related to self-identification, but also related to

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<sup>85</sup> In Chile it is estimated that the Muslim population is around 4,000 people, representing less than 1% of the total population (Grim & Karim 2011). The same report estimated that the number of Muslims in Brazil had reached 1% of the total population with 204,000 people. However, according to the data of the Brazilian demographic census of 2010, 35.167 people identified as Muslim (IBGE 2010b).

social dimensions such as the reinforcement of a collective identity and the importance of social bonds (Ager & Strang 2008; Goździak 2002). In addition, refugees' accounts shed light on a public dimension that emphasises the exoticisation of their religion, particularly of Muslim women and the hijab, and how they negotiated encounters with difference in the host society.

Similar to some Colombian refugees, and in line with the results of other empirical studies (McMichael 2002; Dorais 2007; Goździak & Shandy 2002), Palestinians attributed their circumstances to Allah's will and used their faith as a mechanism of coping. Nazir, for example, refer to Allah when discussing his economic situation:

I have a house and I work nine hours per day – more with extra hours – and we kind of manage to get the money. It is not enough, but thanks to Allah it is fine. My wife and I think that if Allah wants us to be poor, middle class or rich, he knows, not me. I have that way of thinking. Other people may have other ways of thinking. It depends on your faith. [...] Thanks to Allah I have lots of faith. I don't have many rights, but I have so much faith.

(Nazir PTP\_CH93)

In addition, some refugees living near a Mosque found important support networks and a material space of security within the receiving country. In Chile, both the Muslim community and the Palestinian Christian community helped refugees to get jobs, extra language classes and the coverage of some material needs. In Brazil, the distribution of refugees in different cities meant that the attachment to a local Mosque varied according to their location. The religious affiliation also enabled spaces which strengthened social bonds with people from a similar culture where they shared cultural traditions; these spaces were open also to Christian Palestinian families resettled with the rest of the group. Nacira described this:

The Christian family also come with us to the Mosque. Because here they are Arabs, they are refugees. Doesn't matter if they are Christians. They don't go to pray, they go to share, to have a party or to be together on our important dates.

(Nacira, PTP\_Brazil154)

Nacira's account suggested that the Mosque was a social space as well as one of worship. On those special dates, the Mosque was also a space of leisure, where refugees met other members of the Arab communities in the country, or even other refugees, in a safe and

welcoming environment (see Lewis 2015). Palestinian refugees in both countries lived their religion in intimate and public spheres and held a general perception that in both countries other people's religion was respected. This perception influenced the way Palestinian refugees negotiated their differences with the host community but also how they navigated the differences they perceived from the locals. The accounts below emphasise these perceptions:

We explain to our children that each person has their own religion. And that here in Brazil you have many religions. Here, nobody fights with other people because of what religion they are. That is a good thing.

(Nacira, PTP\_BR154)

Here, I don't have problems with my religion. I go out with my hijab and nobody bothers me. Not like in Sweden, where my family is living. There are some good people over there, but many of them have problems with Islam, with the hijab and all that.

(Abida, PTP\_CH46)

I go to the Mosque. And if not, I go to the Church. No problem. Everybody in the Church knows that I am Muslim. It's another faith but still that is a house of God. Not a people's house. No problem. I am very happy when I go there. And on Friday I am going with the group that goes to the Mosque.

(Mahfoud, PTP\_BR140)

The perception that freedom of religion was a good value also highlighted a positive difference with family members who obtained protection in traditional resettlement countries and even in comparison with the situation in their regions of origin. In this context, refugees experienced feelings of being welcomed and 'at home' in the resettlement country, since they could belong while being able to freely express who they were in terms of their religious identity (Valentine et al. 2009). It also allowed them to navigate the differences they perceived with social norms in Chile and Brazil. Nazim and Zoheir explain how they managed this negotiation:

Our laws of behaviour are not the same as Chileans, but I am not going to talk badly about Chileans. Chileans are good people, but they are different to us. Sometimes when I see or hear some of those differences, it shocks me a bit. [...] But I prefer to live calmly. My neighbours, thank god, all good people, they greet us. The only problem is that we don't receive too many visits, but they always say 'hello, good morning', ask 'how are you doing?' ... because all of them and me have a job as well.

(Nazim, PTP\_CH93)

People got used to us and we got used to them. The first year was difficult, second year better. I was shocked with them as well... very shocked. With the way they dress, with their behaviour... But then [it began to seem] normal. They don't have a problem with me and I don't have a problem with them. I have my faith and you have another one but we are all friends. For example at work, I pray outside and nobody interrupts me or bothers me.

(Zoheir, PTP\_CH92)

Zoheir and Nazim's accounts of how they handled differences with the host community emphasise the importance they attribute to respecting mutual differences, similar to what Ang (2001) called 'togetherness in difference'. Additionally, the relevance that Nacim places on greeting within his neighbourhood, can be explained through Amin's (2002, p.976) argument about the power of situated everyday encounters at the local level, as strategies to negotiate difference. Palestinian refugees in both countries stated that these negotiations of difference in everyday 'micropublics' were a constant practice in spaces such as the workplace, schools and municipalities, for example. Nonetheless it can be questioned if the effective negotiation of difference in this type of daily encounters is enough to foster belonging. Some of these encounters certainly were perceived as mutual respect and effective negotiation, but they did not always lead to the creation of social ties or strong emotional attachment to certain places. Moreover, Valentine (2008, p.328) questioned if, instead of real respect for difference, these small encounters are a form of 'granted civilities'.

Furthermore, while the free practice of religion seemed to be respected in both countries, refugees still had to face and negotiate some aspects of their religion that associated them to specific stereotypes and hegemonic discourses. For instance, one of the main issues that some female and male refugees encountered was the exoticisation of the Muslim figure related to the hijab and oppression. Salima illustrates this:

Salima: You have everything in this country, good people and bad people. Many of them ask about the hijab. It is like they don't listen when I say that I am Muslim. They don't understand why we wear the hijab. They don't understand that is my religion, I cannot take off my hijab. They always say, you are in Chile now, why don't you take off that? We cannot! God is there as God is here. I cannot and I don't want to either. This is my religion. I cannot change, because I like my religion very much.

Marcia: Do you try to explain to them?

Salima: Yes, yes. People believe that I put this [shows her hijab] because I am scared of my husband and my husband puts this on me. And I tell them that no... for example, if my husband says 'take off your hijab', I won't do it, because I like my God, I like my religion and I want to wear the hijab. It always has been my decision.

(Salima, PTP\_CH96)

Like Salima, other resettled refugees in Chile and Brazil told me about the questions they received about the hijab, although these questions became less frequent after some years of residence in the resettlement locations. Sometimes, people told refugees to take the hijab off when it was too hot, promising not to tell anybody and assuming that the hijab was an imposition (Maia Marques 2011, p.35; McMichael 2002, p.172). All women who were questioned about the hijab, however, explained why they wear it – together with other aspects of their religion, as a way of negotiating their 'difference' by strengthening their religious identity and providing counter information (Valentine 2013). As Mouna told me:

People ask about my religion. I always talk about it. I don't say my religion is better than theirs, no, because I don't say that, Allah knows. I answer all people's questions, I tell them but sometimes they don't want to listen. No, because on TV they show that we Muslims are bad. But it is not true! And I explained them that.

(Mouna, PTP\_BR152)

Both Mouna and Salima's accounts emphasised refugee agency and how they actively negotiated their differences by strengthening their belonging to their religion and self-identification. However, as Wright (2014) and Ang (2001) have noticed, ethnic minorities' sense of belonging derived from their identification with a 'homeland' elsewhere, is a reflection of 'power struggles over race' (Wright 2014, p.6). Ang (2001, p.34) emphasises that the "very identification with an imagined 'where you're from' is also a sign of, and surrender to, a condition of actual marginalisation in the place 'where you're at'". Indeed, the mere existence of translocal belongings, particularly considering refugees' stories of displacement and persecution, interrogates the power imbalances within the refugee system. In refugees' daily lives, however, these negotiations are pivotal to navigating their resettlement experiences. Palestinian refugees' negotiations of belonging through their religious identity within social spheres, and also within private spheres such as their house (see Figure 6.3), can be also understood as a form of resistance by which they sought to be part of the host society without becoming bounded by it (see Landau 2009). These strategies have proved to be effective since they have managed to establish social ties in

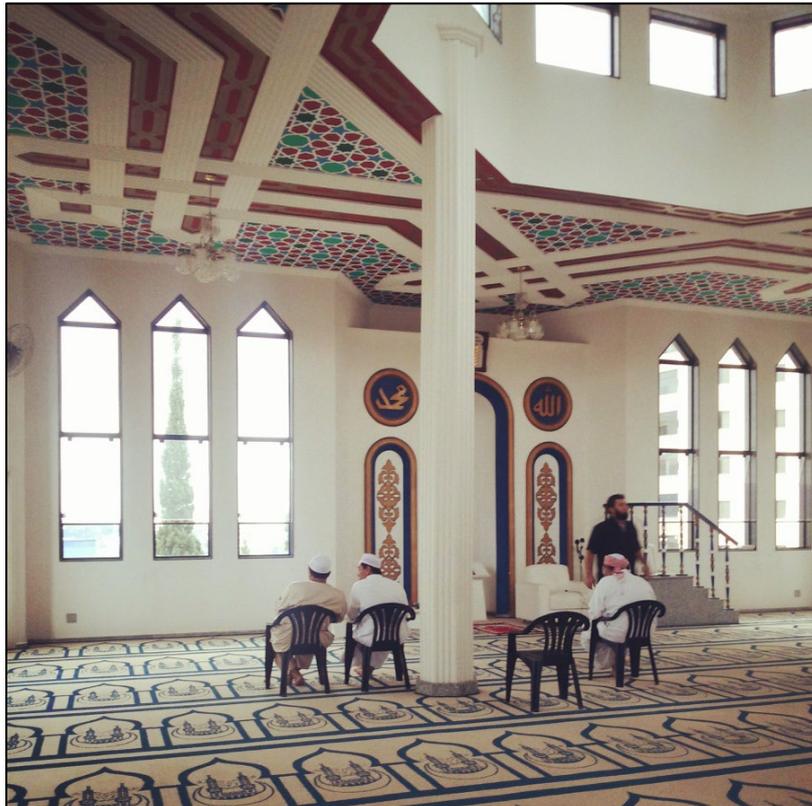
the resettlement country and change perceptions since they first arrived. For instance, a research study about Palestinians refugees' experiences in two Chilean cities within the first two years of arrival, indicated that refugees had problems in praying at work or organising special schedules during Ramadan (Bijit 2012, p.170). When I interviewed Palestinian refugees some years later, none of them reported having these kinds of problems.

Figure 6.3. Images with phrases from the Quran decorated the houses of most of the Palestinians I visited in Brazil and Chile.



Source: Author.

Figure 6.4. Mosque Mogi das Cruzes, Brazil.



Source: Author.

### 6.3.3. Social ties, friendships and networks

A third element that emerged from the interviews with Palestinian and Colombian refugees in both sites was the key role that social relationships, such as friendship and social ties, had in their integration experience. Indeed, refugees' place-based emotional attachments in the resettlement countries were to a great extent mediated by the people they related to (Ager & Strang 2008; Ryan et al. 2008; Betts 2009b; Zetter et al. 2006; McMichael & Manderson 2004). As Yuval-Davis (2004, p.215) has said, "belonging is a deep emotional need of people". These relational factors shaped differently the experiences of Colombian and Palestinian refugees and allowed me to understand further the situatedness of the resettlement experience. While the Colombian refugees had a wide range of positive and negative experiences in terms of friendships, the Palestinians had a generally positive perception of the receiving societies.

*"O melhor do Brasil é o povo"* (the best thing about Brazil is its people), was a phrase that I constantly heard from Palestinian refugees in Brazil. The gratitude and appreciation they expressed for local people contrasted sharply with the mistrust they expressed about the country's institutions and structures (see Chapter 5). Palestinian refugees in Chile also expressed themselves in similar terms about the locals. In both countries, the narratives of Palestinian women about their relationships with locals were mostly about long-lasting and significant friendships, whereas men referred more to 'weak ties' with people that they encountered in their everyday life at work or in their neighbourhoods (see Granovetter 1983; Granovetter 1973). Nacira (in Brazil) recalled that the support she received from the Brazilian friend that helped her with her Portuguese, was also pivotal when she lost her baby. Salima, on the other hand, emphasised the strong ties she created with a Chilean friend that helped her with her daily routine:

My husband went to call my Brazilian neighbour, the one that taught me Portuguese. From the beginning she went with me to the hospital, she helped me so much. For me she is like a sister. She called to her brother that is a taxi driver and he took me to the hospital. She stayed with me at the hospital all the time after surgery.

(Nacira, PTP\_BRP154)

I was at home and also selling at the shop. I had to clean the house and cook, and my baby was bothering me a lot, crying all the time! I wanted to sell, but customers couldn't hear me because the baby cried and wanted to throw everything off the

shelves. So my friend Adriana came and took care of my baby every day, for free. She works from 4pm till 10pm, but still she came every day to pick up my baby from 1 till 3 so I could cook and clean very fast, and sell as well. Now we live in different neighbourhoods, but she is very important for me and I never forget her. When I go to Quilicura, I always visit her.

(Salima, PTP\_CH96)

Nacira and Salima's accounts show that this type of strong friendship became for them key facilitators of belonging in the resettlement country, establishing ties with friends with whom they shared relevant emotional situations and in whom they found people to rely on and show mutual care (see Baumeister & Leary 1995). However, as discussed in previous sections, everyday encounters in spaces such as the neighbourhood, workplaces and social services also had positive effects on Palestinian refugees and the construction of 'home' within the receiving country (Amin 2002; Valentine 2008). Both experiences covered what Antonsich (2010, p.469) refers to as the personal and social needs of belonging. That is to say, that the construction of social bridges made refugees feel welcomed and appreciated, strengthening their feelings of being at home in the resettlement countries.

Contrary to the Palestinian refugees, Colombians' feelings of belonging through relational experiences were much more diverse and shaped by practices of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion related to race and class, framing Colombian refugees' experiences of belonging within the politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2011a; Yuval-Davis 2006; Antonsich 2010). Milena, for instance, described experiences of segregation that jeopardised her attempts at membership and attachment. Like many other Colombian refugees in Chile, the main place where Milena and her husband Luis sought to develop social ties was at the workplace. However, Milena experienced xenophobia and exclusion in her employment in a beauty salon. Her work colleagues did not let her sit down to have lunch with them, did not allow her to talk and sometimes mocked her in front of her customers. Milena described the consequences of that experience:

I always get along with everybody. But I have never felt in my life so rejected as here. Never. I got ill, all my body was in pain, I was depressed [...] So I told my husband that I will never be able to adapt to this country so I will have to take pills all my life because there is no way I can adapt here. Because I cannot cope with these people [Chileans], I

just don't understand them. I don't know what to do for them to like me, or how to behave. And I don't like it because I am losing myself and I don't want that.

(Milena, PTC\_CH14)

Milena, like other Colombian refugees, particularly in Chile, found that most of her social relationships were mediated by discourses of power and practices of inclusion/exclusion, which impeded them creating a sense of 'home' in the resettlement country. Therefore, Colombian refugees had to limit their social ties to 'safe' spaces such as the religious groups or those ones where they effectively negotiated acceptance. The resettlement programme in both countries identified discrimination as one of the main issues Colombian refugees had to face:

(Refugees) feel discriminated by the local population. Brazilian society does not know precisely what a refugee is, frequently perceiving them as fugitives (...)

(UNHCR Officer, Brazil, PT143)

In both countries, refugees had to negotiate the stereotypes imposed by the discourses of race and also the stigma generated around them because of being 'Colombians' or due to the questions that raised their refugee status. However, these experiences were situated and varied across refugee locations in different cities or neighbourhoods. For instance, the analysis of survey data showed the variety of friendships that refugees started to have, while at the same time revealing contradictory dimensions of their social experience in the resettlement country.

Table 6.2 shows how most of the refugees, from both groups and both countries, started to have friends from different backgrounds and origins, including an important number of local friends.

**Table 6.2 Resettled refugees' friends in the resettlement country**

Q46. Would you say that your Friends in the host country are?	Chile		Brazil	
	Colombians	Palestinians	Colombians	Palestinians
	Mainly locals	13.2% (N=13)	15.8% (N=3)	40.0% (N=8)
Mainly people from my country of origin	7.9% (N=3)	5.3% (N=1)	0.0%	0.0%
Mainly people with same religion	10.5% (N=4)	5.3% (N=1)	10.0% (N=2)	0.0%
Mainly foreigners	5.3% (N=2)	5.3% (N=1)	0.0%	0.0%
A mixture of different origins & religions	28.9% (N=11)	68.4% (N=13)	40.0% (N=8)	66.7% (N=6)
I don't have friends in this country	7.9% (N=3)	0.0%	10.0% (N=2)	11.1% (N=1)
I don't know	5.3% (N=2)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
No Answer	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1% (N=1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>

\*Data source: Survey implemented in Chile and Brazil during 2013 and 2014.

However, when refugees were asked how integrated they felt in their neighbourhoods or local communities, the data showed that, despite the wide range of friends, most refugees did not feel part of the community, particularly in the case of Colombian refugees. The majority of Colombians in Chile, 60.5% (N=23), and 45% (N=9) in Brazil did not feel integrated. On the other hand, Palestinian refugees, particularly in Chile, felt much more integrated in their neighbourhoods, reinforcing the themes that emerged from the interviews (see Appendix I).

The survey data also revealed that even when some social bridges were weak, social bonds<sup>86</sup> (Ager & Strang 2008) translated into strong social capital and relevant networks (Boateng 2009), bringing social and economic benefits. It is worth noticing that social capital did not only emerge in religious spaces, but in other social spaces where social relations took place. The results of the survey support these findings (see Table 6.3), Colombian and Palestinian refugees across both countries developed strong support networks whether within their religious community, ethnic group, neighbourhood or among general native residents. In Brazil, the opinion of Palestinian refugees was far more diverse. This can be also explained by the age of the population that stopped seeking employment after a few years into resettlement.

<sup>86</sup> I draw on Ager and Strang (2008, p.178) use of social bonds and social bridges (Putnam 1993; Woolcock 1998) in order to explore refugees social capital and networks. Social bonds refers to connection with 'like-ethnic groups' (such as family and co-ethnic or co-religious groups), while the social bridges makes reference to the links with other communities (such as the host community). See also Portes 2000.

**Table 6.3 Refugees' perceptions about social capital in the resettlement countries.**

**Q73. "I have developed important networks in the resettlement country"**

	Chile		Brazil	
	Colombians	Palestinians	Colombians	Palestinians
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0.0%	15.0% (N=3)	11.1% (N=1)
Disagree	15.8% (N=6)	0.0%	1.0% (N=1)	11.1% (N=1)
Neither agree nor disagree	7.9% (N=3)	15.8% (N=3)	10.0% (N=2)	11.1% (N=1)
Agree	31.6% (N=12)	47.4% (N=9)	45.0% (N=9)	11.1% (N=1)
Strongly agree	28.9% (N=11)	15.8% (N=3)	20.0% (N=4)	0.0%
No Answer	15.8% (N=6)	21.1% (N=4)	5.0% (N=1)	55.5% (N=5)
Total	38	19	20	9

\*Data source: Survey implemented in Chile and Brazil during 2013 and 2014.

## 6.4. Conclusions

This chapter has discussed belonging as a pivotal dimension of refugee integration, related to social and emotional experiences of creating a sense of 'home' during resettlement. The analysis of refugees' accounts suggested that 'belonging' is a translocal and multi-situated experience whereby refugees have created attachments in the host society while at the same time constructing spaces that connected them with other constructions of 'home'. That is to say that the idea of 'home', 'place' and 'roots' appeared as fluid and dynamic, and not fixed to a single place of belonging but related to different significant locales. In this respect, belonging necessarily included transnational practices that connected refugees to the resettlement country through the material and symbolic representations of 'home', whether in their countries of origin or in previous places of displacement (McIlwaine 2011; Waite & Cook 2011; Puyana et al. 2009; Núñez-Madrado 2007). This was evident in participants' narratives about family separation and the ways they kept contact despite the distance, reproducing routine and rituals over the internet; through the learning and use of the dominant language in the receiving country together with the efforts to maintain the original language, and in the key role that religion played creating spaces where refugees negotiated their 'multiple homes'. These findings dialogue with wider debates about what 'belonging' means in terms of place-belongingness (Antonsich 2010; Ehrkamp 2005), emotional attachment to material and social worlds (Wood & Waite 2011; Christou 2011) and as identity reformulation (Valentine et al. 2009).

Furthermore, these experiences provided insights that support the co-existence and interaction between integration and transnationalism (See Erdal & Oeppen 2013). Erdal

and Oeppen argue that these interactions can be understood as ‘migrants balancing acts’ by which they can access opportunities in two or more places. The findings presented in this chapter relate with what Erdal and Oeppen (2013) refer as ‘additive’ interaction between integration and transnationalism, in the sense that refugees have developed a “feeling of belonging and socio-cultural connections in country of origin and of settlement” (Ibid 2013, p.878). However, the experiences of refugees in Chile and Brazil also showed the multiplicity of scales and spaces where these interactions take place and are negotiated, some of which go beyond the limits of the nation state. Colombian and Palestinian refugees’ experiences shed light into the relevance of local contexts and the situatedness of their sense of belonging (Brickell & Datta 2011b; Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013; Freund 2015), exemplified here through their daily encounters and social ties in multiple sites within and outside the resettlement country.

I argued that in order to understand these translocal and multiple belongings, it is necessary to explore resettled refugees’ radical experiences of displacement, persecution and family separation. These experiences affected people’s emotions, spaces and constructions of normality in their daily lives. However, the sense of ‘uprootedness’ as a result of these processes did not diminish refugees’ agency and their active response to shape their integration through translocal negotiations of belonging. In this context, translocal and multiple belonging could be also understood as processes of healing that do not necessarily affect refugee integration in a negative way. Furthermore, the analysis of the exile as part of the experiences of belonging in the resettlement country, provided insights to enable understanding of the limitations and scope of refugees’ social interactions as well as the development of belonging through movement (Fortier 1999; 2000). Since the exile disrupts “the objective and subjective reality of the individual” (Bello 2001, p.20), feeling at home in different places allowed them to ‘move on’ in the resettlement country, including those other spaces, relationships and routines that are also part of their identity and attachment.



## CHAPTER 7

### Living in a 'fissure': obtaining and claiming citizenship

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#### 7.1. Introduction

We have a legal status, but we do not have a bank account, so we do not have the requirements to apply for a house subsidy for example. We are out of the system. Because people like us who are foreigners but who are also located in the middle-low class, stay in the 'fissure'. We live in a 'fissure', as I call it. People like us cannot be anywhere in this country. Therefore, we cannot stay in this country. If we stay, we have to do something.

(Luis, PTC\_CH15)

Luis's narrative summarises the argument of this chapter, the lived-experiences of resettled refugees were marked by the negotiation of processes of inclusion and exclusion imposed by journeys to citizenship<sup>87</sup> in the resettlement countries. That is to say that refugees' integration experiences were influenced by the formal membership *granted* by the host states and the citizenship *claimed* by the resettled refugees. These seem to be two separate processes, but they are connected by refugees' daily negotiations of membership. Both processes also reveal the multiple scales of refugees' citizenship, exposing the tensions that emerge from trying to obtain citizenship (Castles & Davidson 2000) and the gains of performing citizenship (Isin & Nielsen 2008). While refugees' lived-experiences contested the notion of citizenship as legal status only, the exclusion and segregation they faced in the host country highlighted their 'otherness' as 'barely citizens' (Cresswell 2013). In this context, I argue, resettled refugees are unsettled citizens who are constantly negotiating their formal membership in the resettlement country across multiple sites (Staeheli 2010).

The chapter is divided in two parts. The first part (Section 7.2) explores how the refugees' everyday encounters are marked by their 'status', reviewing refugees' restrictions to access certain social and economic rights. Section 7.3 considers refugees' lack of or difficult access to, housing, to illustrate further how the barriers derived from the formal

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<sup>87</sup> By 'journeys to citizenship' (Cole 2014), I make reference to refugees' experiences progressing in their formal membership towards naturalisation, from the moment they arrive in the resettlement country and obtain either temporary or permanent residence permits. In addition, the term can be used to make reference, more broadly, to the relational processes and practices of citizenship formation.

membership develop into differential practices of citizenship crossed by axes of difference, such as race and social class (Mountz 2009). The second part, (Section 7.4) discusses refugees' 'acts of citizenship', and how they have tried to contest power dynamics of citizenship through individual and collective action. The chapter concludes with a reflection about how refugees negotiate citizenship on multiple sites and scales.

## **7.2. Formal membership status: losing and gaining citizenship**

The experiences of both Colombian and Palestinian refugees were marked by the constant tension between losing and gaining citizenship rights. When refugees are forced to flee their country of origin, they experience a denigration of rights and the loss of protection by the state and their 'distinct place in the world', leaving them in a condition of 'rightlessness' (Arendt 1962, p.296). While refugees seek asylum in a second country, or while they experience resettlement to a third country, their 'integration' process also involves the construction of a relationship with the receiving state. This negotiation first involves obtaining a formal membership. What Isin describes as 'status', related to "rules, regulations and laws that govern who can and cannot be a citizen in a given state" (Isin 2012, p.109). For the resettled refugees I interviewed in this research, gaining formal access to citizenship is important because regularisation of their membership in the country would mean protection and stability through certain entitlements. However, as I explore in this section, refugees' citizenship formation in the resettlement country was marked by experiences of segregation and exclusion.

In both countries, refugees' journeys to citizenship were framed by the legal status that resettled refugees received upon arrival as part of the resettlement stipulations. According to most of the resettled refugees in both countries, the regularisation of their status allowed them and their children to access health services and education (primary and secondary) like any other citizen in the host countries (Chapter 2)<sup>88</sup>. However, refugees' narratives gave accounts of a set of rights and services restricted to them, making it difficult to reach 'substantial citizenship' (Castles & Davidson 2000). While there were some issues that affected refugees across both countries, such as the difficulties accessing

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<sup>88</sup> Of the total 86 Colombian and Palestinian refugees interviewed for this study across both research sites, 90.7% (N=78) had access to health and emergency services in Chile and Brazil. Details in Appendix I.

housing (which I explore in section 7.4), there were other barriers that marked each group differently in each country. For example, in the case of the Colombian and Palestinian refugees in Brazil, I focus on the issues emerging from having temporary residence permits and the difficulties they faced accessing social programmes, respectively (Sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2). On the other hand, the experiences of Colombian refugees in Chile were characterised by citizenship practices influenced by race, class and marginalisation (Section 7.2.3). Finally, the accounts of Palestinians in Chile shed light onto the anxieties created by the quest for naturalisation and the links between citizenship, identity and mobility (Section 7.2.4). The experiences of the groups considered in this study thereby allow the exploration of four dimensions of citizenship experience: status, practice, identity and exclusion. These four areas were interrelated and marked by new 'losses', which emerged from refugees' daily negotiations of their formal membership with different forms of power.

#### **7.2.1. Temporary residency and exclusion: Citizenship as status in Brazil**

I will start by looking at the legal status and how refugees' 'regularity' in the host country influences the degrees of 'partial membership' (Morris 2003). In the case of Colombian refugees in Brazil, one of the main issues they faced during resettlement emerged from their 'transitory citizenship status'. As discussed in Chapter 2, resettled refugees in Brazil receive a temporary residency permit once they are accepted into the country with their refugee status recognised (Guglielmelli-White 2012). Although temporary residency regularised their stay and allowed them to work, in practice, the temporary documentation excludes them from many economic, social and cultural rights (see discussion in Chapter 3). Fernando's experience illustrates this. He arrived in Brazil from Ecuador with his wife and daughter in 2009. Since then, he has had another baby, been employed and tried to open a business. However, he has not been able to obtain either permanent accommodation or permanent documentation. He expressed his frustration from the first moment we spoke. I was in his house interviewing his wife Jasmin, when he came out of the room, interrupted the interview and said that everything his wife was saying was a lie. He stated that he did not like Brazil and that he would have preferred to stay in Ecuador. According to Fernando, his main problems derived from the lack of permanent documentation. For example, not having a permanent residency permit prevented him

from registering his business under his name and as a result, his business partner swindled him. Fernando explains the situation in the following way:

Our documentation here is transitory in nature. Because, in theory, we have a valid document, but it is only valid for few months. So when you need an official document to do something, it happens that your document is not valid anymore. That happened to me. When I was going to start my business, I couldn't use my name, so we had to open it under the name of my business partner. And he stole from me, because my name wasn't on the paper, because my name wasn't valid. I did all the work, I was making all the sacrifices, but he received all the money and he stole it all.

(Fernando, PTC\_BR126)

According to Fernando's account, the temporary residence permit diminished his labour opportunities in the resettlement country. Furthermore, it also triggered mental and physical issues (stress and high blood pressure) and increased his disappointment with the resettlement programme in general. During the interview, Fernando and Jasmin also suggested that the situation derived from their legal status also brought tensions between them, shedding light onto the different experiences of resettlement within the household. While Fernando struggled to navigate the barriers of the temporary residence permit, Jasmin faced the consequences of her husband's distress at being the only source of income. As Jasmin told me:

To be honest I am a puppet. I am going from here to there, wherever (he) takes me. My opinion is worthless. Because if I stay here I cannot work, I cannot do anything because of my children. He takes the decisions.

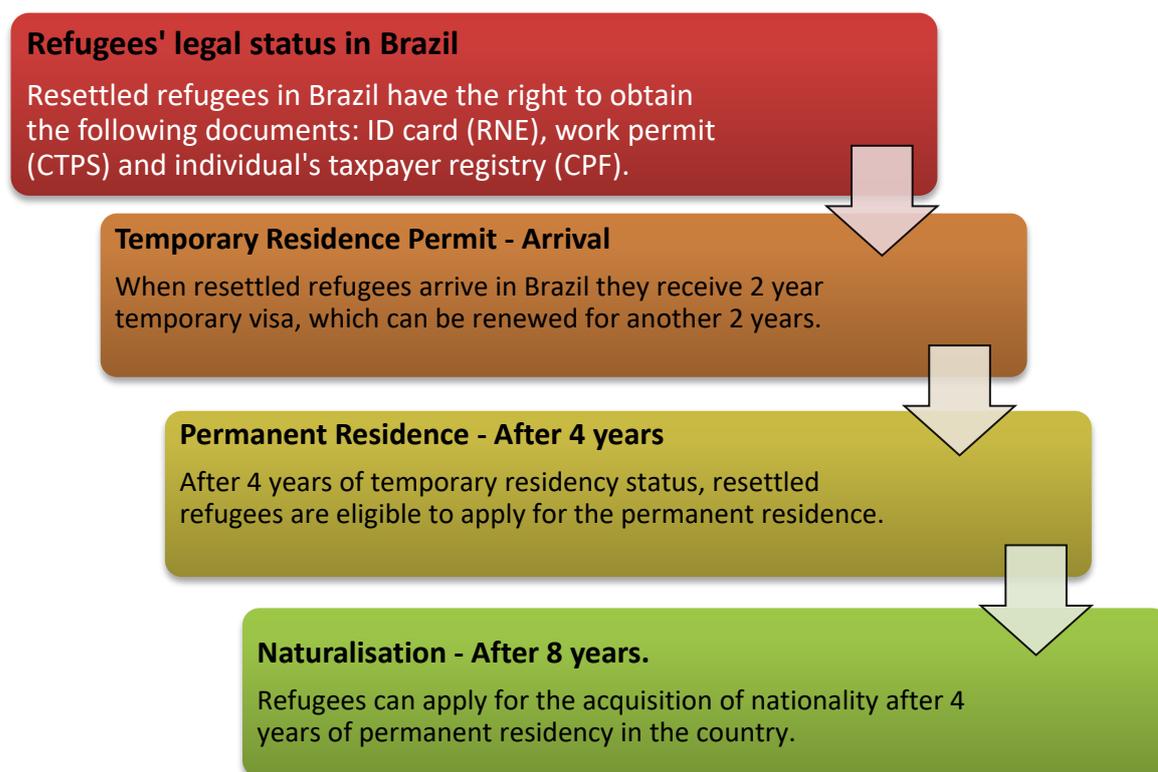
(Jasmin, PTC\_BR125)

The accounts of Fernando and Jasmin illustrate the burden that a temporary citizenship status imposes on refugees, in terms of the recognition of their social and economic entitlements, such as permanent or independent work (See Da Lomba 2010), and the consequences that it has for family relations. As Fernando highlights, this 'transitory' status questioned his 'validity' and therefore, the credibility of his membership in the resettlement country.

As Mountz et al. (2002, p.352) identified in their study about the 'temporary protected status' given to Salvadoran asylum applicants in the United States, this type of documentation is "*neither protective nor temporary*". Although their study makes reference to a legal status granted to asylum seekers who are expected to return home,

and who experience an even more vulnerable situation than resettled refugees, the argument can also apply to the legal status provided to resettled refugees in Brazil. While resettlement is intended to be a ‘durable solution’, the temporary residence granted in Brazil makes that objective difficult, considering that this type of documentation does not fully guarantee refugees access to rights nor fulfils their protection needs in the receiving country. At the same time, because of the bureaucracy and high cost of applying for permanent residency<sup>89</sup>, many refugees who have opted to keep renewing their temporary residence find themselves living for long periods on provisional documentation (see Figure 7.1). In this context, the precarity of resettled refugees’ legal status in the country is due, to a great extent, to the transient characteristic of the ‘temporary residency’ they receive. What Bailey et al. (2002) refer as ‘permanent temporariness’. Resettled refugees are allowed into the country, but in terms of citizenship status, they are long-term non-citizens.

**Figure 7.1. Legal status and path to naturalisation in Brazil<sup>90</sup>.**



Source: (ACNUR 2014a; Government of Brazil 2013)

<sup>89</sup> Refugees need to pay two different fees (in total around US\$105), fill in a form and give proof of their residence, documentation, qualifications and employment (ACNUR 2014a).

<sup>90</sup> The acronyms of each document mean the following: RNE, National Registration of Foreigners; CTPS, Work Permit and Social Security (Carteira de Trabalho e Previdência Social) and CPF, individual’s taxpayer registry (Cadastro de Pessoas Físicas).

Of the 19 Colombian resettled refugees surveyed in Brazil, 12 of them had temporary residence permits, and 6 of them had obtained the permanent residency. None of them had applied for the naturalisation. Two of the refugees with temporary residence arrived in the country in 2005 and were still renewing their papers every two years. In this sense, the ideal timeframe of 8 years that the country suggests to obtain the naturalisation is hardly accomplished. In practice, most of the Colombian refugees interviewed in this research still had temporary residency and they were constantly renewing it for another two years, creating a dependency on the state's validation. Daniela, for example, arrived from Costa Rica with one of the first groups of Colombian resettled refugees and has been in Brazil for 10 years. She had not yet applied for naturalisation, due to the bureaucracy and high cost involved, but has been a permanent resident for two years now. Nonetheless, for eight years she battled with the constraints of the temporary residency. One of the main challenges was the long time she had to wait for the permanent documents:

We had documentation from the beginning, but many times people would say 'I am sorry that document is not valid'. So we would have to go to the Policia Federal (Federal police), they would give us a receipt that would show that we were waiting for the legal document. Many times that receipt wasn't valid either, but we didn't have too much trouble with it. The problem was that the paper said, for example, 'your documents will arrive in three months'. After five months, nothing had arrived. And then, when the document finally arrived it was almost expiring again. So we kept going back and forth with that piece of paper.

(Daniela, PTC\_BR109)

Delays in providing documentation and the need to renew them so soon after receiving the papers also show how state policies and institutions control refugees' lives, actions and even mobility by making them reliant on up to date documents. Brun (2015, p.24) states that everyday life in protracted displacement is shaped both by waiting and uncertainty, affecting refugees' chances of 'moving on'. Waiting for up to date documents had similar effects on Colombian refugees' daily lives, since the dependency on papers that allow them to 'move on' in terms of accessing certain jobs or services, produced uncertainty and did not allow them to take some opportunities. Marta described how the delay in the delivery of the documentation affected her daughter's job prospects:

The most difficult thing about integration in Brazil has been the documentation. For example, my daughter had the opportunity to work in a cosmetic company, but they couldn't hire her because she didn't have the identity card. We got the protocol [work

document] soon, but the ID took too long to arrive and we lost opportunities because of that.

(Marta, PTC\_BR102)

The temporary legal status acts then as a technology of domination that maintains the subject under the hierarchical control of the state administrative regulations (Felder et al. 2014; Fassin 2011). That is to say, temporary residence limited the extent to which refugees could take opportunities and also revealed their vulnerability, leaving them as subjects under control and exclusion. In addition, the state controls refugees' membership by assessing their progress in their pathway to citizenship based on their economic situation. It is not particularly surprising that the state recognises as members those who can contribute to the countries: those that do not have to depend on the welfare social programmes and are, therefore, in line with the ideal of national identity. In this context, refugees that already arrived in a disadvantaged position had to suffer further exclusion from the receiving country in order to reach formal belonging. According to Marta, she felt that her documents were 'more valid' to the authorities once she started to be economically productive.

Now I am just waiting for the permanent residency because I already have the protocol. Because I have already done all the paperwork. But all this didn't help me to open the beauty salon. When I opened my salon I went to the Municipality and told them that I did everything right, following the law, paying my taxes and all that. So things shifted there a bit. Changed because I am paying taxes, I am working and I am bringing money into Brazil, you see? So when things changed and the Federal Police gave me a document to open an account, then things started to get easier.

(Marta, PTC\_BR102)

Marta's perception about the change of her status when she became an economically productive individual who 'gives back' to the country through her work and taxes is indeed one of the requirements of the Brazilian state to apply for the permanent residency, another step in the process of 'becoming a citizen' (Castles & Davidson 2000, p.84). Besides the requirement of living in Brazil for at least four years with temporary residency, the government demands that refugees should:

- "Be a qualified professional employed by an institution based in the country;
- or be a professional with recognised qualifications ;

- or have an established business resulting from the refugee investment” (ACNUR 2014a, p.43).

The requirements get more difficult to accomplish when applying for naturalisation, including a language test<sup>91</sup>. In this sense, it seems that the access to citizenship-as-status is associated with neo-liberal criteria, where the goal of becoming a ‘good citizen’ is not only related to the refugee’s contribution to the local culture and socio-political life of a country, but also related to the pursuit of capital (Ong 2006, pp.499–500). However, in the case of resettled refugees the problems they faced as a result of their temporary residence can indeed affect their accumulation of capital, making it harder for them to access other spaces of citizenship. Therefore, the temporary residence permit in Brazil shows the contradiction of the state’s politics of integration and status regulations, since the temporary documentation restricted refugee access to certain spaces that are crucial for their full acceptance as members of that host country (Da Lomba 2010). This contradiction reinforced refugees ‘continuous temporariness’ (Sayad 2010), weakening refugees’ relations with the host state.

Resettled refugees in both countries wanted to improve their own socio-economic situation through remunerated employment in the resettlement country. They have ambitions and personal achievements which they want to accomplish that are related to income. As discussed in Chapter 5, refugees’ ‘economic sufficiency’ is also, in both countries, one of the main goals of the ‘integration’ strategy set out by the institutions involved in resettlement. However, earning money as part of the ‘earned citizenship’ requirements can increase refugees’ exclusion, reinforcing the marginalisation of those who, because of age, illiteracy or any other reasons, may find it difficult to fulfil that requirement.

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<sup>91</sup> Among other requirements, the application to obtain naturalisation in Brazil demands the following: a document that proves that the person has enough money to fund their own and their family’s subsistence, Portuguese test, last tax declaration, certified copy of the contract of the lease or sale of the property where the person has lived the past five years. A full list of requirements is available at the website of the Brazilian Ministério da Justiça [www.mj.gov.br](http://www.mj.gov.br).

### **7.2.2. 'This is only for Brazilians': Palestinian refugees and barriers of access**

For Palestinian refugees in Brazil, legal status was also pivotal in their resettlement experience. Contrary to the Colombian refugees who struggled with temporary documentation, the resettlement programme made sure that Palestinian refugees obtained permanent residency permits as soon as they accomplished the four years requested by Brazilian law<sup>92</sup>. Despite this improvement, Palestinians still experienced restricted access to social programmes. These experiences allow exploration of citizenship not only as status, but also as practice – or the lack of it (see discussion section 3.5). By exploring citizenship from the perspective of practice, the question shifts from why certain subjects obtain certain statuses and to ask how those subjects “come into being and how those statuses get attached to them” (Isin 2012, p.110). In this sense, the experiences of Palestinian refugees in Brazil allow questioning about what difference having a permanent residency made to their practice of citizenship.

According to the narratives of Palestinian refugees, the difference between temporary and permanent status was relevant in some areas, but not pivotal as a means of integration. Nacira's account illustrates how a 'secure status' may increase access to rights but does not necessarily mean that refugees would be able to exercise them (Da Lomba 2010). Nacira left Iraq in 2007 and arrived in Brazil with her husband, two children, her mother-in-law and brother-in-law. Six months after arriving in Brazil, she realised that she could not rely on the UNHCR or the implementing agency to guarantee the practice of her rights in her everyday life as she expected (Chapter 5). After the traumatic experience she had at the hospital where she lost her baby, due to what she perceived as flawed information, lack of support and language barriers (discussed in Chapter 6), she and her family decided “to take ownership of the resettlement process”. When I interviewed her, after 6 years living in Mogi das Cruces, in Brazil, Nacira did not feel a refugee anymore. She identified herself as Brazilian. However, despite studying dentistry at the local university, her husband working and her two children attending school, she felt that many of her rights still were not recognised in Brazil.

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<sup>92</sup> Among the 9 Palestinian refugees that participated in the survey, 7 of them had already obtained permanent residence permits and 1 was in process of obtaining naturalisation. 1 did not answer the question.

I told myself I am not going to be a refugee anymore because I don't want to depend on them (the resettlement programme), and I only felt like a refugee for the first months here. I grasped life in my own hands. I always say that I am Brazilian now, because when I arrived here I learned that I have the same rights as Brazilians. The law says that. [...] You have some people who know that the refugees have all the same rights as Brazilians, but there are only a few people. Because every place you go, they say 'this is only for Brazilians', but I have the same rights as Brazilians! But it is not written here, with me, that I am a refugee and I have those rights. So the fault also lies with the government that hasn't made this information known. We arrived here and we appeared on the TV news and in the newspapers, but they (the government) didn't pass the information to the public agencies or to the Prefeitura (Municipality) so they don't treat us as they treat Brazilians. Until now, you have benefits like the one my mother-in-law is seeking, the retirement pension, that they said she cannot get because it is only for Brazilians.

(Nacira, PTP\_BR154)

Nacira's experiences of loss of citizenship by lack of access to certain social programmes diminished the experiences of belonging and participation that she accomplished in the country of resettlement. Her experience also shows that the practice of citizenship goes beyond the entitlement to certain rights that the law guarantees, and questions the real scope of those rights and the extent to which they are exercised effectively. As Stefoni (2004, p.332) recognises, the entitlement of citizens' rights "does not guarantee in any case the immigrants' equal social, economic, cultural and political conditions in the host society". Nacira felt that she belonged to the resettlement country and told me proudly about all the achievements that she thought validated her membership of Brazilian society. However, she still felt disregarded because of the lack of, or difficulties to access, some of her rights and government programmes. As identified in this and other studies (Guglielmelli-White 2012; Sampaio 2010), refugees in Brazil face difficulties accessing certain public policies because of the limitations of their legal status, but also because some public services and institutions lack knowledge about the refugee population, something that also happens in Chile.

The problems accessing pensions, housing or higher education subsidies emerged because of eligibility requirements (Sampaio 2010). The 'Booklet for Refugees in Brazil' states that refugees can access public programmes by enrolling on the Unique Register for Social Programmes<sup>93</sup> (ACNUR 2014a, p.50); however, that access is not guaranteed in practice.

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<sup>93</sup> In Portuguese the registration is called 'Cadastro Único para Programas Sociais', CadÚnico. It allows access to programmes such as Bolsa Família (social welfare program); Minha Casa, Minha Vida (social housing); and BPC (subsidiy for elderly and disabled persons), among others.

While some Federal states recognise access to these programmes with permanent or temporary residency permits, other municipalities do not recognise the 'foreigner' category as a welfare beneficiary, requesting them to have naturalisation. Through this lack of recognition, both the nation-state and the federal-state exercise the power to exclude certain people from certain rights, putting barriers to the construction of refugees' membership in the resettlement country.

Lack of access to the state pension BPC (Benefício de Prestação Continuada in Portuguese) is one of the main issues that affected mainly Palestinian refugees in Brazil, who in comparison with the Colombian resettled community had more people aged over 65. Due to their advanced age, this group of Palestinians struggled to learn the local language (discussed in Chapter 6) and to secure a job. According to the UNHCR Officer for Protection in Brazil, the lack of access to BPC and other public benefits is a great difficulty:

Access to public policies is a main issue. There are bureaucratic problems that are very complicated. For me the most relevant difficulty to access, from the point of view of resettlement and vulnerable people, is the BPC benefit for elderly or disabled people that don't have available resources, who are poor. They should be able to access them automatically, but even today they cannot. That is a huge problem. (...) Like what is happening with the Palestinians now.

(UNHCR Officer for Protection in Brazil, PTBR143)

In the case of refugees, despite having rights already guaranteed in the national legislation related to refugee status, the lack of access to government programmes has left resettled refugees marginalised and sometimes in extremely vulnerable situations, like those experienced by elderly Palestinians. For example, Malika (60 years old) and Raouf (68 years old) had the uncertainty of not knowing where to live after the UNHCR announced that they would stop paying their rent in January 2014. Their current rent was R\$750 (around US\$210), of which \$R500 (around US\$140) was paid by the programme, but they also had to pay services and food costs. The couple claimed that the little money they earned from selling Arabic sweets was not enough to cover all their expenses. They also stopped receiving the US\$100 per month that the Palestinian Embassy was providing. At the time of the study, social workers from the implementing agency ASAV were still negotiating with the local authorities to get access to the BPC subsidy. Despite their housing needs, unemployment and lack of pensions, refugees told me they have the same access as

Brazilians to other services such as health. As Raouf, a Palestinian refugee in Sapucaia do Sul, put it: “We receive medical treatments like the Brazilians. We have to wait a lot, but like everybody else”.

Resettled refugees in Brazil were granted rights recognised by the international and local legislation. However, as I explored in this section, refugees had limited access to those entitlements due to their non-citizen status, or the lack of knowledge about their refugee status by public institutions. As Castles and Davidson (2000) have stated, citizenship, symbolised in legal status and most notably in a passport, is crucial to refugees and migrants in general; however, even more important is the achievement of ‘substantial citizenship’, by which they expect equal chances of participation in various areas of society, such as politics, work, welfare system, and cultural relations (Ibid. 2000, p.84). In the case of Palestinian refugees, particularly for those recognised as vulnerable, the lack of substantial citizenship has prolonged their feelings of uncertainty and instability affecting people’s present but also future orientations (Brun 2015).

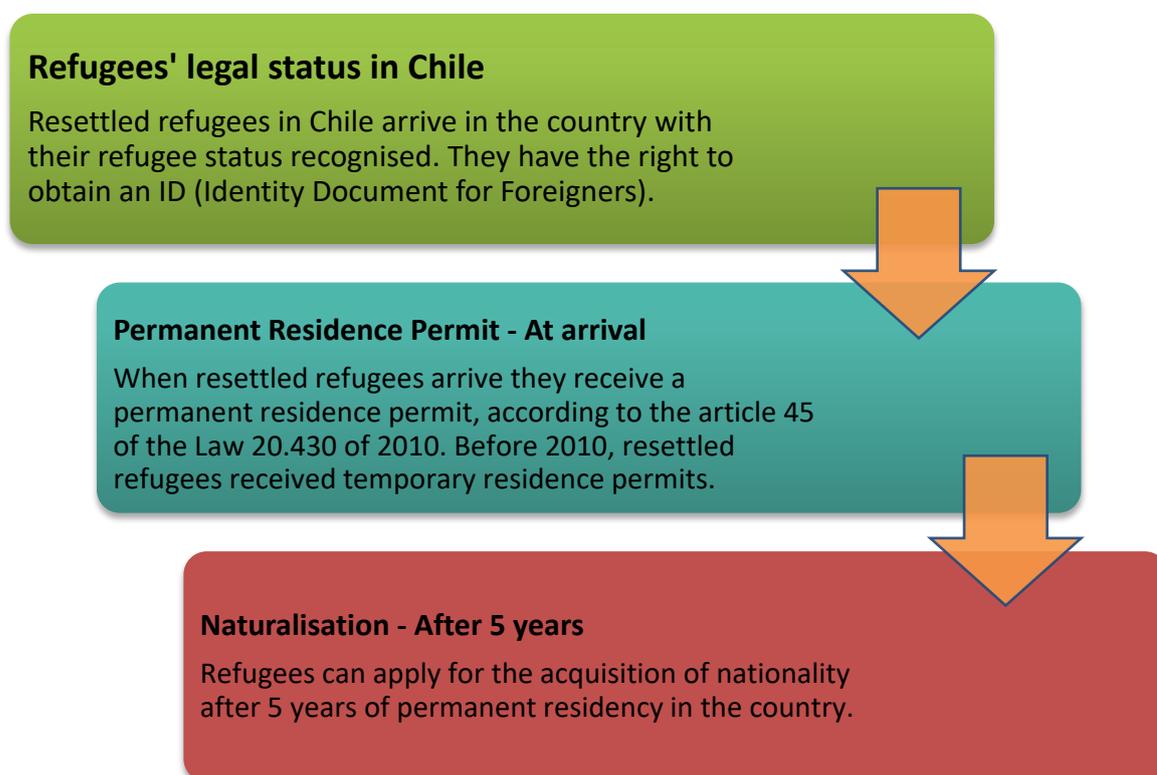
### **7.2.3. Citizenship in Chile: Identity, Status and Race**

In the next two sections, I explore within the Chilean context, the other two dimensions identified in refugees’ journeys to citizenship: identity and exclusion. While legal status remained as one of the refugees’ main concerns in relation to the practice of citizenship, the experience of Palestinian and Colombian refugees in Chile revealed different experiences. The narratives of Colombian refugees showed that their status as ‘foreigners’ determined their practices of citizenship and affected their access to certain economic, social and cultural rights. In addition, their experiences were shaped by class and racial objectification by some members of the host community. On the other hand, the experiences of Palestinian refugees in the country were influenced by lack of a permanent travel document and their fight to obtain a passport as a form of identity and as a resource to facilitate mobility.

One of the main differences with Brazil is that, since the promulgation of the Chilean Refugee Law (Law No. 20.430) in 2010, refugee status granted to resettled individuals and their families guaranteed them permanent residency in the country. According to Article

45 of the Refugee Law in Chile, permanent residence permits grant them all the rights established by the legislation and the International Conventions (González & Palacios Riquelme 2013). With the previous legislation, resettled refugees were granted a temporary residency permit, as in Brazil (see Figure 7.2).

**Figure 7.2. Legal status and path to naturalisation in Chile.**



Source: (National Authorities 2011; Olea et al. 2012; Guglielmelli-White 2012)

Although refugees and civil society organisations have recognised the stipulations of the Law 20.430 as a positive step forward, this new law still imposes lengthy restrictions on access to certain social programmes, such as the requirement of having a permanent residency for 5 years in order to apply for housing subsidies (Olea, 2013). This restriction mainly affected Colombian refugees, since the Palestinians resettled in Chile all received a housing subsidy (explored in section 7.2). Palestinian refugees in Chile, who arrived before the current legislation was enacted, obtained permanent residency within three years of their arrival through the support of the implementing agencies and the Chilean government. The costs were also covered.

Despite complaints that Palestinian refugees have made in relation to the programme and the unfulfilled promises (discussed in Chapter 5), refugees recognised that their situation had improved after 5 years living in Chile. While some issues relating to the exercise of their rights remain, one of the main concerns raised by Palestinian refugees were the restrictions imposed by the legislation in order to obtain naturalisation for them and their children. According to the current legislation, a foreigner can apply for Chilean Nationality by naturalisation if they have lived for more than 5 years continuously in the territory. Most of the Palestinians accomplished this in May 2013. The law, however, also requests people to be “21 years of age, or 18 if you are the child of a Chilean father or mother by naturalisation” (Gobierno de Chile 2005). This means that adults can apply, but their children born outside Chilean territory will not be able to apply until they are 18 years old (if the parents already have obtained the naturalisation), or until 21 (if the parents have not obtained it). Children born inside the country’s territory are immediately recognised as nationals.

Palestinian refugees requested a meeting with the Department of Foreigners of the Interior Ministry to learn about the naturalisation process in December 2013. I attended the meeting as part of my participant observation in AREVI. The head of the naturalisation office explained the process and gave a folder to each family with a copy of the application and a list of requested documentation. Only male householders attended the meeting. After the officer went through the list, the first question from the Palestinians was whether they could apply as a group, but the officer explained that the applications were individual. Immediately afterwards, they asked how their children could apply. When the officer read the rules the room went quiet and one of the refugees asked again, questioning how they could go abroad to visit their family without their children. The meeting finished soon after the officer mentioned that children could still travel with a yellow passport, the travel document that Palestinians can request in Chile, although it is not recognised at all borders. Palestinian resettled refugees in Chile and Brazil were born or were long-time residents in Iraq and had never had a passport (see Chapter 2). Therefore, for Palestinian refugees, having a passport that validates them as ‘members of a place’ has been a permanent battle. Hafid, who has been the spokesperson for the Palestinian group in Chile, explained why it is so important for them and their children to obtain naturalisation:

For me it is a dream to have a nationality, because now I am 50 years old and I have been a refugee all my life. I don't have a nationality, no passport. We suffer a lot with this, it is very difficult. When I get it I will put it in the middle of my house... I am Chilean! But we need to deliver this dream to our children as well. Because we don't want our children to suffer as we did. Do you know what our fear is now? Leaving our children with the same problem. What is going to happen to my 11 year old son? Is he going to stay without nationality until he is 21?

(Hafid, PTP\_CH36)

For Palestinian refugees in Chile, and also in Brazil, obtaining a passport is both a symbolic and a practical issue. Symbolically, Hafid's account highlighted that obtaining a passport is an act of reclaiming identity. It is also an act of validation after living their entire lives without citizenship. By getting a Chilean passport, none of the refugees would lose their Palestinian identity. Instead, by having a passport, Palestinian refugees confirm their transnational membership of both places: their imaginary homeland and the resettlement country that allowed them into their territory (see Barnes 2001). Through obtaining a passport, they emphasised in the interviews, Palestinians would be recognised as subjects with rights and not as refugees.

According to Yuval-Davis (2011, p.75), for some people carrying a passport identifies them as belonging to a specific nation-state when they travel abroad. In the case of Palestinian refugees, it not only provides them with belonging to a place, but also the possibility of freedom of movement around the world. The practical benefits of having a passport include the ability to reclaim their mobility rights denied by years of displacement. In this context, Chilean and Brazilian passports are perceived by the resettled refugees as 'good passports' because they are accepted without a visa in various countries. Zoheir describe it in the following way:

Marcia: Would you like to apply for the naturalisation?

Zoheir: The passport? Yes, of course!

Marcia: And why do you want to have the passport?

Zoheir: It has been so many years that I have lived without a passport, and I want to see this passport. I want a paper that says 'Zoheir is Chilean'! I like the Chilean passport. For example, if I want to go to Canada I don't want to go with the Palestinian yellow card, I want to go with the Chilean Passport. Because the Chilean Passport is a good passport.

(Zoheir, PTP\_CH92)

According to Palestinian refugees in both host countries, naturalisation was one of the promises that the UNHCR made when they offered refugees the possibility of resettlement

in Chile and Brazil (see Chapter 5). For many of the Palestinian resettled refugees, having a passport does not necessarily mean that they will leave the resettlement country, instead it symbolises one of the ways in which they aim to reclaim control over their own mobility and identity in a context where they perceived themselves as 'humans without rights' (see Moulin 2011, p.150). For them, having a passport would also allow them to reconnect with their families abroad and to reconstruct the transnational relationships built until now only through the internet.

Palestinian refugees in Chile not only 'want' naturalisation, but they feel that they 'deserve' it because they have accomplished all other aspects that 'validate' their membership of the host country. Aziza explained this claim in the following way:

I have all my papers and commitments up to date. I have no problem with the government, no problem with the police, nothing. Everything is good here. My kids are going to school. I speak Spanish now, no problem! My only problem is that I want my children to be Chilean. That is the problem. I want them to get the nationality at the same time as me and then we will be fine.

(Aziza, PTP\_CH42)

Aziza stated that not getting the passport for their children would not only overshadowed all their accomplishments, but also all the opportunities she found in the resettlement country. Aziza arrived in Chile in 2008 with her husband and two children. She told me about her children's progress at school, the honours that they have received and that she displayed in the living room of her house. I visited Aziza and her husband a couple of days after the meeting with the Foreigners Office. Aziza passionately expressed her anger about the current legislation. She told me that some families were planning to write a letter to the President and to protest in front of the seat of the government if it was necessary. Although she had been assured that naturalisation was promised to them, and to their children, in writing when they were in the refugee camp, she could not find the paper to confirm that.

Yuval-Davis argues that it is necessary to problematise both the formal and informal ways in which people "are classified as belonging or not belonging to particular states and societies" (2011, p.76). Palestinian refugees' claim for citizenship in the form of a passport raises the question about their need for membership to a particular (or to any) nation-

state in order to validate their belonging not to one place only but to a number of societies and states that otherwise would recognise them as stateless people. At the same time, Palestinians in Chile felt that naturalisation would make official the integration project that they are developing in the resettlement country. The Palestinian refugees' quest shows how citizenship plays out at different spatial scales (see Spinney et al. 2015): in the international arena a person's mobility is recognised and allowed on condition of having a passport, and at the national scale, membership is regulated based on a legal status that marks the inclusion or exclusion that will frame other relational processes. By June 2015, 65 Palestinians had obtained Chilean passports. Their children, however, were still waiting for a change in the legislation in order to apply for naturalisation.

#### **7.2.4. 'The issue of papers': Colombians in Chile**

In the case of Colombian refugees in Chile, their citizenship practices were influenced by the marginalisation of their economic, social and cultural rights, which also translated into exclusionary routines in their jobs, housing and in accessing certain social programmes. Based on the narratives of Colombian refugees, it can be argued that these exclusionary practices derived from both racial discrimination in the resettlement country and from the barriers imposed by the residency status.

Marcela and Pedro, for example, have been living in Chile with their children for the last 4 years. Marcela works as a secretary and Pedro as a security guard. Their time in Chile has not been easy. Their 16 year old daughter has been struggling with depression after suffering bullying at school in Chile. Marcela and Pedro were also attending counselling sessions trying to overcome the marks that the displacement and the resettlement left on them, as individuals, as a couple and as a family. One of the main problems they faced in Chile was that for more than a year they had been trying to obtain their permanent residency permit without success. Although the Law 20.430 established that people whose refugee status was recognised before 2010 should receive permanent residency, the law had not established a procedure for how this change should be made and refugees have had to wait for more than a year (Olea et al. 2012, p.127). The Foreigners Department has rejected Marcela and Pedro's application on several occasions and their ID card expired in July 2011. Because of their 'irregular legal situation', they have not been able to renew

their ID. I interviewed them in April 2013 and they were still undocumented. Similar to the experience of refugees in Brazil with temporary documentation, the lack of ID affected many aspects of their daily life. For example, they had difficulties cashing their payments cheques<sup>94</sup>, accessing some public services and finding a place to rent. The couple explained the issues in the following way:

Marcela: We are suffering all the time thinking whether or not the bank will want to cash our payment cheque. If the cashier is nice, she or he may accept it.

Pedro: Worse than that, the most difficult issue for a foreigner is finding a place to rent. Maybe as a foreigner, you can move to a neighbourhood on the periphery and you may find some place to rent, but I want my kids to live in a safe place! A better environment. We do have the money to pay rent. [...] We have had stable jobs for the past three years that show that we are well established here. But try to explain that to a landlord without your ID! No way... We also have to show that one of us earns twice the sum of the rent, but we make a good salary between both of us. So many papers... It is so humiliating!

(Marcela, PTC\_CH4 and Pedro, PTC\_CH5)

According to Marcela and Pedro's account, the lack of documentation deepened the structural and social constraints that Colombians faced in Chile not only as refugees, but also as Latin American foreigners. In a country like Chile where all services and transactions require an ID card, having expired documentation left this family in a state of social and mental exclusion. This adds to other constraints that Colombian refugees faced as foreigners who are portrayed by the media as the new largest group of immigrants settling in the country (Jerez 2013; Godoy 2012), leading to experiences of employment and social discrimination.

The lack of regular documentation has had a deep impact on Pedro, who also had problems obtaining the recognition of his refugee status in Costa Rica, their first country of asylum.

Everything that happened to us in Costa Rica and what is happening now at the Foreigners Department (in Chile)... it is the same thing. The papers issue. I feel that I just want to throw it all away and stop fighting. I don't want to fight anymore (...) psychologically, something changes inside of you and you don't know what it is. I feel like a coward and then I think of my past as a soldier in Colombia when nothing scared me. Then, I arrived here and I blocked out all my past. (...) It is so weird because in the

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<sup>94</sup> In Chile it is necessary to show an ID card in order to cash a cheque. The ID is also necessary to access health services and social programmes.

field, I felt secure of myself. I was a leader. I commanded a group. And I used to think nothing is going to happen to me, let's go, do it... do you understand? But then we arrived here and something as simple and ordinary as asking for a paper makes you vulnerable, makes you weak. And when life revolves around the lack of papers, it's like... I feel something broken inside me because I don't understand how vulnerable I feel about something so simple.

(Pedro, PTC\_CH5)

Pedro's account describes the practical but also mental consequences he experienced because of the politics of formal membership in the first country of asylum and then in the resettlement, and how deeply it has affected his integration process in Chile. For Pedro, the process of belonging in the resettlement country has been related to a negotiation with the dynamics and bureaucracy of its institutions, but also with the understanding of his own process of identity reformulation. That is to say, the barriers imposed by formal belonging during his entire displacement made him afraid of the process of documentation, describing feelings of vulnerability and emasculation (see Griffiths 2015; 2013). These feelings built from his experiences in the first country of asylum, also emphasised the translocality of his identity experience. The lack of documentation, both in Chile and in Costa Rica, and the constant application process to get the papers up to date became a frightening situation for him, a personal struggle that diminished his self-esteem and affected his relationship with his wife. Marcela, on the other hand, is tired of doing all the administrative work and wishes her 'old husband' were back. Refugees in both study sites struggled with downward social mobility, losing previous careers and dealing with deep changes in their self-identification and motivations. In the case of Pedro and Marcela, the changes have also affected them as a couple, in their intimacy and in the roles they play within the relationship.

Gaining 'substantial citizenship' is one of the areas where Colombian refugees in Chile have faced more challenges. Colombian refugees' integration and the exercise of their rights are also mediated by discourses of race and class. They are portrayed as one of the largest immigrant communities, and they are related in public discourse to stereotypes of drug trafficking, prostitution and the sexualisation of their bodies (Tijoux 2014; Carrillo Sánchez 2012; Polloni & Matus 2011). These discourses merged with all the other stereotypes of being foreign, making their access to, and promotion at, the work-place even more difficult. The former resettlement coordinator of the programme in Chile described this discrimination:

One issue that the refugees have raised in our evaluations is strong labour discrimination. Not because they are refugees, but because they are foreigners. Even if they have their documentation some people get bothered or are paid less. Chileans fear competition, because Colombians have some skills we lack. For example, they are very good at attending to the public, they have very good communication skills, and they provide very good customer service.

(Resettlement Coordinator, PTCH82)

This discrimination translated into problems of unfair treatment in the work place and instability in the job market. These experiences of vulnerable and insecure employment as a result of neoliberal practices of exploitation of the transient status of refugees and migrants, has been increasingly explored through what is known as the geographies of precariousness (see Lewis et al. 2014; Ettlinger 2007). Despite the contribution of geographers exploring precarity related to the labour market, I have suggested that the study of refugees' social exclusion from a framework of citizenship not only emphasises the lack of access to rights, but also reveals the different sites where refugees have experienced precariousness (see discussion in Chapter 3).

The different ongoing and embodied experiences of Colombian and Palestinian refugees in both Chile and Brazil illustrate how different type of legal statuses (either temporary or permanent) influence (or not) the practice of 'substantial citizenship'. Furthermore, it raise questions in relation to what degree legal status is considered as a marker of integration (see Da Lomba 2010). Participants' accounts in both countries showed that a more secure legal status does not necessarily translate into the effective exercise of their rights. These results support Yoshida's (2011) research findings which showed that obtaining a similar status to the host society does not guarantee integration. Yoshida's research, a comparative study of resettled Vietnamese refugee women in Australia and Japan, showed that in Australia, for example, the approach to citizenship is more egalitarian. The country also provides resettled refugees with permanent residence upon arrival (like Chile). On the other hand, Japan had more restrictive forms of citizenship, giving them temporary residency and very limited entitlements. Despite the different constructions of citizenship, Vietnamese refugee women in both countries were living in marginal socioeconomic conditions and did not have a sense of belonging with the national community.

The four dimensions of citizenship I have explored in this section – status, practice, identity and exclusion – illustrate that citizenship discourses in Chile and Brazil are mediated by the nation state and the impact of legal status on access to rights and different spaces of membership. However, the practice of citizenship is negotiated through refugees’ daily (and sometimes translocal) experiences and encounters, showing that the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion are also symbolic, relational and discursive constructions.

### **7.3. Rights to housing: between place-making and social exclusion**

Access to housing was raised as one of the main challenges faced by Colombian and Palestinian refugees alike in both countries. Housing is recognised as a social right, and according to Marshall (1949), these social rights are fundamental to gaining meaningful membership in society. Similarly, Lalloo (1998, p.36) states that “rights in property are necessary to sustain the basic needs of life”, and access to housing empowers and contributes to variations in the status of citizenship. Additionally, housing can be understood as the materiality of the ‘home’, as transnational spaces where identities are shaped and places where relationships between the individual and the host society can be mediated (Bonhomme 2013; see also Blunt 2005). I use access to housing to illustrate further how resettled refugees in Chile and Brazil experienced citizenship in juxtaposition with racial and class discrimination, which aggravated their social exclusion.

The difficulties that refugees face finding accommodation have been reported in relation to the resettlement programme in South American countries (Guglielmelli-White 2012) as well as in other parts of the world (Ager and Strang 2008; Glover et al. 2001; Dutch Refugee Council/ECRE 2001). While some studies explored the issues of housing in relation to the appropriateness in terms of space, quality and facilities of the house (Ager & Strang 2008, p.171), in Chile and Brazil the issues reported by participants were related to access, discrimination, location and lack of support to cope with the requirements to rent or to apply for housing subsidies.

Milena and Luis experienced such segregation after they arrived in Chile from Ecuador, in 2009. Since then, until the moment of the interview, they had sub-let in more than five different places and, for a year and half, they shared the same room and bed with their

teenage son. They had jobs, but even so nobody wanted to rent to them. When I met the couple in a shopping mall in Quilicura, the nearest place between the room they were renting in Peñalolen and the centre of Santiago, Milena told me:

Our main problem always has been housing. We have been paying for rooms in houses of so many friends. Every time when we called to ask for a flat, they said 'we don't rent to foreigners'. Even a Chilean friend who called in our behalf told us that she didn't know that Chileans were like that. And the housing agencies are even worse. They ask us the car plate number, as if we have one! They also ask for signed cheques to cover 12 months in advance and that you should earn three times the price of the rent.

(Milena, PTC\_CH14)

Milena and Luis concluded that the main reason why landlords did not rent to them was due to their 'foreignness'. Sometimes they were confused with Peruvian migrants<sup>95</sup>, one of the most segregated groups in Chile, and denied a place based on that nationality. Other times, it was just because they were known to be Colombians. This type of discrimination had two main consequences for the family. Firstly, Milena and Luis felt extremely frustrated because they were not able to find a place for themselves (without sharing with other families), and sharing the same room and bed affected their relationship as a family. They moved from room to room for at least two years. "We haven't been able to take the clothes from the suitcases in years", Milena told me. Secondly, their racial profile and immigrant status has not only left them at the margins of the social structure, but also at the social periphery of the city, influencing in which part of the city they could live. As Luis described it:

People like us, with the level of education that we have, with the lack of networks we experience, and with the little support we received, we are destined to live in a lower class neighbourhood, and not a good one. Once there we can start either behaving like them or live constantly scared without going out to the street. What can we do then? Should I become one of them? That is precisely the type of people that Chile does not want. That discriminates. What type of security is that? You end up being discriminated for both reasons. If they hear you speaking as Colombian and see who you are, they discriminate against you. If you say that you live in these places and speak like the people from these neighbourhoods they also discriminate against you!

(Luis, PTC\_CH15)

Luis's account illustrates refugees' comments around spatial segregation in Chile as a result of the barriers to rent due to their status of 'foreigners'. These limitations relegate them to

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<sup>95</sup> Peruvians are the largest group of immigrants in Chile, together with Argentinians, and are one of the most segregated groups in the country. For more information about the situation of Peruvians in Chile see (Stefoni 2002, Schiappacasse 2008, Mora and Undurragada 2013).

certain parts of the city, placing them in neighbourhoods with a bad reputation. The 'otherness' that characterises refugees' life in a 'fissure', is constructed not only by the loss of citizenship as a result of the limits of the status, but also by the racialisation of their bodies as refugees and as Colombians. The racism that they experienced in everyday encounters "within multiple spaces of daily life and across multiple spatial scales" is part of their citizenship practices (Chouinard 2009, p.110). As a consequence, they lose agency and are relegated to certain social and economic spheres, deepening the feeling of instability in the resettlement country. Drawing on the interviews, it can be argued that limitations to the practice of citizenship, including barriers to access and exercise of rights and entitlements, lack of membership recognition and restricted social participation, cannot be explained solely by the refugees' status. However, the documentation that shows them as outsiders adds to other axes of differentiation with the local population, creating a racial profiling that excludes them and relegates them to certain economic and social spaces. Therefore, it can be argued that, despite the importance of legal status for the daily life of refugees, citizenship formation is emerging through relational processes (Spinney et al. 2015; Staeheli 2010) within specific sites (for example, the workplace, the municipality, the neighbourhood).

In this context of instability, having access to permanent housing not only means security, but also a confirmation of their settlement in the host country. For some participants, having a house will be a benchmark according to which they can value their belonging and their membership. Furthermore, having access to their own property is both a material shelter and a symbolic representation of the possible roots they have created in the host country. Liliana and Juan emphasised that having a house could help them to complete their life project in Chile. When I interview Liliana the first time, they were living in a small bungalow they rented in the back garden of a Chilean family. To get to the bungalow they had to pass across their landlord's house. Liliana kept apologising about the place and told me how uncomfortable it was living without privacy. The second time I visited the family, they had moved to a rented flat in the same building where many Palestinian families bought their flats through the government's subsidy in Quilicura. Liliana and Juan were happy with the new place; however, as Juan stated, they still wished to have their own place:

The only thing I ask God is to have a house, or a piece of land where I could build something that is mine. Only with that we would feel safe here. I think, if Vicaría bought flats for the Palestinians here in the same building, at least they could help us with the applications! I am not asking them to give it to me for free; I just ask the opportunity to buy, to take a mortgage. To feel that what I am paying for is mine, to feel that I have something here.

(Juan, PTC\_CH44)

While in Chile, the main barriers to access housing were related to racial discrimination and lack of documentation and guidance, Colombian and Palestinian refugees in Brazil identified that the main difficulties accessing housing were the high prices and the bureaucracy involved, that particularly affect those refugees with fewer networks in the country. Fernando, for example, was paying \$400 reales (around US\$110) for his house in Sapucaia. He was worried that the owner might increase the rent again or that he might ask for the house back. Fernando, like other Colombian and Palestinian refugees in Brazil, was facing both the instability of the housing system and the uncertainty of whether he would have to rent again, where, and how difficult it might be. When I asked him how he managed to rent his current house, he told me:

Asking for charity, because renting here is something impossible. Because they ask you for an amount of papers that we don't have! We have been living four years here and we still do not accomplish the requirements.

(Fernando, PTC\_BR126)

From the refugees I interviewed in Brazil, only two families (one Colombian and the other Palestinian) managed to access the Brazilian social housing 'Minha Casa, Minha Vida'<sup>96</sup>, and are currently paying their mortgage with the help of the state subsidy. The rest of the families were renting or trying to deal with the restrictions imposed by their municipalities to apply to the social programme. In Mogi das Cruces, for example, the local municipality required that refugees must have lived in the city for at least three years and have permanent residency permits in order to access social housing programmes (Murakawa 2011). The issue of housing has been raised by the refugees and by the civil society, and remains one of the main barriers to refugees' integration in Brazil (Guglielmelli-White 2012; Andrade & Weintraub 2012; Moreira & Baeninger 2009).

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<sup>96</sup> The name of the Brazilian social housing programme is "My House, My Life", translated from Portuguese to English.

In Chile, the institutions involved in the resettlement programme managed to secure from the Ministry of Housing, a 'solidarity fund' subsidy that provided around 12 million pesos (around US\$20.000) per family to buy houses for Palestinian refugees. The subsidy was not included in the original design of the programme, but the housing need was identified soon after the arrival of the Palestinian refugees. One of the problems that emerged from the housing programme for Palestinian refugees was that all the houses were registered in the name of the male householder. When Abida, a 30 year old Palestinian refugee in Chile, divorced her husband she was left with just the four children. Now, Abida's ex-husband uses the house as a 'bargaining chip' to forbid Abida working, leaving her in a vulnerable situation.

According to the Chilean organisations working on resettlement, housing subsidies were one of the "main successes" of the Palestinian programme. However, the benefit was not extended to Colombian refugees and housing remains one of the main barriers that the refugee community face in Chile. From the 38 Colombian refugees surveyed in this research, 78.9% (N=30) of them were in rented accommodation, 13.1% (N=5) were buying, and only 5.2% (N=2) were buying using state subsidies. All the refugees who were buying privately or through the social programme had arrived in Chile between 2005 and 2006. Although resettled refugees who arrived after 2010 immediately obtained permanent residency, the law stipulates that they need to have five years of permanent documentation before being able to apply for housing subsidies.

**Figure 7.3. Housing development in Quilicura, Chile, where more than 7 Palestinian families bought flats through state subsidies.**



**Source: Author.**

**Figure 7.4. Family and members of NGO in Brazil, look at the family accommodation, rented through the programme during the first year in the country.**



**Source: Author.**

#### **7.4. 'We are a minority that is waking up': Refugees claiming citizenship**

The first part of this chapter discussed refugees' negotiations to try to obtain citizenship as a formal status and as a relational process, and focused on the 'losses of citizenship' experienced during these negotiations. The discussion shed light on refugees' unsettled situation in both the host countries by exploring four dimensions of their citizenship journeys. Nonetheless, refugees' narratives also demonstrate agency in their attempts to claim citizenship performatively (Nyers 2011). This section explores how refugees in both countries have found ways to challenge segregation by performing different acts of citizenship that allowed them to 'be citizens' even if they had not legally become one (Castles & Davidson 2000). Refugees' precarious experiences in both countries did not preclude their agency and the ownership they try to take over their resettlement process, suggesting 'agency-in-unsettlement'<sup>97</sup>. In this context, refugees taking action can also be understood as prompted by dispossession, as discussed by Butler and Athanasiou (2013). According to the authors, dispossession (described as the condition of those who have lost land, citizenship, or a broader sense of belonging to the world, among others) opens up a performative condition by which the subject is affected by injustice, but at the same time is provoked to take action. Therefore, the discussion about the 'losses' of citizenship in the resettlement country are essential to frame the discussion about agency and citizenship performance. As Butler (2009, p.xi) has argued "when we act, and act politically, it is already within a set of norms that are acting upon us, and in ways that we cannot always know about". Looking at resettled refugees as active subjects in their own process of resettlement, invites us to explore citizenship through people's actions and how these constitute them as political subjects, what Isin (2008; 2012) refers as 'acts of citizenship' (see Section 3.5). Those acts, Isin argues, are considered as 'deeds', that break away from norms, expectations or routines (Isin 2012, p.110).

Palestinian and Colombian refugees in Chile and Brazil have performed, either as a group or as individuals, acts of resistance and have claimed rights that have translated into disturbances to the status quo of the resettlement programme. However, it is worth asking to what extent refugees' acts as political subjects have influenced their 'integration'

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<sup>97</sup> The idea of 'agency-in-unsettlement' is built from Brun's (2015) conceptualisation of 'agency-in-waiting', where the author contributes to the understanding of how people cope in a situation of protracted uncertainty while also exposing the limits to their own resistance.

process in the resettlement countries. In this section I argue that despite the different performative acts of resettled refugees in each study site, citizenship within the frame of refugee 'integration' and belonging, is shaped by discourses of race, class and power that those acts have challenged but that they have not been able to break. In the following four sub-sections, I discuss the acts of each group in each country.

#### **7.4.1. 'We are raising our voices': Refugees' organisation in Chile**

The research found that resettled refugees performed acts of citizenship, either individually or in a collective way, depending on structural constraints such as the refugees' geographical distribution in the host country, or subjective determinants such as refugees' personal characteristics and lived experiences. In Chile, Colombian and Palestinian refugees participated in both formal and informal organisations to achieve collective action and pursue mutual goals. In the case of Colombian refugees, some of them overcame their fears of meeting other Colombians (discussed in Chapter 6) when they sought an opportunity to act collectively, both to seek improvements accessing rights and public policies in Chile, but also to claim retribution rights in Colombia through the compensatory Law for victims of the armed conflict<sup>98</sup>.

The Organization of Colombian Refugees in Chile started to take shape in February 2009, when a group of 30 families united and received financial assistance from the Refugee Integration Services Program (Programa de Servicios de Integración Para Refugiados, or PROSIR) which is part of the Foundation of Social Help of the Christian Churches in Chile (Organización de Refugiados Colombianos 2009). The organisation has 456 associates that include both resettled refugees and asylum seekers. According to the President of the Organisation, the aim of the group is twofold, to keep their cultural identity and to negotiate more influence in the implementation of refugee programmes:

The organisation provides information and guidance. Firstly, the group was born to get together as a stronger group that could be effectively heard by the Chilean government. The popular idiom says 'the union makes the strength'. Also the idea of

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<sup>98</sup> In 2011 the Colombian government proclaimed the Law Nº 1448 (Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras) that demands measures of attention, assistance and integral reparation to the victims of the internal armed conflict in Colombia. The law also proposes transnational reparations in order to benefit victims that live abroad such as the refugees in Chile and Brazil (For more information see Ministerio del Interior y de Justicia. República de Colombia 2011; Cantor 2011; Unidad Para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas 2014).

having an organisation was to do activities in which we could keep our idiosyncrasy, our customs and our culture. So that our kids that are integrating into this society, don't forget their culture and keep an identity. This is because it is difficult for the first generation to settle into the exile, but the second generation is the one that integrates more into the country where they are refugees [...] We also aim for the entities of the state, at least the ones that are in charge of refugees, to give us the opportunity to participate more in the programmes. We have many concerns around issues such as education, health and housing.

(President of the Organisation of Colombian Refugees, PTCH89)

For the organised Colombian refugees in Chile the association represented an opportunity to preserve their identity and reinforce spaces of belonging related to their 'homeland'. At the same time, getting together allowed refugees to rebuild trust with their compatriots, by creating spaces of solidarity with other refugees facing similar issues in Chile (Jensen & Valdebenito 2010). In addition, collective action allowed them to imagine and develop strategies of representation to claim, resist and take action in scenarios where they recognise themselves as a minority. The political aim in the formation of the organisation, expands the current definition of what has been studied as Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs)<sup>99</sup> that do not necessarily consider citizenship claims and acts as part of their establishment. In the case of the Colombian refugees in Chile the political aims of the group justifies its existence, as Andres, one of the refugee members of the organisation, explained:

That slogan of Chile as a 'host country' is like a corporate image of the country. It is like showing to all the other countries that Chile is a good host, and that security prevails in Chile. And yes, it is safer than other places, but also there is great insecurity and violations of rights as well. The thing is that we are a minority, but a minority that is waking up. And we are raising our voices as well, we are complaining. Because of this we decided to create a refugees' organisation.

(Andres, PTC\_CH49)

As Andres recalled, the organisation was not only a platform from where to present their claims, the creation of the group itself was their way to perform as claimant subjects. The organisation acts as a support network but also as a trigger of action, that allows them to identify their lived-experience as individuals or families with other people in similar conditions, and then find (and take forward) joint battles (Ortega & Ospina 2012b).

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<sup>99</sup> Zetter and Pearl (2000, p.676) define RCOs as "organisations rooted within, and supported by, the ethnic or national refugee/asylum seeker communities they serve. Essentially, these RCOs are established by the refugees and asylum seekers themselves – or by their pre-established communities".

**Figure 7.5. Stencil graffiti of a migrant organisation in Santiago, Chile.  
The image reads “Migrant, get active. Join our Facebook fan page”.**



**Source: Author**

The association of Colombian refugees is preceded by the actions taken by Peruvian migrants and refugees in Chile, who have been acting collectively in different organisations since the mid 90’s (Luque Brazán 2009). Even before the Organisation of Colombian Refugees was formed, some refugees received guidance from the Peruvian organisations and now share some spaces of intervention, such as common statements to highlight the situation of refugees in Chile (i.e. Organización de Refugiados Colombianos en Chile et al. 2013). The Organisation of Colombian refugees has around 200 members in Santiago, with the rest living in other northern cities. Despite the numbers of affiliates growing, the president of the Colombian organisation recognised that it has been difficult to have an effective influence on the structures of decision-making. As he told me: “We have communicated our concerns in specific areas to the State, but it has been very difficult to penetrate these institutions of the State to take interest in our case” (PTCH89).

Despite the difficulties, they have accomplished some important victories. For example, they won a complaint against a local TV station which showcased a documentary about Colombians in Chile that presented a biased and sensationalist view of the Colombian population in the country. With the support of the Legal Clinic for Migrants and Refugees from the University Diego Portales, the organisation informed the TV Regulator Council that the story “transgressed the mental integrity, honour and dignity of Colombian migrants in Chile (...) thereby affecting the peace of the resident Colombian families in Chile, because that coverage urged racist, xenophobic and discriminatory behaviour among the population” (Emol 2012). The organisation also created links with the Colombian Council in Chile and organised two day drop-in sessions where Colombian refugees received guidance about how to access the benefits under the Law Nº 1448 (Consulado de Colombia en Santiago de Chile 2014; Unidad Para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas 2014). The negotiations demanding reparation showed that the group was even able to re-build their relationship with the country of origin through the performance of extra-territorial citizenship (See Collyer 2013).

Regardless of these achievements, the Organisation of Colombian refugees has not been able to take effective action against regrettable xenophobic activities, such as the march against (mainly Colombian) migrants organised by some residents of Antofagasta, in the north of Chile (Correa 2013; Cooperativa.cl 2013). Despite the march not having a large number of attendees, the action perpetuated discrimination, racism and violence against migrants and refugees. The image that publicised the march linked brown and black migrants with crime in the city and was threatening to the rest of the community (see Figure 7.6).

Figure 7.6. Flyer calling the protest in Antofagasta.



Source: DiarioUChile, 2013 [Accessed 16 June 2014]

<http://radio.uchile.cl/2013/10/17/polemica-por-marcha-anti-inmigrantes-en-antofagasta>

In addition, the association of Colombian refugees did not have access either to government discussions or to the inter-ministerial commission on vulnerable cases (Mesa de Casos Vulnerables, see Chapter 2) that aim to deal with refugees' difficult lack of access to economic, social and political rights. Therefore, despite the fact that they managed to break the status quo with some of their collective acts, the group kept battling with the discriminatory labels that race, class and non-citizen status foster in the resettlement country.

Individual actions also emerged as a powerful example of acts of citizenship, enacted by some of those Colombian refugees who did not feel comfortable meeting other Colombians. While some feared that association with other refugees may have been dangerous, other refugees questioned how representative the refugee organisation was, and opted to make individual claims through their own channels (Griffiths et al. 2005). Such actions included activities like approaching the council of the area where they lived,

looking for help from other organisations of social action or contacting the Colombian Council in Chile.

#### **7.4.2. Effective action: Palestinians and their collective voice**

Palestinian refugees in Chile also opted for collective action. While the group was organised informally (without legal representation), they had been acting collectively since they were together at the Al Tanf refugee camp. Palestinians resettled in Chile started to work together in Al Tanf, where they sought the help of the UNRWA to open a small school for their children, and they also wrote letters to different governments seeking support for resettlement. Hafid, who has been acting as the speaker for the Palestinians in Chile since their arrival, was also part of the refugee organising committee at the camp. He told me about some of the activities they carried out during their stay in the camp:

We spoke with different delegations that came to the camp: Norway, Switzerland and other European countries. We talked, claimed and did some activities to raise awareness about our situation at the refugee camp.

(Hafid, PTP\_CH36)

Once in Chile, the group kept coordinating informally when they faced issues of general interest in the group. Their complaints were mainly related to claims of unaccomplished promises by the programme (see Chapter 5), their socio-economic conditions, and access to housing and permanent documentation. Hafid explained that individual concerns were also directed to the authorities through him, because some people did not speak Spanish.

Until now, I have been the spokesperson of the Palestinians refugees, of the group. When they need something they tell me, because for some people the language is too difficult.

(Hafid, PTP\_CH36)

Hafid acted as a mediator between some individuals and the resettlement organisations. Furthermore, soon after arrival, the Palestinian refugees realised that it was better for them to present their claims together. For example, Hafid suggested organising a meeting with the government to explain the naturalisation process, and they also approached institutions involved in the programme to present their housing demands before they obtained the subsidy and during the time they were searching the properties. Despite being located in different cities, these places were no more than 2 hours apart from each other, which facilitated contact among the families. One of the coordinators of the

Resettlement Programme (and former head of AREVI) recognised that the Palestinian group exercised such strong pressure that at some point it became an ‘issue’ for the institutions involved in the programme:

We located them in the same place considering family ties. We understood that if we had them together that would have facilitated their integration. And that strategy worked like that for a while, but at some point when some issues emerged and pressure arose from them, having them together... had a more negative result, let’s say. It made it more difficult to manage certain crises. Because it is different to deal and talk with one interlocutor, than to do it with a block. So we had to learn from that as well... to create strategies that allowed us to solve critical situations when the actor was a group.

(AREVI Coordinator, PTCH81)

Palestinian refugees realised the benefits of acting together and took the opportunity to have a united voice and put forward stronger demands in certain areas. In comparison with the Colombian resettled refugees in Chile, Palestinians deployed a more effective strategy that translated into concrete modifications to the programme. For example, they managed to put pressure on the programme and prolonged their financial subsistence allowance from two years to three. It is worth questioning why Palestinian refugees’ strategies of negotiation with the resettlement programme in Chile were more effective than those of their Colombian counterparts, despite the fact that their organisation was informal and with fewer adherents (see Table 7.1).

**Table 7.1. Colombian and Palestinian refugee organisations in Chile**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Palestinian Refugees</b>	<b>Colombian Refugees</b>
<b>Name</b>	No formal name	Organización de Refugiados Colombianos en Chile
<b>Status</b>	Informal organisation	Registered legal entity
<b>Representation</b>	Same speaker since they were at the refugee camp.	They have a president and a committee elected for a set period of time.
<b>Adherents</b>	No official numbers, but most of the Palestinians resettled in Chile will trust their issues to the speaker.	456 Asylum seekers and refugees. 200 located in Santiago – 256 in different cities in the north of Chile.
<b>Main action points</b>	Naturalisation for the entire family group. Improve access to services. Influence the resettlement programme to accomplish their original promises.	Improve asylum seekers’ recognition rates. Obtain the benefits of the Law No 1448 Improve labour conditions and access to rights and entitlements. Increase participation in the refugee process.

Source: Data collected through semi-structured interviews in Chile in 2012-2013

There are two main factors that help to understand the success of their actions, besides the value that can be attributed to the organisation of their demands and their recognised 'extra needs'. First, the institutions involved in the resettlement programme faced other sets of pressures related to the amount of funding available for the Palestinians, the interest of the international community and the visibility of the programme in the local and the international media. Second, some members of the group benefited from pre-established Palestinian communities that facilitated their knowledge of the local context, and the framework in which their demands could be made.

In addition, the intersection of race, class and the visibility of the 'solidarity' with Palestinian refugees, could have also contributed to explaining Palestinian access to some of the social and cultural rights that Colombian refugees have not accomplished. The news of Palestinian refugees coming to look for protection in Chile made it to the local press even before their arrival, highlighting the humanitarian role that the country would accomplish by receiving them. On the other hand, Colombian refugees rarely appeared in the media and, if they did, it was within press reports about all the Colombian migrants and with the many stereotypes that label implies in Chile.

#### **7.4.3. 'Each family did their own thing': claimant subjects in Brazil**

In Brazil, Colombian and Palestinian refugees had low levels of either formal or informal organisation while the research was conducted. However, refugees from both communities developed individual strategies to claim their rights as refugees. The low level of organisation was related to the characteristics of the programme design that resulted in the geographical segregation of the refugees, who were distributed across more than 20 different cities in two states.

In the case of the Palestinian refugees, the lack of association with other refugees is also related to the natural detachment that geographical distance has created among the refugee community. According to Nacira, distance and the pressures of daily life did not encourage refugees' association:

In Brazil each family did their own thing. I don't know why, but here it was difficult (to act as a group). You have some families here in Mogi, other families in Porto Alegre,

other ones in Paraná. It is too difficult to communicate because each family works and that. It doesn't work to get together. For example, I want to visit a friend of mine who came with me and it has been more than three months that I haven't managed to visit her. She is working, sweating. I am working, sweating".

(Nacira, PTP\_BR154)

However, it was not always like that. Eight months after their arrival in Brazil, a group of nine Palestinians decided to protest against the way the resettlement programme was conducted in both São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul by camping outside the UNHCR offices in Brasilia. Four of the refugees camped outside the premises of the UNHCR in Brasilia for almost a year, from May 2008 until April 2009, with improvised tents made of cardboard and plastic (Fernandes 2008). Other Palestinian refugee joined them sporadically, but only four stayed during the entire protest. The refugees were demanding improvements to the programme and questioned the UNHCR decision of taking them to Brazil (Hamid 2012; Moulin 2011). The protest received important press coverage giving visibility to the Palestinian refugees' situation.

The protesters' main demand was to be transferred to another country for resettlement, claiming that Brazil could not provide the conditions for their stay and did not accomplish their original promises (Chapter 5). The refugees' claims were directed to the UNHCR rather than the Brazilian Government because they considered the UN agency as the main group responsible for their resettlement. They highlighted this in a blog that they kept with some information about the protest:

We are refugees from various wars. We were hosted by Brazil. So we love and respect its people and its government. However, the United Nations are not giving us the proper care. We have special and immediate needs that are being neglected [...] We don't want any special privileges. We don't want to be a burden to Brazil. We are not ungrateful. We are just vindicating our rights. The most important thing is to express our dissatisfaction, among which the most difficult is that they are not considering our past experiences. They are not considering that before coming to Brazil we already had other experiences of citizenship that left deep marks on us. [...] Our experiences of citizenship are different. The protest is our common expression. Being passionate is our limit and how we are in the world. Protecting our identities is our duty. Being heard by the authorities and discussing our destinies is well known to us. We believe that the best thing for us is to rescue our way of being Arab citizens, Palestinian and Muslim.

(Palestinos Refugiados no Brasil 2009)

For the Palestinians who went to Brasilia, the protest was an act of resistance to their displacement and also a strategy to accomplish their individual aims. Despite using

collective action, each of the four protesters deployed their own strategies and undertook their own negotiations as explored in detail by the Brazilian academic Hamid (Hamid 2012) in her ethnographic research. For example, one of them managed to leave the country but neither the resettlement programme nor the other refugees knew through which channels he left Brazil. The protest moved to the front of the government offices after the UNHCR moved their premises to another location. But after a while, the protest ended. The results were eight months of tensions that increased conflict between the resettlement organisations and the refugees, and stressed the classification of the group as 'undesirable refugees' (Hamid 2009; Moulin 2012). After the protest was over, the authorities reinforced the need for selection missions in order to determine the candidate's likelihood to be 'integrated' and said that they were considering not resettling any new groups of Palestinian refugees.

According to Moulin (2011) the protest of the Palestinian refugees in Brazil made visible the plight of a 'humanity without rights', a consequence of the structures of power and lack of resolution of how human rights fit within the triad of territory-state-citizen. At the same time, she argues, the protests showed the opportunities that humanity offers as a space of transnational political intervention and resistance. Moulin argues:

Even if the refugees did not have success breaking the complex dynamic of the relationships of global power, I believe that the emergency of their political global mobilisation poses important questions over the assumptions in which surround the rules of access to human mobility in an interdependent world (Ibid 2011, p.153).

Moulin asserts that the Palestinian refugees' protests were a possibility to problematise the limitations and opportunities of 'the rights to have rights' in an international framework, where subjects are interpreted and disciplined by the effects of the international system. In this sense, both the collective and individual action of Palestinian and Colombian refugees in both countries invite that reflection. It is possible to question, then, to what extent refugees are entitled to rights within a resettlement process that is directed and controlled by institutions shaped by the interest and instabilities of the international system.

The individual actions that the Palestinian refugees were deploying five years after their arrival were in tension with those assumptions. While some of them were fighting for

access to basic rights that allowed them to live, a younger group were claiming rights to move, travel, study and have a better situation than the one they faced. Some Palestinian refugees constantly communicated their demands to the programme, but instead of waiting for their intervention, the refugees approached other local networks and actors looking for different ways to accomplish their goals.

#### **7.4.4. Colombians in Brazil: discontent and transformation**

In the case of Colombian refugees in Brazil, collective action was not an easy option. In many cases, the refugees did not have contact with other Colombians in their city. Eugenia and her family, for example, were looking to get in touch with other resettled refugees in Rio Grande do Sul. They asked ASAV, but the implementing agency argued that they could not give the contact of other families without their authorisation. “So tell them that we want to meet them. If they don’t want to, it’s fine! But at least help us pass on the information!”, Eugenia suggested to the organisation. They wanted to meet other Colombian families because until then they felt isolated and they wanted to speak Spanish or to share experiences with other refugees. Ines and Eugenia recognised the benefits of association from their experience of working in an organisation of migrants while in Venezuela (their first country of asylum).

Eugenia: We gave support to people that requested some guidance. For example about how to get their papers, which were the requirements to access education, and many other things that in Venezuela allow the social integration of the migrant. And people don’t know about it. So that is important. All migrants need that support, to create those networks.

Ines: We would like to meet other people and learn from them. But also to support people with information that we have found out already because we have been here for more time.

(Eugenia PTC\_BR113, and Ines, PTC\_BR114)

After several years in the country, some Colombian refugees in Brazil created informal support networks. However, none of these informal associations were purposive or strong enough to trigger initiative and action by the state or the NGOs. The few networks created covered mainly social needs, like commemorating important dates together. In most of the cases, Colombian refugees opted for individual action. For example, in Rio Grande do Sul, one of the refugees found out through the internet about the Defensoria Pública (Office of the Ombudsman) and contacted them directly. According to the Ombudswoman of Porto

Alegre, two resettled women got in contact with her office. They complained about a lack of understanding shown by the institutions involved in the programme, and the incongruence between the promises made in the first country of asylum and what they found in Brazil (Chapter 5). It is worth noticing that, in both countries, women were more willing to be involved in individual action and directly approached the institutions they sought to address their needs. The Ombudswoman told me that since then, her office has started a dialogue with ASAV and the UNHCR and has received more than 20 refugee cases. Her office identified that some problems of mistrust were created because of a lack of clear information and documents being in Portuguese and not in the refugees' original language, among other things.

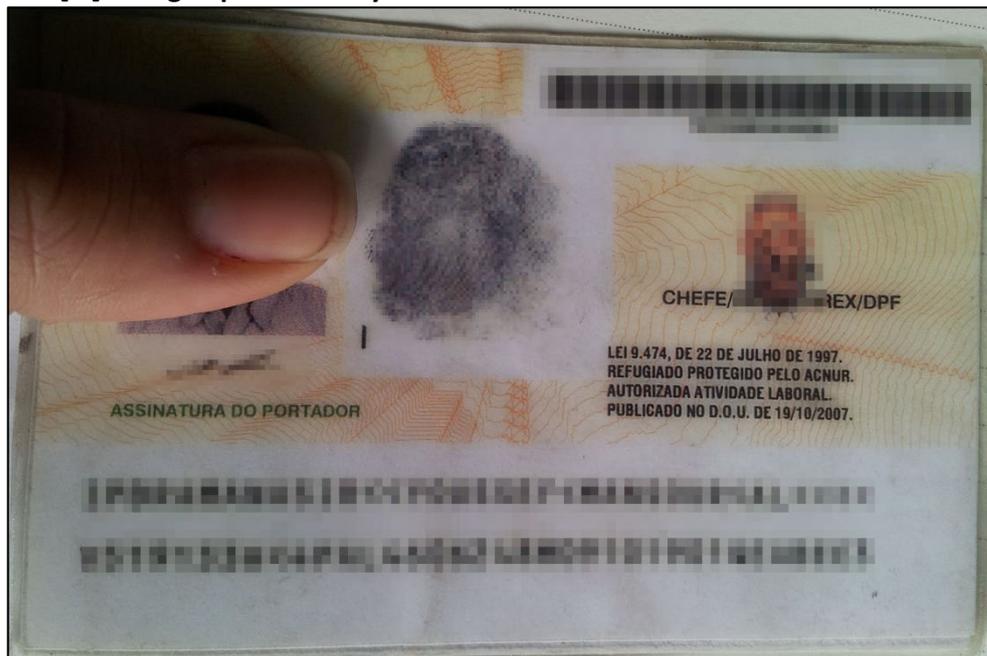
They were simple things. For example when people arrived they did not know what papers they were signing. They also complained about the Portuguese classes and some issues accessing health services. In that case, the doctor did not want to attend the patient because she was a foreigner. After that first experience, we started to receive more cases. Even ASAV sent us people. At the beginning it was a difficult relationship with the organisation but then it turned into a constructive process.

(Ombudswoman Porto Alegre, PTBR119)

The Ombudswoman stressed that, from the initial complaint and the collaboration with the organisations involved, they accomplished important changes such as:

- The translation to their native language of all documents that refugees received previous to the resettlement and at arrival;
- An agreement with the local university (UFRGS) to avoid fees in the validation of refugees' professional certificates;
- They recommended the Ministry of Justice to modify official documentation to erase the word 'refugee' from it (see Figure 7.7). After a long discussion and the involvement of other institutions, including the Federal Police, the authorities decided to change the document, which now reads 'Law 1404' instead of 'refugee'.

**Figure 7.7. Refugee ID card in Brazil. The part that has not been pixelated reads “[...] Refugee protected by the UNHCR. Authorised for labour activities”**



**Source: Author**

The Ombudswoman praises the change in the documentation as one of the most important actions which emerged directly from the demands of those two resettled refugees:

They requested the change in their documentation that said they are refugees. I remember they asked me and I was shocked when I saw the document, because the word ‘refugee’ generates a strong stigma in this country. People here think that there are fugitives and also Colombians carry the prejudice of being drug dealers. And then we realised that the status that was aimed to protect them, was jeopardising their opportunities to get jobs and stigmatising a priori their relationships with the society.

(Ombudswoman, Porto Alegre, PTBR119)

A similar situation was identified by the authorities and organisations in Chile. In Brazil, the word ‘refugee’ was removed from work permits and ID cards, and replaced with ‘foreigner under the Law 9474/97’ (Guglielmelli-White 2012, p.13). Despite these improvements, the Ombudswoman recognised that “Brazilian society is not ready and we need to extend our work creating awareness about who are these people coming to the country”. Similar remarks were made by the Chilean authorities. As I have discussed in this chapter, refugees in both countries faced difficulties reaching what Castles and Davidson (2000) identify as ‘substantial citizenship’; despite refugees’ legal status in both countries, they were still perceived as ‘foreigners’. This reinforces the idea that the state, however pivotal

in the refugee experience, is only one of many sites of citizenship negotiation that resettled refugees faced in Chile and Brazil (See Staeheli 2010). Instead, refugees negotiate their 'otherness' through their daily encounters, practices and acts, across multiple scales and sites (see Chouinard 2009; Spinney et al. 2015).

## **7.5. Conclusions**

In this Chapter I have told two stories: one about resettled refugees' losses in their processes of citizenship formation, and the other about refugees' agency and what they have gained by their acts of citizenship. The first part of the Chapter (Sections 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4) discussed how refugees' experiences were primarily marked by the exercise of their rights or the lack of access, based on their legal status. However, by comparing the experiences of Palestinian and Colombian refugees in both countries with different legal statuses, I build on geographies of citizenship (Spinney et al. 2015; Staeheli 2010; Chouinard 2009; Mountz 2009; Staeheli 1999) reinforcing notions that refugees' citizenship formation is made of complex and contested processes and practices. The exclusion imposed by a weak status and lack of citizenship did not only frame their formal membership, but also constructed the imaginaries that determine their lived experiences of 'otherness' in the resettlement country (see Walia 2013). I illustrated this by exploring four dimensions emerging from the data, citizenships as status, practice, identity and exclusion. These experiences either prolonged refugees' uncertainty in the resettlement country (See Cole 2014) or, in other cases, provoked instability and even precarity.

Although the analysis frames refugees as 'unsettled citizens', the second part of the Chapter (Section 7.4) explored refugees' 'agency-in-unsettlement', discussing how refugees experienced citizenship as a membership claimed and not granted, a process by which refugees become citizens while they develop, individually and collectively, 'acts of citizenship' (Isin 2008). In this way, they performed as 'claimant subjects' that demand 'the right to have rights' (Arendt 1962, p.296), not only as refugees but as humans that are 'legal' and 'political' (Benhabib 2004, Schaap 2010). Although important gains were made through these acts of demand and resistance, refugees' claims were still framed within the power dynamics of the state and the refugee governance system that brought them to Chile and Brazil (Mountz et al. 2002). They were also shaped by the social and cultural

boundaries imposed on the refugee subject. In this sense, refugees' acts of exercising citizenship performatively showed some triumphs, while reinforcing the idea that citizenship formation, as part of their 'integration' experience, is based on contested and ongoing processes and practices. These tensions leave them in a 'fissure', an uncertain and unstable middle ground between being and becoming a citizen. In sum, resettled refugees' experience is one of constant negotiation within the multiple sites and scales that frame their unsettled citizenship.

## CHAPTER 8

### Conclusions

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#### 8.1. Introduction

I say that I will stop being a refugee when I stop having all these worries, instability and insecurity and all that. Right now, I feel that I will always be a refugee, who knows for how many years? Maybe I will die being a refugee. Even if I have the right papers [...] So when would I stop being a refugee? I do not know. Maybe when all the fear disappears from my life, or when I feel part of this place and people put trust in me and I trust them. Or it may be the case that I stop being a refugee, but I will always be a foreigner here.

(Diego, PTC\_BR152)

In this thesis I have explored the experiences of integration of Colombian and Palestinian refugees resettled in Chile and Brazil. In the empirical chapters of this thesis (Chapters 5, 6 and 7), I have reviewed and discussed different spaces where these experiences develop and the different dimensions that affect refugee integration, through the accounts of refugees and other actors involved in resettlement in both countries. In doing so, the thesis sheds light onto the differences and similitudes between both communities in both receiving countries. Moreover, the thesis demonstrated that refugees' experiences of integration need to be understood as ones of 'unsettlement', considering the uncertainty and translocality, but also the agency, that characterise the process of resettlement. These findings reveal the complex scales where integration is negotiated, while providing a rich and intimate account of refugees' experiences in Chile and Brazil.

This final chapter aims to present the contributions of this thesis to the debate about refugee integration and resettlement in Latin America. I begin by summarising and discussing the research findings of the thesis, exploring the main themes and linking them to the aim and research questions set out the start of the study (Section 8.2). I then identify the main contributions that the thesis makes to the academic debates that inform this research, and to public policy and methodology (Section 8.3). Next, in Section 8.4, I explore the limitations of the study and propose areas for future research. Finally, I reflect on the relevance of the research topic and significance of exploring these refugees' experiences.

## 8.2. Empirical findings

In this section I explore the empirical findings of the thesis, presented and discussed in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, creating links with the context of the study described in Chapter Two and in relation to the concepts and theoretical discussions that inform the thesis, explored in Chapter Three. The findings are presented by theme, although they are directly connected to specific chapters and they answer one or more of the research questions. However, the plurality of refugee experiences is situated and subjective, but also developed in interconnected scales, with the result that some of the themes overlap while dialoguing with each other. Taken together, the themes presented here answer the main research aim and the questions that guided this research:

**Research Aim:** This thesis aims to explore how resettled refugees from different origins (Colombian and Palestinian) experience integration in Chile and Brazil, in order to understand the extent and ways in which third country resettlement is lived and implemented in Latin America.

**RQ1** What are the main dimensions influencing resettled refugees' integration in Chile and Brazil?

**RQ2** How do Colombian and Palestinian resettled refugees negotiate the emotional dimensions of resettlement and to what extent do they develop a sense of belonging in the resettlement country?

**RQ3** What are the relationships and tensions among the different actors involved in the resettlement programme in each country? How do these relationships influence the resettlement experience?

**RQ4** How do practices and social policies in relation to resettlement shape the experiences of refugees' citizenship?

### 8.2.1. Expectations, mistrust and the politics of resettlement

The research found that one of the main dimensions affecting refugee experiences of integration was the tension and mistrust constructed between refugees and the organisations involved in the resettlement programme in both countries. In Chapter 5, I discussed how mistrust developed as result of 'unfulfilled expectations', addressing directly **RQ3** and **RQ1**, by revealing this relationship as one of the dimensions affecting refugee integration. Through the chapter, great emphasis was given to the role of

expectations that both refugees and the resettlement organisations created even before refugees arrived in the resettlement countries. In the case of resettled refugees from both groups, in both countries, research results showed that resettled refugees' expectations were built in relation to the emergency that framed their resettlement decision, the time spent in the first place of displacement, the lack of clear information provided and the source of that information (the UNHCR, the NGOs, family or friends), and, finally, the knowledge (or lack of it) about the resettlement country. This typology of how expectations were constructed varied between Colombian and Palestinian refugees. Common expectations among both groups were related to having their immediate needs covered, socio-economic stability and the learning and use of a new language. In the case of Colombian refugees, they gave great emphasis to the quest for security, while Palestinian refugees also expected to access naturalisation and family reunification. The research showed that many refugees' expectations clashed with the socio-economic realities of the host countries and the implementation of the resettlement programmes. Expectations turned into complaints of 'unfulfilled promises', revealing refugees' frustration and, sometimes, precarious situation in the resettlement country. This was particularly acute in the case of some elderly Palestinian refugees in Brazil.

Accounts about expectations also demonstrated that, in the case of Colombian refugees, their perceptions about the accomplishment of their aspirations were far more diverse than those of their Palestinian counterparts. However, the research found that the feelings of uncertainty and instability that both Colombian and Palestinian refugees experienced in the first places of displacement, extended and normalised during resettlement, framing the experience of integration as one of 'unsettlement'. These findings are central to address the aim of this research, contributing to build one of the main arguments of this thesis in relation to the unsettled experiences of integration in the resettlement countries in Latin America. The idea of 'unsettlement' manifested in refugees' accounts, not only emerged in relation to uncertainty and instability, as discussed in Chapter 3. 'Unsettlement' reinforced the need to understand refugees' resettlement process as an experience that is dynamic and multifaceted, negotiated in multiple scales. In addition, exploring refugees' unfulfilled expectations contributed to the understanding that the experiences of refugees are translocal, with information provided in the context of the refugee camp or the first country of asylum having effects in the resettlement country. In

this context, I argued that in the case of resettlement, the experiences of integration do not start upon arrival but instead when refugees first face the possibility of, and the information about, resettlement in a particular country.

The findings of Chapter 5 also provided relevant insights about refugee agency: how they cope and resist the experiences of uncertainty and instability and how they negotiate their demands with the multiple actors involved in the resettlement programmes (further explored in Chapter 7). Chapter 5 also discussed some of the refugees' perceptions about the organisations and staff members involved in resettlement in each country: 'unfulfilled promises' and lack of clear information resulted in accusations of abandonment and even corruption in some cases.

Furthermore, this chapter explored the expectations held by the organisations involved in the resettlement programme, and how, once unfulfilled, they turned into the construction and reproduction of essentialised and decontextualised assumptions about what refugees should be. The findings I discuss in the thesis identify that the expectations held by the resettlement programmes in relation to refugees, were based on their understanding of integration as economic self-sufficiency and in their perception of the scope of refugee protection. While the programme in both countries understood self-sufficiency as refugees' capacity to reach economic stability and independence, for the refugees themselves 'self-sufficiency' was related to both economic autonomy and ownership and agency over their own resettlement process. When refugees complained or raised the issue of 'unfulfilled promises', members of the organisations involved regarded refugees as 'ungrateful subjects' (Moulin 2012) as result of their 'refugee mentality' that made them become accustomed to being assisted, particularly in reference to Palestinian refugees. These narratives that framed refugees solely as recipients of assistance (Rajaram 2002) did not account for how refugees themselves constructed their own identities and, instead, these views depoliticised them and removed them from their historical context (Malkki 1996). Chapter 5 demonstrated that the logic of refugee gratitude which framed the organisations' assistance was also related to the understanding that the programmes had about refugee protection, focused on refugees' immediate relief and safety. The tensions that emerged from these representations caused the organisations to mistrust refugees' intentions and sometimes created favouritisms and imbalances in information delivery. At

the same time, the findings revealed the lack of accountability held by resettlement organisations towards refugees. In this scenario, the use and delivery of information became a tool of control and privilege. The tense relationship between the programme and refugees, made the organisations and service providers another front of negotiation, instead of being a source of certainty within the integration experience.

Finally, this chapter revealed some of the tensions within the organisations themselves, and exposed the structural complexities of resettlement. In both Chile and Brazil, these complexities were related to short-term planning, budget constraints, control over resources and the unclear definition of the aims, means and methodologies in the implementation of resettlement. This supported the argument that the paradoxes of resettlement are 'structural discontinuities' (Shrestha 2011; Ong 2003) that end up imposing barriers to refugee integration. Chapter 5 unpacked the relationships and representations built between refugees and the organisations involved in resettlement, revealing the politics of resettlement and demonstrating that the tensions and mistrust between both groups directly affected refugees' experience. The findings discussed in Chapter 5, emphasised the links between **RQ3** and **RQ1**, both contributing to address the main aim that guided this study.

### **8.2.2. Translocal belongings: 'home' and attachment here and there**

Another main theme that emerged from the thesis findings was that refugee integration is a 'translocal' experience of belonging. While translocality emerged within different dimensions of the refugee experience, as shown in the theme above, participants' narratives gave particular attention to how translocality shaped the social and emotional dimensions that characterised their integration in the resettlement country. These social dimensions were particularly explored in Chapter 6 and the results discussed have a direct relation to **RQ2** and **RQ1**. The findings revealed that the refugee integration experience is not confined to the receiving state. Instead, the negotiations of belonging, both as place-belongingness and as self-identification, developed simultaneously 'here' (the resettlement country) and 'there' (the country of origin and other places of displacement, transit or connection). These experiences of belonging also involved the politics of belonging and how refugees negotiated difference and dynamics of exclusion. These

results contribute to a growing body of literature on translocality (Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013; Brickell & Datta 2011b), particularly in relation to the constructions of belonging in multiple places (see McIlwaine 2011; Barnes 2001) and how these contributions are pivotal in refugees' experiences of integration.

In order to understand the multiple dimensions involved in belonging, the chapter analysed the consequences of displacement, persecution and family division, and how these affected refugees' integration experience at the resettlement country. For instance, the experiences of Colombian and Palestinian refugees showed how these forced mobilities created a radical feeling of 'uprootedness' as a result of being displaced from the place the person considered 'home'. This feeling of being 'removed' also generated a loss of 'normality'. However, while the experiences of both communities showed that the displacement affected people's daily rituals and relationships, these did not alter refugees' sense of belonging to those relational places that they still called 'home'.

In Chapter 6, I showed the marks left by the displacement and explored how refugees' experiences of persecution and threat, both in the first country of asylum and in the first place of displacement, created a deep sense of material and symbolic dislocation with their homelands, while having specific consequences in their lives in resettlement. In the case of Colombian refugees, their experiences of violence and persecution by other Colombians, generated a deep mistrust of 'others', mainly other Colombians, having a great effect on the way they related to other refugees and compatriots, which sometimes made the creation of social bonds in the resettlement country difficult (see Ager & Strang 2008). In the case of Palestinian refugees, the persecution faced – both the historical and their current experiences – signified cutting ties with the country of birth, while strengthening their self-identification as part of the Palestinian diaspora.

A third element discussed in relation to their pre-departure experiences, that had an effect during resettlement, was the consequences of family division. The research demonstrated that separation from family members, as result of forced displacement, contributed to feelings of solitude and longing. At the same time, the research showed the way refugees and their families built their relationships translocally connecting through the internet and over the phone (see Aouragh 2011; Brinkerhoff 2009; Wilding 2006). These new forms of interaction demonstrated how 'belonging' became a translocal construction, with

transnational relations built online as refugees tried to recover the 'normality' torn by forced displacement.

In Chapter 6, refugees' narratives demonstrated that despite the marks left by the displacement, forced mobility did not disrupt the emotions, connections and memories built in the country of origin or other locales of transit. Once in the resettlement country, refugees kept and reproduced practices that reinforced their self-identification and that were equally important in developing strategies of membership in the receiving country. In this context, the construction of 'home' was fluid and related to different significant locales and not to a single place of belonging. In order to understand the translocal nature of belonging, I explored three main areas where refugees negotiated it: the learning and use of language, religion and faith, and networks and social ties. All of these provided relevant answers to **RQ1**, in relation to the main dimensions affecting refugee integration. In this Chapter, I showed that refugees' efforts to learn and use the dominant language at the resettlement country existed alongside the families' endeavours to maintain the original language, particularly among younger generations. In addition, I exposed some of the main barriers refugees faced in learning the dominant language and how the lack of it endangered their opportunities to participate in, and negotiate the power structures of, the resettlement countries (see also Hou & Beiser 2006).

Emphasis was also placed on the role of religion as an indicator of translocal belonging. On the one hand, the findings of the thesis identified the practice of religion and faith at the resettlement country as a coping mechanism, while at the same time, it became a relevant source of support and access, by allowing the creation of social capital and social bridges. On the other hand, I showed through refugees' experiences, that religion and faith played a key role in their negotiation of difference with the host society, but also as a space from which to reinforce a sense of 'shared identity' (McMichael 2002). Finally, I discussed the relevance of social ties, friendships and networks in the construction of a sense of 'home' in the resettlement country. While the previous two dimensions showed situated differences between Colombian and Palestinian refugees in both countries, the experiences of friendship and social ties highlighted great differences between both groups. While Palestinian refugees in both countries showed strong construction of social ties, Colombian refugees' relational experiences were mostly shaped by dynamics of

inclusion/exclusion related to race and class and experiences of segregation and xenophobia, particularly in Chile.

The implications of the findings presented in Chapter 6 suggest that integration develops between different locales, the resettlement country and other spaces related to 'home-making'. In this sense, the chapter showed the links between integration and transnationalism, reinforcing the argument that the refugee experience develops in multiple scales and spaces and also that it is not bounded by time nor confined to the nation-state. At the same time, integration is marked by the consequences of the displacement but not restricted to it. Instead, being 'integrated' involves a dynamic process of construction of multiple places called 'home' and the negotiation of self-identifications and relationships 'here' and 'there', contributing to respond **RQ2 and RQ1**. Consequently, these results demonstrate another characteristic of integration as 'unsettlement'. The multiple spaces where the integration experience developed showed that integration is indeed far from being settled in one single place. Instead, refugee integration is a dynamic process by which refugees create belonging in the host country while reinforcing belonging somewhere else, by maintaining communication, practices, relationships and traditions.

### **8.2.3. Citizenship scales, struggles and claims**

Refugees' experiences of integration into the resettlement countries were also marked by structural dimensions related to the policies and practices of formal belonging, and refugees' daily negotiations of membership across diverse scales. Emphasis was given to the extent to which the legal status recognised by the resettlement country facilitated refugees 'journeys to citizenship' (Cole 2014), as well as to the instability generated by refugee's constant losses and gains as a result of citizenship status and practice. Chapter 7 explored refugees' intertwined experiences of segregation and agency in relation to citizenship as given but also as claimed, providing answers to **RQ4 and RQ1**.

The research demonstrated that legal status, both the refugee status and the residence permit, are pivotal in the refugee integration experience. Since resettled refugees' mobility into the third host country is controlled and decided upon by others (the governments and

the UNHCR), refugees negotiate the terms and conditions of both statuses, navigating their limitations and opportunities. For instance, refugees in both countries stated that the regularisation of their status allowed them and their children to access health services and education (pre-school, primary and secondary), with its benefits and limitations, as any other citizen. Nonetheless, refugees in both countries gave accounts of the restrictions in other areas that prevented them from reaching 'substantial citizenship' (Castles & Davidson 2000). These barriers were explored in relation to four dimensions of the citizenship experience (status, practice, identity and exclusion), each of them in relation to some of the difficulties faced by each group in each country.

Examples were given about the difficulties Colombian refugees experienced in Brazil as a result of the temporary residence status they received upon arrival. This legal status limited refugees' access to some cultural, economic and social rights and prevented them from accessing certain opportunities, revealing the precariousness of the temporary status. Moreover, the delays in receiving the documentation and bureaucracy, and the costs involved in their renewal, revealed refugees' 'permanent temporariness' (see Bailey et al. 2002; Mountz et al. 2002) and the state control over their membership and pathway to citizenship. In the case of the Palestinian refugees in Brazil, the resettlement programme made sure that they obtained permanent residency permits, by facilitating the application process and costs. However, as I showed in the thesis, Palestinian refugees still experienced restrictions accessing social programmes, and limitations to the practice of citizenship. Refugees' narratives provided examples of the difficulties they faced accessing pensions, housing or higher education subsidies due to a lack of coherence of eligibility requirements at the federal and national level. Therefore, I suggested that the permanent residence in Brazil is not enough to overcome the structural barriers that impede refugees' achievement of 'substantial citizenship'.

In the case of the Palestinian refugees in Chile, who also received permanent residence permits, their main concern was access to naturalisation for them and their children. I explored some of the restrictions and worries expressed by refugees. Moreover, I demonstrated how obtaining a passport is both a symbolic and a practical issue, by which refugees expected to be recognised as subjects of rights and not only as refugees, as well as gaining control over their mobility. By June 2015, 65 Palestinian refugees had obtained Chilean passports; their children, however, were still waiting. In the case of Colombian

refugees resettled in Chile, their citizenship practices were influenced by marginalisation and precarious conditions in relation to employment, housing and access to certain social programmes. Examples of these exclusionary practices were found in refugees' narratives, showing that they derived from both racial and class discrimination and the barriers imposed by their residency status. Colombian refugees had to negotiate their citizenship in daily encounters and across diverse scales. All of these issues contributed to answer **RQ4**.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Chile and Brazil had made considerable advances in relation to refugee legislation, in line with their regional and international commitment to refugee protection. Nonetheless, this research demonstrated that resettlement on the ground follows different patterns, characterised by the lack of, or difficult access to, certain services, rights and social programmes. Using as case study, refugees' difficulties accessing housing, I demonstrated further the social exclusion faced by refugees and the limitations of their citizenship practice that shaped their citizenship experience as one of 'unsettlement'.

Central to the analysis was the argument that, despite refugees' experiences as 'unsettled citizens', they exercised 'agency-in-unsettlement' (see Brun 2015) and became citizens while claiming access, participation and rights through 'acts of citizenship' (Isin 2008). I explored these acts by focusing on refugees' individual and collective actions while claiming citizenship. For instance, examples were given of both Colombian and Palestinian formal and informal forms of organisations in Chile, their achievements and the barriers they faced. I showed how Palestinian refugees in Chile managed to implement a more effective strategy than Colombian refugees, taking advantage of their visibility and the interest of different stakeholders. In Brazil, on the other hand, Colombian refugees opted mainly for individual action that in some cases resulted in benefits to the larger refugee population. In the case of Palestinian refugees in Brazil, the thesis explored how some refugees organised during the first year after arrival and discussed some of the characteristics of the protest outside the UNHCR office. I also showed how, after 6 years in Brazil, Palestinian refugees opted mainly for individual action by seeking support through local actors and targeted networks.

Although refugees' individual and collective acts proved to be transgressive in some cases, breaking the resettlement status quo, the results of this thesis showed that refugees' negotiations are still framed by the power dynamics of the state and refugee governance, as well as shaped by the social and cultural constraints imposed on the refugee subject. In this context, my research results indicated that refugees' unsettlement was constantly reproduced and resisted.

The main empirical findings summarised here, demonstrate that the experience of resettlement does not necessarily mean the end of the consequences of displacement or the culmination of refugees' mobility. Instead, integration is experienced as a process of unsettlement, inherent to the refugee experience. In this context, I argue that integration includes not only a functionalist process, broadly characterised by people's access to services, rights and means of self-sufficiency, but also a connection with other dimensions such as the social and emotional dimensions of integration and the power relations that characterise the refugee process in general. How the intersection of different dimensions plays out in the refugee experience is also related to the different scales and spaces where it develops, which allows us to understand integration as a translocal experience. Within this process, refugees' agency played a key role in negotiating their unsettled experience.

### **8.3. Theoretical, empirical and methodological implications**

This thesis draws on an interdisciplinary body of literature across human geography and refugee studies, among other related disciplines. By grounding the study of resettlement within a focus on refugees' experiences of integration in Latin America, this thesis has contributed to a growing, and necessary, body of literature on forced migration and resettlement in the region (Fischel de Andrade 2014; Guglielmelli-White 2012; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011; Bertino Moreira 2014). In addition, the thesis developed a number of original theoretical and methodological contributions. I start this section by exploring the contributions made to the academic debates that inform this research, discussed in Chapter 3, and then explore the empirical and methodological contributions of the thesis.

### 8.3.1. Theoretical contributions

This thesis has made a strong case around the need to explore refugee integration focusing on refugees' experiences instead of centring the debate on processes only or using a mainly state-centred approach. By doing so, refugees' narratives dialogued with other state and policy focused-analysis in order to enhance the understanding of refugee integration and resettlement. The inclusion of refugee experiences as the main focus of analysis contributes to an increasing body of literature that emphasises the relevance of refugee agency and their role as social actors (Sigona 2014; Korac 2009; Essed et al. 2004; Korac 2003b; Turton 2003; Richmond 1993). In addition, by emphasising refugees' knowledge of their own experience (Hynes 2003) and how their narratives dialogue with the ones of other actors, the thesis provided relevant insights that contribute to the debate about refugee integration more broadly.

In Chapter 3, I argued that the focus on refugee integration as a 'two-way process' did not account for the diversity among refugees and the different rationales of the other actors involved in the process (see Strang & Ager 2010; Sigona 2005). Until now, most of the debates around refugee integration have agreed that it should be considered a 'two-way process', placing the dynamics of integration within the nation-state by identifying two main broad actors: 'them' (the refugees) and 'us' (the receiving country). This thesis problematised the 'two-way' approach in Chapter 3, and the research results demonstrated the need to expand this analysis by including the scales and spaces where the integration experience takes place. That is to say, refugees' experiences in both resettlement countries showed that the negotiation of integration takes place above and below, and inside and outside, the nation-state,<sup>100</sup> revealing a multiplicity of scales that include the individual, the local, the national, the international, but also the transnational dynamics. Therefore, the thesis extended the conceptualisation about 'integration' beyond the multiple dimensions identified in the literature (Da Lomba 2010; Ager & Strang 2008; Castles et al. 2002) to the multiple scales – and therefore the multiple actors, structures, negotiations and power relationships – embedded in the integration experience. The discussion about multiple scales and spaces builds from, and also contributes to, an

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<sup>100</sup> The idea about scales and spaces expressed as "above and below the nation state" and "inside and outside the nation state" belongs to Cathrine Brun and Marta Bivand Erdal, drawing from Stokke (2013), in relation to the different scales of citizenship. They presented these ideas at the RGS-IBG Annual Conference 2015.

emergent body of literature around citizenship and belonging (Stokke 2013; Ong 2006; Staeheli 1999). By expanding our understanding about 'integration', this can be used to better effect as an 'umbrella term', as suggested by Castles et al (2002), to explore the micro and macro dynamics and the multiplicity of linkages, actors, scales and dimensions that encompasses the resettlement experience.

This thesis's original contribution also relies on introducing the notion of 'unsettlement' to the analysis of the refugees' integration experiences. In this thesis, I suggest that unsettlement can be understood as the condition by which refugees' feelings of uncertainty and instability extend and normalise, from the displacement, into the resettlement experience. In doing so, the notion of unsettlement contributes to an increasing body of work in relation to uncertainty in forced migration (see special issue about "uncertainty" Horst & Grabska 2015; also Griffiths 2014). The findings of the thesis also reveal that unsettlement in the host country results from experiences of precarity – in relation to marginalisation, barriers to practice of citizenship, lack of clear information and temporal legal status, for example. Therefore, the concept also contributes to extending the current understandings of precarity within forced migration (Lewis et al. 2014; Waite 2009; Ettliger 2007). Nonetheless, the results of this thesis also reveal that 'unsettlement' is not a fixed condition. On the one hand, the feelings of unsettlement can prompt refugees' coping strategies but also actions of resistance as shown in this thesis in Chapters 5 and 7 (see also Brun 2015; Butler & Athanasiou 2013). On the other hand, unsettlement revealed more clearly the translocality of the refugee experience, with accounts of intimate experiences of belonging developing in multiple spaces where peoples' self-identification and relations were based, showing that unsettlement is indeed a continuous characteristic of the experiences of mobility and forced migration more specifically (see McIlwaine 2011; Barnes 2001). That is to say that refugees' relationships are radically disturbed by the unforeseen displacement and also by distance, but also rearticulated in relation to both the movement and geographical distribution. Overall, 'unsettlement' is a term by which the connections between, and consequences of, interrelated processes involving refugees' uncertainty, precarity, instability and translocality can be understood and explored, both in relation to refugee agency and in relation to the structures and conditions that frame their mobility.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that although unsettlement encompasses a number of lived experiences and situations, it is not an elusive object of study. Instead, by understanding refugees' experiences as 'unsettled' (as a result of uncertainty, instability, precarity and translocality), it is possible to understand refugee integration as a dynamic and fluid process and as a constant negotiation, and not only as a target or necessarily as the end of the displacement's consequences. I argue, then, that the insights provided by looking at the refugee experience through the lenses of unsettlement, allow the different actors to grasp the complexities of the process and, therefore, design and implement better resettlement programmes. The notion of 'unsettlement' also builds from, and contributes to, discussions around refugees' 'permanent temporariness' (see Bailey et al. 2002; Mountz et al. 2002) and the power imbalances involved in 'waiting' (see Brun 2015; Khosravi 2014; Bourdieu 2000). Finally, the notion of unsettlement also contributes to extend our understanding of 'translocality' (Greiner & Sakdapolrak 2013; Brickell & Datta 2011b), while also providing insights about the links between integration and transnationalism (Erdal & Oeppen 2013).

### **8.3.2. Empirical and policy contributions**

During the years this research was conducted, the situation has rapidly changed in Chile and Brazil. New legislation has been enacted, budgets have been cut and other sources of funding have emerged, the civil society – particularly in Brazil – has taken a stronger role supporting and advocating for migrants and refugees, and new groups of forced migrants have arrived in both countries. The global refugee situation has also been changing, generating great attention from the media, public opinion and governments worldwide. At the same time, the UNHCR has identified a “notable increase” of forced migrants in Latin America, mainly coming from Colombia, Central America and Syria (UNHCR 2015; Brodzinsky 2014). In this context, the findings of the thesis have considerable policy relevance at the time of writing, when Chile and Brazil have expressed their willingness to take new regional and extra-regional refugees, mainly from Syria (Arias 2015; Fellet 2015; Brodzinsky 2014). Brazil also has been working on a resettlement programme for refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Considering these developments, the situated knowledge unveiled by this research is more relevant than ever, providing rich empirical data about refugees' resettlement experiences in Latin America and a timely assessment of

the implementation of the programme in both countries. I am preparing a brief with the results of this research to feed findings back to different stakeholders and participants. A second stage, if funding available, would be to discuss these results in a series of workshops with refugees and resettlement organisations in both countries.

New plans for resettlement in Chile and Brazil make it urgent for scholars and practitioners to interrogate how the programme has worked until now. While some studies have look at the particularities of resettlement in both countries (Guglielmelli-White 2012; Bijit 2012; Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011; Sampaio 2010; Bessa 2006), there is a lack of focus on refugee experiences and this thesis addressed that gap by providing refugees' assessment and perceptions of their own resettlement process. Exploring refugee resettlement and integration through the refugee experience, it is not aimed to emphasise criticism on resettlement policies only. Instead, these refugees' experiences allow us to understand how policy and the design of the resettlement programme should be discussed in the first place and how it can move forward. That is to say, that a non-policy restricted view of integration would also enable further policy development; by including refugees' experiences it is possible to recognise the limitations of access to these countries' social programmes and to identify the broader context of vulnerabilities and discrimination in which refugees are hosted. Therefore, refugee integration in the context of resettlement cannot be understood solely as a policy concern. It also needs to include the shortcomings of the process, what has not been achieved, despite the legislation in place, and what has been written out of institutional reports.

Furthermore, the thesis dialogues with, and contributes to, the debates emerging from the commemoration of the 30 years of the Cartagena Declaration, the main instrument and basis of refugee protection in Latin America (Lubbers 2004; Maldonado Castillo 2015). In 2014, 28 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean came together at a ministerial meeting in Brasilia and reinforced their commitment to refugee protection through the adoption of the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action (UNHCR 2014). In relation to resettlement, the declaration proposes to evaluate national resettlement programmes in order to identify common obstacles and share good practices (Americas Regional Refugee Instruments & Related 2014, p.13). However, no mention it is made of the inclusion of resettled refugees' experiences in those evaluations. In addition, the declaration proposes

to establish a 'labour mobility' programme, as part of a comprehensive durable solution strategy, in order to facilitate the free movement of refugees to third countries. In this context, the understanding of refugees' experiences under third country resettlement has great relevance in informing these debates. More broadly, the findings of this thesis made a considerable contribution to the debates about forced migration and refugee integration in Latin America. Although the research was limited to understanding the experiences of resettled refugees, for whom the process of arrival and inclusion is different to those seeking asylum, it can also inform wider processes, since some of the structural and social dimensions that both groups experience in the receiving countries are similar.

Finally, this thesis also suggests that more attention needs to be given to the structural limitations of 'refugee integration' in these Latin American countries as well as to the different actors involved in resettlement, their rationales and their power *vis-à-vis* refugees. Ortega and Ospina (2012) indicate that the current institutional circuits can, and should, improve responses to refugees by facilitating access, information, attention and work in the face of institutional discrimination towards refugee groups. The understanding of the relationships and everyday encounters between refugees and these institutional actors, provided in this research, can contribute to that endeavour.

### **8.3.3. Multi-sited Research with refugee communities: Methodological contributions.**

One of the main contributions of this thesis in terms of methodology relies on opting for a complex matrix of variables that included two countries and refugees from two distinct communities, in order to understand how resettlement is implemented and experienced in Latin America. Moreover, the methodology implemented in this research demonstrated the value of a qualitative-driven mixed-methods approach in order to capture the particularities and situatedness of refugees' experiences, without over-generalising them under uniform categories and without decontextualising those experiences from specific power dynamics (see Eastmond 2007). While the survey enabled a broad understanding of the demographic characteristics of the resettled refugee population, it also showed the limitations of counting refugee experiences (as explored in Chapter 4). In this sense, the thesis focused less on numbers and trends than on experiences, narratives and situated knowledge. What is more, the use of multiple methods of data collection, such as semi-

structured interviews and participant observation, allowed capture of the ‘multiplicities’ embedded in refugees’ experiences by reaching both refugees and a wide range of people and institutions involved in the resettlement programme in Chile and Brazil. By doing so, the thesis explored refugees’ narratives about their resettlement experiences in relation to the discourses of governments, NGOs and the UNHCR, while at the same time it allowed meaningful comparisons among groups and receiving countries. In this context, the use of participant observation was pivotal in placing participants’ accounts within wider contexts as well as facilitating dialogue and contrast of different narratives. As discussed in Chapter 4, the use of three different methods of data collection imposed practical and methodological challenges. At the same time, however, the different methods through which accounts of resettlement were explored, allowed to better understand the similarities but also the contradictions, and the absences, within and across participants’ narratives. Overall, the methodology implemented was multi-sited in every aspect, considering two countries and many localities within those countries, multiple voices narrating the experiences and multiple spaces and scales where resettlement was experienced.

In addition, the process of data collection opened up the opportunity to engage with questions about access, positionality and ethical considerations, while researching refugee communities and the use of gatekeepers (see Doná 2007; Valentine 2002). The thesis contributed to discussions about positionality with reflections about negotiation of access and encounters with participants, particularly with resettled refugees. In the research I explored how participants and I recognised our similarities, framed in distinctive contexts of power and privilege, and also our differences, not only related to our mobilities but also to our self-identifications. This process of mutual recognition was not only about creating rapport with participants. Instead, it was about the encounters developed within the research process that enabled intimate accounts of the resettlement experience and a deeper understanding of the experiences of displacement and integration in a third country. Additionally, the research process triggers reflections about conducting research with urban refugee populations in Latin America. As I will discuss in the next section, some of the strengths of the methodology implemented can, and should, be developed and theorised further.

#### **8.4. Future research**

This research represents a significant contribution to the debates about forced migration in Latin America, to the understanding of refugees' integration in the context of resettlement in 'emergent countries', and to the conceptualisation of integration more broadly, by exploring the dimensions, scales and spaces where refugees' experiences takes place. However, this research also suggests venues of future research and inquiry. For instance, the comparative focus of this research, between two communities and two countries, raises the need to explore the implementation and experiences of resettlement across other 'emergent resettlement countries', not only within Latin America but across other regions, with a special focus on high middle-income countries and those with developing structures of refugee support, in order to draw meaningful comparisons of how these programmes are designed, funded, implemented and experienced. Researching other emergent resettlement countries would allow exploration of the real possibilities they offer not only to increase the quota, but also the quality, of refugee resettlement.

Drawing from the findings and reflections of this thesis, there are also particular areas of research that I would like to undertake. For instance, in this study I emphasised the relevance of focusing on the experiences of integration. Nonetheless, it is also necessary to explore further how 'integration' is understood in countries of the region and in other Southern regions, considering that most of the conceptualisations are developed and framed in English speaking western countries. In order to address this gap, my next research proposal aims to investigate the ways in which refugees, governments, service providers and international organisations understand refugee integration in six cities across three regions of the so called 'Global South'. This cross-regional comparative research project aims to know more about the different foundations of these understandings and how they are shaping practice, policy and the experiences of refugees.

A third line of research emerges from both the findings and the limitations of this study. In this thesis, refugees' experiences have been explored at the collective, household and individual level; however, refugee integration is also a gendered experience and a study focusing specifically on those gendered differences at the individual level would be an important contribution to the understanding of resettlement experiences and refugee integration (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2014). At the same time, I aim to return to the research

sites to discuss these findings with all the actors involved while also searching for venues to extend the study by including one of the actors absent from this research: native communities. As highlighted in the preface of this thesis, my journey exploring refugees' experiences is far from being over.

In terms of methodology, broad reflections about the research approach, strengths and limitations of this study also reveal opportunities for future research. For example, the challenges of access and ethical considerations discussed in Chapter 4 should be explored further, extending those reflections to discuss in depth researchers' positionalities *vis-à-vis* refugees and in relation to broad dynamics of power. Future research can also focus on the particularities of doing research with urban refugees in Southern cities and the role of NGOs, governments and international organizations controlling access to refugees, extending the work done in urban contexts by Jacobsen and Landau (2003) and in other contexts by Harrell-Bond and Voutira (2007), for example. Finally, considering the difficulties I faced while conducting the survey in relation to sampling, further research is necessary on the possibilities and limitations of using social media as a platform to reach wider refugee populations.

Theoretically, this thesis suggested some contributions to the literature on refugee resettlement that need to be developed further. For example, in this thesis I highlighted the importance of translocality in order to understand the refugee experience. Translocality appeared as part of daily practices or in relation to previous experiences of displacement. It also had great relevance in terms of networks and communication. Future research could follow the flow of those networks and review to a greater extent the scope of those translocal communications and their role in the refugee experience. Finally, I aim to continue developing the concept of 'unsettlement' and how it can influence policy while increasing the understanding of refugees' integration experiences.

## **8.5. Final remarks**

In this thesis I have explored the experiences of Colombian and Palestinian refugees resettled in Chile and Brazil. The findings of this study transcended the differences of two

communities and two countries, showing that both groups experienced integration as a process of 'unsettlement'. Colombian and Palestinian refugees negotiated and accomplished belonging by creating a sense of 'home' and membership in certain areas, while, in others, they felt unsettled. Diego's quote at the beginning of this chapter summarises that feeling and illustrates some of the multiple dimensions and scales involved in the integration experience. Although it may be perceived that his 'integration' was successful – based on his self-sufficiency, language fluency and permanent status – he felt that he would not stop being a refugee any time soon. The findings of this thesis not only emphasise the situatedness of the refugee experience, but also some common issues across both communities and both countries. Some of these, I have shown, are related to the structural organisation of refugee assistance in Chile and Brazil, while others are related to discontinuities of resettlement, the refugee system more broadly and the intimate consequences of the displacement. At the same time, however, I have demonstrated that refugees are not passive within their own experiences and they exercise great agency in negotiating their integration process. In the light of these findings, I have proposed to include the idea of 'unsettlement' to analyse and understand how refugee integration is experienced during resettlement.

The task of understanding the refugee experience by focusing on two countries in Latin America and two communities is ambitious but more urgent than ever. While governments, policy makers, service providers and academics are discussing how to deal with the current refugee crisis, integration has been mostly absent from the debate (see Phillimore 2015). At the same time, most of the discussion has been focused in Europe, while thousands of refugees are crossing borders within their regions of origin or other Southern regions. Refugees' displacement not only has global implications, it also has regional, local and intimate ones that go beyond the emergency of taking refugees out of the camps or dangerous zones. Thinking and planning long term solutions, which include and understand the refugee integration experience, means to create solutions that are durable, but also 'liveable'. By advocating the understanding of refugee 'unsettled' experiences of integration in Latin America from the accounts of the refugees themselves, this thesis makes a vital contribution towards this aim.





## APPENDIX I

### Social and demographic characteristics of resettled refugees in two sites

Characteristics	Chile		Brazil	
	Colombians (N=38)	Palestinians (N=19)	Colombians (N=20)	Palestinians (N=9)
<b>Gender</b>				
Male 46.5% (N=40)	16 (42.1%)	10 (52.6%)	9 (45%)	5 (55.6%)
Female 53.5% (N=46)	22 (57.9%)	9 (47.4%)	11 (55%)	4 (44.4%)
<b>Age</b>				
18 to 30	9 (23.7%)	3 (15.8%)	2 (10%)	2 (22.2%)
31 to 40	13 (34.2%)	10 (52.6%)	10 (50%)	2 (22.2%)
41 to 50	8 (21.1%)	5 (26.3%)	6 (30%)	1 (0.0%)
51 to 60	7 (18.4%)	1 (5.3%)	1 (5%)	2 (22.2%)
Over 60	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (22.2%)
No Answer	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	1 (11.1%)
<b>Legal status</b>				
Refugee without permanent residency	3 (7.9%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (60%)	0 (0.0%)
Refugee with permanent residency	33 (86.8%)	19 <sup>101</sup> (100.0%)	7 (35%)	7 (77.8%)
Citizen through naturalisation	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (11.1%)
Does not know	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
No Answer	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5.0%)	1 (5.0%)
<b>First country or place of asylum</b>				
Ecuador	15 (39.5%)	0 (0.0%)	15 (75%)	0 (0.0%)
Costa Rica	21 (55.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)
Venezuela	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (15%)	0 (0.0%)
Al Tanf Refugee Camp	0 (0.0%)	19 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Rwashed Refugee Camp	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (100%)
Other	2 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Year of Arrival</b>				
2003	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)
2005	9 (23.7%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (10%)	0 (0.0%)
2006	6 (15.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)
2007	5 (13.2%)	19 (100%)	3 (15%)	9 (100.0%)
2008	2 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
2009	9 (23.7%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (30%)	0 (0.0%)
2010	2 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (10%)	0 (0.0%)
2011	2 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
2012	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (10%)	0 (0.0%)
2013	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (15%)	0 (0.0%)
No Answer	2 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Single	7 (18.4%)	2 (10.5%)	3 (15%)	2 (22.2%)
Single but living with partner	7 (18.4%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (30%)	0 (0.0%)
Married	21 (55.3%)	16 (84.2%)	8 (40%)	6 (66.7%)
Separated, but still legally married	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	1 (11.1%)
Divorced	1 (2.6%)	1 (5.3%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)
Widowed	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)

<sup>101</sup> Answers taken during the fieldwork in 2013-2014. In June 2015, Chile granted naturalisation to 65 Palestinian refugees in Chile.

No Answer	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Do you have children?</b>				
Yes	31 (81.6%)	17 (89.5%)	18 (90%)	7 (77.8%)
No	7 (18.4%)	2 (10.5%)	2 (10%)	2 (22.2%)
<b>Religion</b>				
Catholic	17 (44.7%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (50%)	0 (0.0%)
Muslim	0 (0.0%)	19 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (100%)
Evangelical	7 (18.4%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)
No Religion	4 (10.5%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (15%)	0 (0.0%)
Christian	6 (15.8%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (15%)	0 (0.0%)
Jehovah's Witness	4 (10.5%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (15%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Do you have access to health services?</b>				
Yes	36 (94.7%)	18 (94.7%)	19 (95%)	5 (55.6%)
No	2 (5.3%)	1 (5.3%)	1 (5%)	2 (22.2%)
No Answer	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (22.2%)
<b>Employment situation in the resettlement country</b>				
Full time employment	21 (55.3%)	4 (21.1%)	9 (45%)	2 (22.2%)
Part time employment	2 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (10%)	0 (0.0%)
Independent work	6 (15.8%)	3 (15.8%)	5 (25%)	1 (11.1%)
Housework or caring for other people	3 (7.9%)	6 (31.6%)	1 (5%)	2 (22.2%)
Unemployed	0 (0.0%)	2 (10.5%)	2 (10%)	1 (11.1%)
Student (full or part time)	2 (5.3%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (11.1%)
Retired	0 (0.0%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (11.1%)
Other	4 (10.5%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0.0%)
No Answer	0 (0.0%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (11.1%)
<b>Q45. How integrated do you feel as part of your neighbourhood or local community</b>				
Not integrated at all	11 (28.9%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (25.0%)	1 (11.1%)
Not Integrated	12 (31.6%)	2 (10.5%)	4 (20.0%)	2 (22.2%)
Neither	2 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (10.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Integrated	10 (26.3%)	78.9% (N=15)	8 (40.0%)	4 (44.4%)
Very Integrated	1 (2.6%)	1 (5.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (11.1%)
No Answer	2 (5.3%)	1 (5.3%)	1 (5.0%)	1 (11.1%)

## APPENDIX II

### Resettled refugees in Brazil and Chile until 2011<sup>102</sup>

#### Resettled refugees in Brazil, since 2002 till 2011

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	TOTAL
Afghanistan	23										23
Colombia		15	71	81	50	42	16	28	25	15	343
Ecuador			3	4	2	2	3	2	3		19
RDC		1									1
Palestine			1			99		4			104
Cuba						2					2
Jordan						1					1
Iraq						4					4
Guatemala						2					2
Lebanon						1					1
Stateless						3					3
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>503</b>

Source: (Lyra Jubilut & Pereira Carneiro 2011)

#### Resettled refugees in Chile, since 1999 till 2011

	1999	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2011	TOTAL
Afghanistan		6	11									17
Argentina											1	1
Azerbaijan			2									2
Colombia				38	81	14	18	69	20	76	31	347
Costa Rica					2	1	5	2	3	2	3	18
Ecuador					4			2	1	2	3	12
El Salvador										3	3	6
Iran		4	1									5
Iraq		4	1									5
Nicaragua						1						1
Palestine									117			117
Venezuela						2						2
Former Yugoslavia	64											64
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>597</b>

Source: (Ministerio del Interior Chile 2015)

<sup>102</sup> Both tables consider the numbers available until 2011. In Brazil the programme is still running and it is estimated that the total number of resettled refugees has increased to 612 (ACNUR 2014b).



## APPENDIX III

### List of Participants

#### Resettled Refugees in Chile and Brazil (Semi-structured Interviews)

Participant number	Name <sup>103</sup>	Gender	Age	Nationality	First Country of Asylum	Resettlement country	Year Arrival
PTC_CH4	Marcela	Female	35	Colombian	Costa Rica	Chile	2009
PTC_CH5	Pedro	Male	40	Colombian	Costa Rica	Chile	2009
PTC_CH14	Milena	Female	35	Colombian	Ecuador	Chile	2009
PTC_CH15	Luis	Male	32	Colombian	Ecuador	Chile	2009
PTC_CH19	Natalia	Female	19	Colombian	Ecuador	Chile	2007
PTC_CH23	Paula	Female	49	Colombian	Ecuador	Chile	2007
PTC_CH31	Carmen	Female	51	Colombian	Ecuador	Chile	2009
PTC_CH32	Liliana	Female	42	Colombian	Costa Rica	Chile	2006
PTC_CH34	Patricia	Female	49	Colombian	Costa Rica	Chile	2006
PTP_CH36	Hafid	Male	49	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH38	Yazid	Male	53	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH40	Fadila	Female	50	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH41	Jabar	Male	24	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH42	Aziza	Female	35	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH43	Moktar	Male	47	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTC_CH44	Juan	Male	51	Colombian	Costa Rica	Chile	2006
PTP_CH46	Abida	Female	30	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTC_CH49	Andres	Male	43	Colombian	Ecuador	Chile	2005
PTP_CH91	Rahal	Male	34	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH92	Zoheir	Male	37	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH93	Nazim	Male	37	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH96	Salima	Female	35	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTP_CH97	Yamina	Female	23	Palestinian	Al Tanf camp	Chile	2008
PTC_BR102	Marta	Female	44	Colombian	Ecuador	Brazil	2007
PTP_BR104	Fouzia	Female	22	Palestinian	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2007
PTP_BR105	Mabrouk	Male	59	Palestinian	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2007
PTP_BR106	Riad	Male	33	Palestinian	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2007
PTC_BR107	Claudia	Female	59	Colombian	Venezuela	Brazil	2013
PTC_BR109	Daniela	Female	44	Colombian	Costa Rica	Brazil	2003
PTC_BR110	Diego	Male	50	Colombian	Ecuador	Brazil	2009
PTC_BR112	Alberto	Male		Colombian	Ecuador	Brazil	2010
PTC_BR113	Eugenia	Female	34	Colombian	Venezuela	Brazil	2013
PTC_BR114	Ines	Female	39	Colombian	Venezuela	Brazil	2013

<sup>103</sup> The names of all refugees interviewed in this research have been changed to pseudonyms, for protection reasons.

PTC_BR121	Felipe	Male	36	Colombian	Ecuador	Brazil	2005
PTP_BR123	Raouf	Male	68	Palestinian	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2007
PTP_BR124	Malika	Female	60	Palestinian	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2007
PTC_BR125	Jazmin	Female	36	Colombian	Ecuador	Brazil	2009
PTC_BR126	Fernando	Male	39	Colombian	Ecuador	Brazil	2009
PTC_BR127	Cecilia	Female	34	Colombian	Ecuador	Brazil	2009
PTP_BR140	Mahfoud	Male	67	Palestinian	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2009
PTP_BR151	Rabah	Male		Palestinian	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2007
PTP_BR152	Mouna	Female	19	Palestinian	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2007
PTC_BR153	Ana	Female	40	Colombian	Ecuador	Brazil	2005
PTP_BR154	Nacira	Female	34	Lebanese	Rwaished camp	Brazil	2007

## Other resettlement actors - Informants (Semi-structured Interviews)

Participant Number	Institution	Role	Country
PTCH80	AREVI	Former Local Coordinator San Felipe	Chile
PTCH81		AREVI Coordinator	Chile
PTCH82		Resettlement Coordinator	Chile
PTCH84	Ministry of Interior	Refugee and Resettlement Analyst	Chile
PTCH85	AREVI	Former Interpreter	Chile
PTCH86		Women in Risk Programme coordinator	Chile
PTCH87	Ministry of Interior	Refugee and Resettlement Coordinator	Chile
PTCH88	AREVI	Former AREVI Coordinator	Chile
PTCH89	Organization of Colombian Refugees	President	Chile
PTCH90	UNHCR	Liaison Officer	Chile
PTCH95	Mosque As-Salam Santiago	Member	Chile
PTCH98	Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre, University Diego Portales	Coordinator	Chile
PTCH99	CEPAL	Researcher	Chile
PTCH100	AREVI	Former Staff Member / Social Worker	Chile
PTCH101	University Alberto Hurtado	Coordinator PRISMA	Chile
PTBR115	Sigmund Freud Associação Psicanalítica	Psychologist	Brazil
PTBR116		Psychoanalyst	Brazil
PTBR117	ASAV	Admin Staff	Brazil
PTBR118	Sigmund Freud Associação Psicanalítica	Psychoanalyst	Brazil
PTBR119	Ombudsman Office (Defensoría Pública)	Ombudswoman	Brazil
PTBR122	University UNISINOS	Academic	Brazil
PTBR129	ASAV	Translator staff member	Brazil
PTBR131	Refugee and Immigration Assistance Group (Gaire), UFRGS	Solicitor	Brazil
PTBR132		Member	Brazil
PTBR133	Camara de Vereadores (Chamber of Councilors Porto Alegre)	Staff	Brazil
PTBR134		Staff	Brazil
PTBR135	ASAV	Coordinator Resettlement Programme	Brazil
PTBR136		Programme Officer	Brazil
PTBR137	Local Council Porto Alegre	Social worker	Brazil
PTBR141	Institute of Migration and Human Rights, IMDH.	Director	Brazil
PTBR142	UNHCR	Senior Programme Assistant	Brazil
PTBR143		Assistant Protection Officer	Brazil
PTBR144	CONARE	General Coordinator	Brazil
PTBR145	UNHCR	Former Officer	Brazil
PTBR146	CARITAS	Former Resettlement Coordinator	Brazil
PTBR147	Sociedade Cultural e Beneficiaria Islâmica de Mogi das Cruzes	President	Brazil

PTBR148	Mosque Mogi das Cruzes	Sheikh (Spiritual Leader)	Brazil
PTBR149	CDDH-Guarulhos	Social Worker	Brazil
PTBR150		Social Worker	Brazil
PTBR155		Social Worker	Brazil

## **APPENDIX IV**

### **Interview Guides**

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#### **INTERVIEW GUIDE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS - RESETTLED REFUGEES**

##### **Situation Pre-Resettlement - Displacement**

1. How was your life in your country of origin?
2. What were the reasons that triggered your displacement? (both internally and across the border)
3. How was your life in the first country of asylum? (i.e. in terms of security, migratory status, socio-economic conditions, etc).
4. How did the possibility of resettlement emerge? What did they tell you in the mission about the process and about the country? How was the process of interview, waiting time and then travel?

##### **Arrival to the Resettlement Country**

5. I would like to ask you about the process of arrival and the first days in the resettlement country. How would you describe the arrival and welcome process?
6. Could you please describe your first months? In what type of accommodation were you received? Did you receive an orientation process? How long did it take you to find a job? Did you receive language classes? How much was your monthly allowance? Did you receive any explanation about money and costs? Documentation?
7. Thinking about the information you received in the first place of asylum and in your own aspirations, do you think that this country met your expectations?

##### **Integration Process – Domains and Facilitators**

8. Do you feel safe in the resettlement country?
9. How would you assess your access to services such as health and education?
10. What has been your experience relating to housing?
11. What do you think is the most difficult issue that you had to face to integrate into this country? What elements/tools/support/people/spaces have facilitated your integration?
12. What are the things you like the most in the resettlement country?

13. Do you feel part of your neighbourhood/local community/city?
14. What differences do you perceive with the host society? What would you say are the differences they perceive from you?
15. How do you think the programme can improve?
16. When do you think you will stop being/feeling a refugee?
17. Do you think there is anything else that you would like to discuss or any relevant issue that we are leaving out?

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS –INFORMANTS**

### **Institutional Role**

1. What is your role and in what capacity have you been involved in the resettlement programme?
2. What is the role of this organisation within resettlement?
3. How did the resettlement programme in this country emerge?

### **Resettlement Process – Design and Implementation**

4. What is the design of the programme? How does it work and who are the actors involved?
5. What would you say are the selection criteria of resettled refugees?
6. What does the resettlement programme offer? What is the main objective?
7. What are the main characteristics and differences between the Palestinian and the Colombian resettlement programmes? (Design, funding, actors, etc).
8. In your experience, what would you say are the main public policies that have emerged from the resettlement programme? Or what policies have facilitated its implementation?
9. What is the relationship between the resettlement organisations and the refugees? How is the relationship between the refugees and other groups of interest ?(i.e. religious or ethnic communities at the resettlement country)

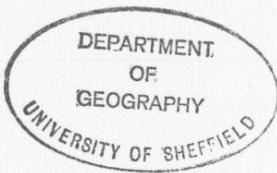
### **Assessment – Challenges and Opportunities**

10. How would you evaluate the implementation of the Palestinian and Colombian programmes?
11. How do you evaluate the implementation of the programme? Are refugees included in the evaluation process?
12. How would you evaluate the integration experiences of resettled refugees? What would you say are the main challenges they have to face at the resettlement country?
13. What would you say are the main challenges that the resettlement programme faces? And what are the main positive outcomes?
14. How has the dialogue with other resettlement countries in the region gone? It is possible to talk about a regional programme?
15. Do you think there is anything else that you would like to discuss or any relevant issue that we are leaving out?



## APPENDIX V

### Introduction Letter Supervisor (available also in Spanish and Portuguese)

	<p>The University Of Sheffield.</p>	<p>Department Of Geography.</p>
<p>August, 2013</p>	<p>Head of Department Professor Jean Grugel</p>	<p>Department of Geography The University of Sheffield Winter Street SHEFFIELD S10 2TN</p>
	<p><b>Telephone:</b> +44 (0) 114 222 7942 <b>Secretary:</b> +44 (0) 114 222 3601 <b>Fax:</b> +44 (0) 114 279 7907 <b>Email:</b> j.b.grugel@sheffield.ac.uk</p>	
<p>Dear Sir or Madam,</p>		
<p>I am delighted to introduce Marcia A. Vera Espinoza. Marcia holds the prestigious scholarship Becas Chile, CONICYT, and is completing her PhD at the Department of Geography, The University of Sheffield (<a href="http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography">http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography</a>).</p>		
<p>Since Marcia started the program I am supervising her PhD research (<a href="http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/staff/grugel_jean/index">http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/staff/grugel_jean/index</a>).</p>		
<p>Marcia is researching on resettlement in Latin America, specifically in the case of Chile and Brazil. The study aims to explore from a critical perspective the emergence of resettlement programs in South America, analysing the extent and in which ways the regional resettlement model is being consolidated in South America; and assessing, in these two key countries, the effectiveness of the resettlement regional agenda in terms of refugee protection, social policy, adherence by states and how these affect the integration of refugees.</p>		
<p>I would be delighted if you would find the time, however short, to discuss her project and eventually support her activities during the fieldwork in Brazil.</p>		
<p>Marcia Vera's project has been granted ethical and risk assessment approval by the University of Sheffield.</p>		
<p>Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further details. Thank you.</p>		
<p>Yours truly,</p>		
		
<p>Professor Jean Grugel</p>		<p>THE QUEEN'S ANNIVERSARY PRIZES FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION 2007</p>

## APPENDIX VI

### Participant Information Sheet (Spanish Version)

#### Información para el participante

#### **Proyecto de Investigación: Protección de Refugiados en Sudamérica. Un análisis crítico del modelo regional de reasentamiento en Chile y Brasil.**

##### **Invitación**

Usted ha sido invitado a ser parte de este proyecto de investigación. Antes que usted decida si quiere participar es importante que entienda por qué se está realizando este estudio y qué es lo que abarca. La información será entregada oralmente, pero usted también puede leer el siguiente documento. Si hay algo que no le parece claro o le gustaría tener más información, por favor no dude en preguntarnos. También estaremos dispuestos a responder cualquier duda o preocupación que pueda surgir. Por favor tome su tiempo para decidir si quiere o no ser parte del proyecto.

##### **Muchas gracias por leer esta información**

##### **¿Cuál es el propósito de la investigación?**

El objetivo de este proyecto de investigación es explorar el programa de reasentamiento de refugiados en América Latina, particularmente en Chile y Brasil. Asimismo, la investigación intenta evaluar la efectividad de estos programas en términos de la protección de los refugiados, políticas sociales, adherencia de los estados a los compromisos adquiridos y la integración de los refugiados reasentados. Para lograr estos objetivos el estudio indagará las experiencias y opiniones de refugiados reasentados de origen Colombiano y Palestino, así como también recogerá las opiniones de los gobiernos involucrados, organizaciones internacionales y ONGs relacionadas con el programa.

##### **¿Por qué he sido escogido(a) para ser parte del estudio?**

Le hemos invitado a participar porque usted puede contribuir a la investigación a través de su experiencia de reasentamiento o su relación con el programa ya sea en Chile o en Brasil.

##### **¿Tengo que participar?**

Es decisión suya si quiere participar en el estudio o no. Si usted decide participar, se le dará esta información escrita y se le solicitará firmar un formulario de consentimiento. De todas maneras, usted puede retirarse en cualquier minuto sin dar razones.

##### **¿Qué pasará si decido participar del proyecto?**

Si usted es un refugiado reasentado se le solicitará llenar una encuesta sobre sus opiniones acerca del programa de reasentamiento. Asimismo, se le invitará a participar en una entrevista con preguntas abiertas relacionadas con su experiencia de reasentamiento y su proceso de integración en el país de acogida. Estas entrevistas no durarán más de una hora y serán grabadas en audio.

##### **¿Cuáles son los posibles beneficios de participar en el estudio?**

Si bien no hay beneficios inmediatos ni directos para aquellas personas que participen del proyecto, se espera que la investigación contribuya a la discusión sobre reasentamiento en América Latina y al debate sobre su implementación y las políticas públicas asociadas.

**¿Qué pasa si algo sale mal?**

Si algo sale mal o si a usted le gustaría exponer una observación o reclamo, puede contactar a la investigadora principal cuya información se entrega al final de este documento o a la supervisora del proyecto, Profesora Jean Grugel en el email [j.b.grugel@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:j.b.grugel@sheffield.ac.uk). Si usted siente que su reclamo no ha sido manejado satisfactoriamente por la investigadora principal ni por la supervisora, usted puede contactar directamente a la Universidad de Sheffield a través de Philip Harvey al email [registrar@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:registrar@sheffield.ac.uk).

**¿Mi participación será confidencial?**

Cualquier información personal sensible será confidencial y anonimato será garantizado si es requerido.

**¿Qué pasará con los resultados de la investigación?**

Los resultados de este estudio serán compartidos con los participantes, particularmente refugiados reasentados en ambos países, y con los gobiernos y organizaciones –nacionales e internacionales- que están involucradas con el programa de reasentamiento. Los resultados serán usados en la investigación y en otras publicaciones académicas, ensayos y artículos relacionados con el proyecto. Éstos también serán utilizados en investigaciones futuras y pueden ser presentados en seminarios y conferencias cuando la oportunidad se presente.

**¿Quién financia la investigación?**

La Comisión Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología de Chile (CONICYT) contribuye al financiamiento de esta investigación a través de Becas Chile, que financia el programa de doctorado en donde se enmarca esta investigación. El trabajo de campo en Brasil ha sido financiado por la beca Slawson Award que ofrece la Royal Geographical Society de Inglaterra.

‘Las grabaciones de audio o video realizadas durante esta investigación serán utilizadas para análisis e ilustración en conferencias, artículos, ensayos y clases’.

Este proyecto de investigación ha recibido aprobación ética del Comité de Ética del Departamento de Geografía de la Universidad de Sheffield en Julio de 2012.

**Contacto investigadora principal:**

Nombre: Marcia A. Vera Espinoza, University of Sheffield.

Email: [marcia.vera@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:marcia.vera@sheffield.ac.uk)

**Esta hoja de información es para que usted la guarde entre sus archivos.**

**Muchas gracias por su tiempo y colaboración.**

## Participant Information Sheet (Arabic Version)

### معلومات للمشاركين

#### موضوع البحث:

حماية اللاجئين في أمريكا الجنوبية. تحليل انتقادي لنموذج الاستيطان الاقليمي في تشيلي و برازيل

انت مدعو الآن لتشكّل جزءاً من هذا المشروع. قبل ان تقرر المشاركة، من المهم ان تدرك دواعي هذه الدراسة واهدافها. المعلومات تُعطى شفهيًا، ولكن باستطاعتك ايضا قراءة الوثيقة الآتية، اذا وجدت فيها غموضاً او اردت معلومات اضافية الرجاء عدم التردد في الاستفهام، ونحن مستعدون لايضاح اي غموض والاجابة على اي سوال . الرجاء التأني في التفكير قبل اخذ القرار بالمشاركة لتكون جزءاً من هذا المشروع.....شكرا لقرائتك هذه المعلومات.

#### • ما هو الهدف من هذا البحث؟

الهدف هو معالجة برنامج استيطان اللاجئين في أمريكا الجنوبية وخاصة تشيلي و البرازيل، وتقييم مدى فعالية هذه البرامج من حيث حماية اللاجئين، والسياسات الاجتماعية والتزام الدول بتعهداتها واندماج اللاجئين في بيئتهم الجديدة. من اجل تحقيق هذه الاهداف، يبحث المشروح في خبرات وآراء اللاجئين من اصل كولومبي وفلسطيني، كما وايضاً يجمع آراء الحكومات المعنية والمنظمات الدولية ذات الصلة بالموضوع.

#### • لماذا تم اختيارك لهذه الدراسة؟

لان بإمكانك ان تساهم نظراً لخبرتك بموضوع الاستيطان وعلاقتك مع البرنامج الخاص به سواء في تشيلي او برازيل.

#### • هل علي ان أشرك؟

هذا عائد اليك، إذا كان قرارك ايجابياً س يُطلب منك التوقيع على موافقتك ، وستبقى كافة المعلومات التي تُدلي في سرية كاملة. على كل حال باستطاعتك الانسحاب في اي لحظة دون اي مبرر.

#### • ما الذي يمكن ان يحصل اذا شاركت؟

اذا كنت لاجناً مستوطنناً س يُطلب منك ملئ استمارة استطلاع حول آرائك في برنامج الاستيطان. س تُدعى كذلك لمقابلة توجّه لك خلالها اسئلة مفتوحة متعلقة بخبرتك وعملية الاندماج في بلد الاحتضان، ويتم تسجيلها صوتياً. كلا المقابلتين لا تطولان اكثر من ساعة .

#### • ما هي الفوائد من مشاركتي؟

رغم انه ليس هناك فوائد فورية للمشاركين في المشروع، املي ان يساهم هذا البحث في النقاش حول الاستيطان في أمريكا اللاتينية وتحسين اوضاعه والسياسات الخاصة به.

- ماذا سيحدث اذا سارت الامور بشكل خاطئ؟

اذ حصل ذلك او اردت ان تعبر عن اي راي او تقدم اي ملاحظة او شكوى او احتجاج، بإمكانك الاتصال مع الباحثة في هذا الموضوع التي تظهر معلوماتها في نهاية هذا الاعلام او الاتصال مع الاستاذة المسؤولة عن المشروع على البريد التالي: [j.b.grugel@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:j.b.grugel@sheffield.ac.uk)، واذ شعرت ان رايك او شكواك لم تحظى باهتمام اي منهم، باستطاعتك الاتصال راسا مع جامعة Sheffield مع السيد Philip Harvey على العنوان التالي: [registrar@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:registrar@sheffield.ac.uk).

- هل ستحظى مشاركتي بالسرية؟

كافة المعلومات الخاصة ستكون سرية ، ونؤكد على عدم اشهار هوية المشارك اذا كانت تلك رغبته.

- ماذا سيحدث لنتائج البحث؟

يتشاطر النتائج كافة المشاركين وخاصة اللاجئين المقيمين في كلا الدولتين، وكذلك الحكومات والمنظمات المحلية والدولية المعنية ببرامج الاستيطان. سنستخدم النتائج ايضا في البحوثات وفي منشورات اكااديمية ومواد وتجارب لها علاقة بالموضوع، كما ويمكن الرجوع اليها في بحوث لاحقة وعرضها في ندوات او مؤتمرات اذا تناسب الامر.

- من يمول هذا البحث؟

تساهم " اللجنة القومية للعلوم والتكنولوجيا " في تشيلي ( CONICYT ) في تمويل هذا البحث عن طريق منحات Becas Chile في اطار تمويل البحوث من اجل نيل الدكتوراة . ومن جهة العمل على ارض الواقع، تقوم بتمويله منحات مقدمة من Slawson Award from the Royal Geographical Society.

التسجيلات الصوتية والمرئية التي تؤخذ خلال هذا البحث، تُستخدم للتحليل والتوضيح في المؤتمرات والمنشورات والدراسات.

لقد استلم مشروع البحوث هذا، موافقة " اللجنة الاخلاقية " في قسم الجغرافيا في جامعة " شيفيلد " في شهر يوليو 2012.

الاتصال مع الباحثة:

الاسم : مارسيا فيرا اسبينوسا --- جامعة شيفيلد

البريد: [marcia.vera@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:marcia.vera@sheffield.ac.uk)

هذه نسخة لك ارجو الاحتفاظ بها

شكرا لوقتكم ومشاركاتكم



## APPENDIX VII

### Participant Consent Form

University of Sheffield		
<b>Participant Consent Form</b>		
Working title of Research Project: <b>Refugee protection in South America: a critical analysis of the regional resettlement model in Chile and Brazil.</b>		
Name of Researcher: <b>Marcia A. Vera Espinoza</b>		
<b>Participant Identification Number for this project:</b>		
<b>Please tick the box</b>		
1. I confirm that I have understood the information explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my responses and I understand that these responses will be used in the research and in other papers, essays and articles related with the research. I understand that any sensitive personal information will be kept confidential and anonymity will be guaranteed if requested.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. I agree to take part in the above research project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent (if different from lead researcher)	Date	Signature
<i>To be signed and dated in presence of the participant</i>		
_____	_____	_____
Lead Researcher	Date	Signature
<i>To be signed and dated in presence of the participant</i>		
Copies:		
<i>Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.</i>		



## APPENDIX VIII - SURVEY

Copy of the survey translated into English. Original versions given to participants were in Spanish and Arabic.

<p>Survey Number: <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/></p> <p><b>Survey Resettled Refugees</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Research project: Experiences of 'unsettlement': exploring the resettlement of Palestinian and Colombian refugees in Chile and Brazil.</b></p> <p><b>Instructions</b>          After you have signed the consent form please read the following instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All of the answers provided will be confidential.</li> <li>- If you come across questions that you do not want to answer, please move to the next question.</li> <li>- The questionnaire contains different sections, covering different topics: please fill in all the questions in each section by putting a tick ✓ in the box next to the answer of your choice, writing in the space provided as the case may be or circling your response in the last section.</li> </ul> <p>This project has been granted ethical approval by the University of Sheffield. If you need additional information concerning the project or assistance in completing the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact the researcher:          Marcia A. Vera Espinoza          Email: <a href="mailto:marcia.vera@sheffield.ac.uk">marcia.vera@sheffield.ac.uk</a></p> <p><b>SECTION 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION</b></p> <p><b>SURVEY NUMBER:</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Q1 Gender:</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Male 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Female</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Q2 Please write your age:</b></p> <p>_____</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Q3 What is your country of birth or 'home country'?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Colombia 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Palestine 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>If other, please specify _____</p> </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Q4 For which countries do you currently hold a passport/travel document?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Chile/Brazil 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Colombia 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Palestine 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Iraq 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Ecuador 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Costa Rica 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Venezuela 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Q5 What is your Immigration status in the Host Country?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee status with no permanent residence. 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Residence 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Naturalisation 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Q6 Which year did you arrive to Chile/Brazil through the resettlement programme?</b></p> <p>_____</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Q7 Which country where you living before you came to the host country?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Ecuador 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Costa Rica</p> </td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Q8 What religion do you practice?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Islam 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Christian</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Q1 Gender:</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Male 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Female</p>	<p><b>Q2 Please write your age:</b></p> <p>_____</p>	<p><b>Q3 What is your country of birth or 'home country'?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Colombia 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Palestine 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>If other, please specify _____</p>	<p><b>Q4 For which countries do you currently hold a passport/travel document?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Chile/Brazil 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Colombia 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Palestine 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Iraq 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Ecuador 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Costa Rica 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Venezuela 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p>	<p><b>Q5 What is your Immigration status in the Host Country?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee status with no permanent residence. 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Residence 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Naturalisation 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>Q6 Which year did you arrive to Chile/Brazil through the resettlement programme?</b></p> <p>_____</p>	<p><b>Q7 Which country where you living before you came to the host country?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Ecuador 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Costa Rica</p>	<p><b>Q8 What religion do you practice?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Islam 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Christian</p>	<p>Survey Number: <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; 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This draft of the survey is based on Chilean currency].</i></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 80.000 pesos 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 90.000 – 150.000 pesos 3. <input type="checkbox"/> 151.000 – 250.000 pesos 4. <input type="checkbox"/> More than 251.000 pesos 5. <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> <p><b>Q16 What is the total number of people living in your household including yourself and any children?</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Q17 How many extended family members (e.g. mother, nephew, uncle, etc) live in this household?</b></p> <p>_____</p>	<p>3. <input type="checkbox"/> Venezuela 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Iraq 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Jordan 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>If other please specify _____</p>	<p>4. <input type="checkbox"/> I don't practice any religion 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>If other please specify _____</p>	<p><b>Q 9 What is your marital status?:</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Single 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Single living with your partner 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Married and living with wife/husband 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Separated, but still legally married 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed</p>	<p><b>Q10 Do you have children?</b></p> <p>1. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2. <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><b>Q11 How many children do you have?</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Q12 How many of these children are under 10 years of age?</b></p> <p>_____</p>
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**Q18 When you first arrived to Chile, did you receive provisional accommodation?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  Don't know

**Q19 If yes, how long did you stay in that accommodation?**

1.  1-2 weeks
2.  3-4 weeks
3.  More than 4 weeks
4.  Don't know/ I don't remember

**Q20 Where did you look for information about permanent housing?**

1.  Friends/family/someone in the community
2.  NGO
3.  Newspaper/magazine, accommodation listings, Internet
4.  Your church, mosque, temple or other religious organization
5.  Looking directly in the neighborhoods
6.  Didn't look for information on housing
7.  Other
8.  Don't know

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Q21 How easy or difficult was it for you to find the information you needed about how to get accommodation in Chile/Brazil?**

1.  Very difficult
2.  Fairly difficult
3.  Neither easy nor difficult
4.  Fairly easy
5.  Very easy
6.  Don't know

**Q22 How long did it take you to find accommodation which met the basic needs of you or you and your family**

1.  Less than one month
2.  1-6 months
3.  More than 6 months
4.  More than 1 Year
5.  I still haven't found suitable accommodation
6.  I Don't know

### SECTION THREE: EDUCATION

**Q23 Which, if any, is the highest educational or professional qualification you have obtained?**

1.  Primary education/equivalent
2.  Secondary Education/equivalent
3.  Undergraduate degree from University of comparable institution.
4.  Postgraduate degree (e.g. Master, Doctorate)
5.  Technical qualification
6.  Some other sort of qualification
7.  Still studying
8.  None of the above
9.  Don't know

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**Q24 Did you get this qualification in Chile/Brazil, your home country or another country?**

1.  Chile/Brazil
2.  Home country
3.  Other country - Which? \_\_\_\_\_
4.  N/A

**Q25 If you or a member of your family are interested in Higher Education, do you know where to find the information and guidance?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  I don't know

**Q26 Do you consider that it is possible to continue your (higher) education or the one of your family members in the resettlement country?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  I don't know

**Primary and Secondary Education. If you don't have children, please go to Q29.**

**Q27 If you have any children, do they have access to primary and secondary education?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  I don't know

**Q28 How do you evaluate the information and guidance provided by the NGO, the UNHCR and the Government to parents or carers, about access to pre-school and school systems?**

1.  Very Poor
2.  Poor
3.  Fair
4.  Good
5.  Very Good
6.  I don't know

### SECTION FOUR: EMPLOYMENT

**Q29 Which of these descriptions applies to what you are doing at the moment?**

1.  Paid work - full time
2.  Paid work - part time
3.  Self employed
4.  Doing housework or looking after children or other people.
5.  Unemployed and actively looking for a job
6.  In education/training - full time or part time
7.  Permanently sick or disabled
8.  Retired
9.  Unpaid or voluntary work e.g. for a charity, community group
10.  Other. Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Q30 Which of the following statements best describes what you were doing before you moved to Chile/Brazil?**

1.  Paid work - full time
2.  Paid work - part time
3.  Self employed

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4.  Doing housework or looking after children or other people.
5.  Unemployed and actively looking for a job
6.  In education/training - full time or part time
7.  Permanently sick or disabled
8.  Retired
9.  Unpaid or voluntary work e.g. for a charity, community group
10.  Other. Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Q31 How do you consider your situation in the resettlement country in comparison with the first country of asylum?**

1.  Worse
2.  The same
3.  Better
4.  Don't know

**Q32 How long did it take you to find a paid job in Chile/Brazil after you arrived?**

1.  Less than 3 months
2.  3-6 months
3.  6 months to 1 year
4.  I haven't found a job
5.  I haven't looked for a job
6.  I don't know

**Q33 How much do you earn in your current job?**

*[Question changed depending of the currency in each country].*

1.  I receive a salary under the minimal wage (\$193.000 pesos)
2.  Between \$194.000 and 250.000
3.  Between \$251.000 and 450.000
4.  Between \$451.000 and 650.000
5.  More than \$651.000

**Q34 Do you have a contract in your current employment?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  I don't know

**Q35 How did you find your current job?**

1.  I found a job through my own effort and networks
2.  I found a job through the NGO
3.  I found a job through the UNHCR
4.  I found a job through the government
5.  Through my church, mosque, temple or other religious organisation
6.  Other

If other please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Q36 How do you evaluate the guidance and information provided by the resettlement programme regarding employability and how to use your job skills?**

1.  Very Poor
2.  Poor
3.  Fair
4.  Good
5.  Very Good
6.  Don't Know

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#### SECTION FIVE: HEALTH SERVICES

**Q37 Do you have access to medical and emergency health services in Chile/Brazil?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  I don't know

**Q38 Are you currently registered with a public health provider (i.e. FONASA) or a private one (through an ISAPRE)?**

1.  Yes, I am registered in the public system.
2.  Yes, I am registered in a private medical centre.
3.  No, I don't know how to access these services
4.  I don't know

If not registered, please go to the following question. If your answer is yes, please continue to question Q40.

**Q39 Why are you not currently registered with a health centre?**

1.  I haven't needed to/no health problems
2.  No time/I haven't got around to it yet
3.  I don't know how to register
4.  Other – Which? \_\_\_\_\_

**Q40 Do you have any long-standing illness or disability (over tan 12 months) that limits your activities in any way?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  I don't know

**Q41 Have you experienced an emotional or mental health problem (for example anxiety or depression)?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  I don't know

**Q42 Have you had, or are you currently getting treatment for this emotional or mental health problem?**

1.  Yes
2.  No
3.  Prefer not to say

**Q43 How do you evaluate the access to medical services in Chile?**

1.  Very Poor
2.  Poor
3.  Fair
4.  Good
5.  Very Good
6.  Don't Know

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**SECTION SIX: LOCAL CULTURE AND RELATIONSHIP WITH HOST COMMUNITY**

**Q44 Are you involved in activities with your neighborhood?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**Q45 How strongly do you feel a part of your local area/community?**

- Not at all integrated
- Not very integrated
- Indecisive
- Fairly integrated
- Very integrated
- Don't know

**Q46 Would you say that your friends in Chile/Brazil are...?**

- Mostly Chileans/Brazilians
- Mostly from your home country
- Mostly from your same religion
- Mostly from other countries
- A mixture
- I don't have any friends in Chile
- I don't know

**Q47 Do you have access to Internet?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

**Q48 What use do you give to internet?**

- To talk with my family and Friends back at my country of origin
- To find information
- To make contacts and improve my networks
- To pay bills or search for documentation of public/private institutions
- A mixture of all the above
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION SEVEN: HOST ORGANISATIONS**

**Q49 If you have any question or need guidance, to which of the following organizations do you contact first?**

- NGO [this answer was replaced with the names of the NGOs in each country]
- UNHCR
- Government
- Your church, mosque, temple or other religious organization
- Local Council
- None of the above, I ask my family and friends
- I don't know

**Q50 How do you evaluate the coordination between the organizations involved in the resettlement programme?**

- Very Poor
- Poor

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- Fair
- Good
- Very Good
- I don't Know

**SECTION EIGHT: LANGUAGE (If your mother tongue is the same that the one spoken in the host country please move to section nine)**

**Q51 Have you taken part in any formal Spanish/Portuguese language training in Chile/Brazil?**

- Yes – currently taking formal language training.
- Yes – Completed a course.
- Yes – Started but did not complete the course.
- No

If your answer is 3 or 4 go to the next question, otherwise please continue to question Q53

**Q52 Why have you not taken or completed any formal language training?**

- I already speak the language
- Unable to attend because of work/ family commitments/ or ability to travel.
- Don't need to/Don't want to
- I don't know how to access the training
- I am being taught informally/ learning from family or friends.
- I did not like the lessons
- I am not allowed to access free training.
- Other

If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Q53 How long were you in Chile/Brazil before you attended formal language training?**

- Less than one month
- Between 1 and 3 months
- Between 3 and 6 months
- More than 6 months
- Don't know

**Q54 In day-to-day life, how good are you at speaking Spanish/Portuguese when you need to? For example, to have a conversation on the telephone or talk to a professional such as a teacher or a doctor? Would you say your Spanish/Portuguese is...**

- Very Poor
- Fairly Poor
- Average
- Fairly Good
- Very Good
- Don't Know

**Q55 In day-to-day life, how good are you at writing in Spanish when you need to? For example writing letters or notes or filling in official forms? Would you say you are...**

- Very Poor
- Fairly Poor
- Average
- Fairly Good
- Very Good
- Don't Know

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**SECTION NINE – SAFETY**

**Q56 In comparison with your previous country of asylum, how safe or unsafe do you feel in Chile/Brazil?**

- 1.  Very unsafe
- 2.  Fairly unsafe
- 3.  Neither safe nor unsafe
- 4.  Fairly safe
- 5.  Very safe
- 6.  Don't know

**Q57 To what extent would you feel confident reporting a crime to a police officer in Chile/Brazil?**

- 1.  Very unconfident
- 2.  Fairly unconfident
- 3.  Neither confident nor unconfident
- 4.  Fairly confident
- 5.  Very confident
- 6.  Don't know

**SECTION TEN: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT INTEGRATION**

Please use the following scale to indicate how much you agree with the following statements. Circle your response.	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	N/A 6
<b>Q58</b> The most difficult thing is to find a job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q59</b> Having my ID soon after arrival has contributed to my integration process	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q60</b> It is easy to access the health services in Chile/Brazil.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q61</b> Children suffer discrimination in their schools	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q62</b> It has been hard to establish personal relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q63</b> It is easy to access the Government subsidies to start a business.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q64</b> I am not accepted at my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q65</b> This country met all my initial expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q66</b> People don't know what a refugee is.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q67</b> The level of income in the	1	2	3	4	5	6

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host country is too low.						
<b>Q68</b> There are facilities to validate degrees and certificates of previous studies.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q69</b> It is quite easy to rent a house.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q70</b> I have felt discriminated because of my race.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q71</b> The resettlement programme provides information and guidance about family reunion applications.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q72</b> I felt welcomed in the host community	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Q73</b> I have develop important support networks in the resettlement country	1	2	3	4	5	6

Many thanks for taking part on the survey. We would like to invite you to participate in the next phase of the study. It involves an extended interview related to your experience of resettlement in Chile/Brazil. If you would like to take part please leave your contact telephone number and other contact details below this page and I will get in touch with you as soon as possible. If you have any questions regarding this survey and the next stage of the research that you have been invited, please do not hesitate in contact the researcher.

Many thanks for your time!

**Your contact details**

Name:  
Email:  
Address:  
Telephone:



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