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Human Rights Education through Community Radio: The Promotion of Afro-Colombian Women's Identity and Rights

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University of San Francisco

**Human Rights Education through Community Radio:
The Promotion of Afro-Colombian Women's Identity and Rights**

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences
Master's Program in International Studies

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in International Studies

By
Mariana Lopez-Steele

December 2011

**Human Rights Education through Community Radio:
The Promotion of Afro-Colombian Women's Identity and Rights**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

by

Mariana Lopez-Steele

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Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this thesis project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Background	4
Radios Ciudadanas: A Space for Democracy in Harmony with Diversity.....	6
Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí.	8
Buenaventura: Human Rights Education in the Midst of Conflict.....	9
Theoretical Framework.....	11
Definition of Terms.....	15
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	17
Introduction.....	17
Human Rights Education and Women’s Empowerment	18
Radio as a Tool for Human Rights Education	23
“Constructing” an Afro-Colombian Women’s Identity	29
Conclusion	37
Chapter 3: Data and Discussion of Findings.....	39
Methodology	39
Kambirí: The Radio Project	42
Promoting Afro-Colombian Women’s Cultural Identity and Rights.....	46
Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations	65
Appendices.....	71
References.....	75

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Abstract

In 1991, for the first time in history, the Constitution recognized that Colombia is a multiethnic and culturally diverse country. Since then, a number of organizations have emerged to promote and reinforce the right to difference of the Afro-Colombian ethnic community, as well as to claim and defend their rights. This thesis project presents how La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí, a national network of Afro-Colombian women, has used community radio as a tool for imparting Human Rights Education to women through the promotion of their cultural identity. To accomplish this goal, I analyzed the radio programs created by Kambirí that were broadcasted in the year 2010 in the city of Buenaventura, Colombia. This research paper answers the following questions: (a) how is radio used as a tool for Human Rights Education in promoting Afro-Colombian women's identity and rights? and (b) how are local cultural elements used as a medium to communicate universal concepts of human rights?

Chapter I: Introduction

Since 1991, when the Constitution recognized for the first time in history that Colombia is a multiethnic country, a large number of national and international organizations have emerged to claim and defend the ethnic, political, social, territorial, and economic rights of Afro-Colombiansⁱ. The promotion of an Afro-Colombian identity based on race, ancestry, and history, as well as the defense of the cultural assets of black Colombians, has been a priority in the agenda. In particular, women's organizations working parallel with the larger black social movement have participated actively in this process by informing women about their rights. Therefore, the following research paper will answer the following questions: (a) how is radio used as a tool for Human Rights Education (HRE) in promoting Afro-Colombian women's identity and rights? and (b) how are local cultural elements used as a medium to communicate universal concepts of human rights?

Afro-Colombian communities have been subjected to historic discrimination, exclusion, violence, and the forced removal of their territories. Rich in biodiversity and natural resources, the Pacific Region of Colombia is a battlefield in which competing interests for natural resources have brought guerrilla, paramilitaryⁱⁱ, and multinational corporations to this territory. Women, in particular, have taken a leadership role in the defense of the rights of the Afro-Colombian population as they are able to organize more easily and with less risk of being targeted or assassinated, than men (Zill de Granados, 2011).

Inspired by the struggles of the Afro-Colombian community, especially the women, in June 2011, I arrived in Colombia to conduct research on how Human Rights

Education is used to transmit rights information to Afro-Colombian women in the Pacific Region. I was also compelled to study why and how local culture is used as a pedagogical tool to inform women about universal concepts of human rights. As I began to learn about the different organizations working on the promotion of Human Rights Education and culture to women, I encountered La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí.

This organization, which has engaged in numerous human rights training programs for Afro-Colombian women across the country for more than 10 years, began in 2010 using radio as a mechanism to impart Human Rights Education. With the training and financial support from the Ministry of Culture to develop radio programs of interest to the community, Kambirí used community radio stations to communicate with the audiences in Buenaventura, Florida, Túmaco, and Cartago, four cities located in the Pacific Region of Colombia. These programs, which accomplished an educational and entertainment purpose for the community but especially for women, were broadcasted three times per week for 18 weeks in 2010. Therefore, in this research project I evaluate how Kambirí radio programs informed women about their rights through the promotion of their cultural identity, specifically in the city of Buenaventura, Colombia in 2010. Due to the rich content and quality of the radio programs, I consider that Buenaventura deserves unique attention throughout this research project.

To accomplish my research goal, I listened to and analyzed 31ⁱⁱⁱ radio programs created by Kambirí women in the city of Buenaventura. I also conducted semi-structured interviews with members of the organization and experts in the topic of community radio and Afro-Colombian ethnic and cultural identity. I did this in order to complement, gain

background, and give context to the radio programs. Furthermore, I read a number of books and research projects to gain familiarity of historical and current events of the Pacific Region, specifically Buenaventura.

The development of this research project is timely and relevant, as Human Rights Education has gained increasing attention in recent years. The international community, national governments, academia, social movements, and non-governmental organizations consider HRE a tool for individual and collective empowerment, social change, development, and conflict resolution. In addition, HRE is also acknowledged as being a mechanism to eliminate racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination. In the specific case of Colombia, a country that has suffered through decades of human rights violations, a research project of this nature is useful to organizations seeking innovative ways to impart HRE.

However, in the near future it is imperative that national and international governments, organizations and movements encourage the development of additional research projects and case studies that contribute to enriching the field of Human Rights Education. If new theories, as well as innovative methodologies and strategies, are introduced, human rights educators will have better tools to successfully contribute to the creation of societies in which human rights are valued and respected.

In the remaining pages of Chapter 1, I provide background information that is useful to understand the context in which Kambirí community radio programs emerged, provide a theoretical framework for this research study, and define key terms. Chapter 2 reviews existing research literature related to Human Rights Education, community radio,

and Afro-Colombian cultural identity. Chapter 3 presents the data collection methods and results. Finally, Chapter 4 offers conclusions and recommendations.

Background

In 1991, for the first time in history, the Constitution recognized Colombia as a multiethnic country. Despite the fact that 10.6% of the population is Afro-Colombian and 3.4% of the population is indigenous^{iv}, Colombia had stood for hundreds of years as an ethnically homogenous country. But in 1991, indigenous populations and the Afro-Colombian community lobbied the National Constitutional Assembly to declare Colombia as a multicultural country. Although indigenous populations had received territorial rights in 1890 in the form of *cabildos*, the Constitution mandated the adoption of Law 70 in 1993 (the Law of Black Communities), which was the first and most important achievement in terms of ethnic, cultural, and territorial rights for Afro-Colombians. Law 70 stipulated the protection of the territorial rights and cultural identity of Afro-Colombians, as well as the role of the state in guaranteeing the socio-economic development of the communities living in the Pacific Basin of Colombia.

As Velez (2011) states, since 1993 “the Colombian government has assigned collective titles to more than five million hectares of land in black communities. Between 1996 and 2008, a total of 156 communities received collective land titles benefiting more than 62,000 families in six departments of the country” (p. 199). This was the first time Afro-Colombian communities in rural areas of the Pacific Region received titles for their territories, despite the fact that Afro-Colombians had inhabited and engaged in economic activities in this area for hundreds of years.

The Pacific Region of Colombia or the Pacific Lowlands, as it is also called, refers to the region that covers the Westernmost part of Colombia from the northern border with Panama to the southernmost limits with Ecuador along the Pacific Ocean. The population of the Pacific is mostly inhabited by Afro-Colombian communities, who represent 90% of the total population of the region. Although most of the population is settled in rural areas in the offshores of hundreds of rivers in the region, in recent years there has been an increased migration towards urban areas due increasing conflict in the area.

Law 70 of 1993 aims to protect Afro-Colombian ethnic and cultural identity and grants collective territories to the Afro-Colombian population in the Pacific Lowlands. Asher (2009) argues that its passage was a strategic plan of the national government to speed-up the modernization of the region. Although the law granted collective territories to the population, it simultaneously engaged in large-scale economic development projects due to the rich biodiversity and natural resources present in the area. The extraction of resources has brought armed groups into the region and caused the forced displacement of thousands of Afro-Colombians from their land. In fact, since the end of the 1990's the number of Internally Displaced Populations in the region has increased. As of 2007 more than 250,000 Afro-Colombians had been displaced from their collective territories (Afrodes and Global Rights, 2007).

In order to protect the cultural assets of Afro-Colombian populations, as well as their territorial, political, and economic rights, a number of organizations have emerged to accomplish this purpose. Since 2010, La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí has participated in the struggle for ethnic and gender rights by using radio as

means to promote Afro-Colombian women's cultural identity and rights. The Ministry of Culture through their national communications program Radios Ciudadanas: A Space for Democracy in Harmony with Diversity supports this initiative. Radios Ciudadanas has since opened channels for Kambirí to use radio as means to convey Human Rights Education to the community, especially women.

Radios Ciudadanas: A Space for Democracy in Harmony with Diversity.

Radios Ciudadanas: A Space for Democracy in Harmony with Diversity^v is an initiative of the Ministry of Culture of Colombia that emerged in the year 2004 to promote democracy and cultural diversity through radio. Since then, three times per week for half an hour each day, audiences across the country listen to a variety of new voices in their community radio stations. In order to achieve its goal of increasing public participation, The Ministry of Culture promotes the creation of committees formed by people in specific communities and supports them with financial resources and training to create radio programs that are of interest and need to the community, and which are broadcasted on their local radio stations. By 2010, 219 community radio stations had joined Radios Ciudadanas.

In order to promote the use of community radio as a space for democratic participation, the program seeks to provide spaces for individuals and communities, which had traditionally been excluded or marginalized from media channels, to participate and make their voices heard. Therefore, through Radios Ciudadanas not only does the community participate in the creation of radio programs, but they also contribute to the development of the thematic agendas. The Ministry of Culture, or any other governmental body in the locality, does not interfere in the selection of the topics or

content of the broadcastings, as they are meant to be a space of free expression for the community.

In addition to promoting participation, Radios Ciudadanas also seeks to strengthen community radios across the country as they lack economic resources in great part due to their non-commercial origin. Not only do the radio stations receive a stipend for participating in this project for approximately 18 weeks in a year, but also their staff participates in training workshops that help create production, content, and radio management strategies for success and sustainability. The Ministry of Culture is able to finance this project by building alliances with national and international organizations. In the past, organizations such as USAID, as well as the United Nations Development Programme office in Colombia, have contributed financially to the development of Radios Ciudadanas. Similarly, national, regional, and local governing bodies provide financial resources for the implementation of these programs.

The promotion of diversity is also a main goal of Radios Ciudadanas. According to Liliana Ramirez, communications advisor for the Ministry of Culture, Radios Ciudadanas is a space “that has a clear emphasis on diversity, not only in terms of skin color, but also in ways to see and feel life of the local population who are linked to this project”^{vi} (Author’s interview, trans. July 8th, 2011). Therefore, in 2010 Radios Ciudadanas linked La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí, into this project, seeking to incorporate a gender and ethnic perspective into the radio programs of four municipalities in the Pacific Region.

Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí.

La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí, was created in December 2000 by a group of 174 women interested in joining the ethnic struggle for Afro-Colombian rights from a gender perspective. Since then, Kambirí “promotes the organization, participation, and development of Afro-Colombian women, through the permanent communication, diffusion and defense of their rights based on the principles of solidarity and equality”^{vii}. The creation of this organization was motivated by the need to build a formal network of women that would provide an autonomous space for them to organize, participate, and learn about their rights.

In December 2000, 14 regional coordinators were selected, and since then more than 7500 women across the country have become members of Kambirí. As the director of Kambirí, Aura Dalia Caicedo Valencia, argues when referring to the training classes required for women who join the Network, “We have decided to start the schooling process in each territory we go because it is a beautiful experience. We could have more people affiliated but we want to ensure they go through a process of training at school, and once they complete it, they would become members of a partner women’s group or organization in the area”^{viii} (Author’s interview, trans. July 7th, 2011).

This training process, known as Escuelas de Formación or Training Schools, consists of five modules that are completed in four years: (a) Human rights, (b) coexistence in the middle of difference or the role and participation of youth in political organizing and cultural movements, (c) self-esteem and identity, (d) incidence and political participation of Afro-Colombian Women, and (e), territory and territoriality. In order to increase the impact of these educational programs, women who complete the

training return to their communities to replicate and educate other women in these topics as means to create a larger social impact.

Therefore, when Kambirí took the opportunity to spread their message through radio, regional coordinators who had participated in the Training School began creating and producing the radio programs with the support and production-skill training of the Ministry of Culture. These programs were created to present new voices: the voices of regular women with no previous journalist experience but who decided to use radio as a mechanism for circulating information that interested them as Afro-Colombian women, and voices from the perspective of La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí in Buenaventura.

Buenaventura: Human Rights Education in the Midst of Conflict.

The people of Buenaventura, a city in the Pacific coast of Colombia, listened to the voices of women members of Kambirí for 18 weeks in 2010 through their local community radio station, Chimia Stereo. Buenaventura, the largest and most important commercial port in the region, has nonetheless remained marginalized and isolated from national development projects for hundreds of years. Since its foundation in 1540, the population of Buenaventura has lived under extreme poverty conditions, and most recently, has become subject to violence by armed actors such as guerrilla and paramilitary groups that operate in the region. In fact, it is estimated that 80.6% of the population lives in poverty, of which 43.3% live in extreme poverty (Nunez & Carvajal, 2007, p.43).

Buenaventura remained isolated for years from the conflict between guerilla and paramilitaries that was striking the rest of the country. However, according to Nunez and

Carvajal (2007), since the year 2000, the region has become a battlefield in which the population is closely monitored and controlled by the armed groups. Violence therefore has led to a situation of “confining and internal displacement”^{ix} (p. 167) within the city of Buenaventura.

The development of violence can be attributed to the geographical location of Buenaventura. For instance, a vast forest, dozens of rivers, and the Pacific Ocean surround the city. This fact contributes to the isolation of this area from the rest of the country, especially the national government and the state armed forces (Nunez & Carvajal, 2007, p.172). In addition, Buenaventura is also an ideal place for the recruitment of young militants living under poor conditions, who have the possibility of earning higher incomes if they enroll in the militias. As the armed groups financial subsistence is highly related to drug trafficking, Buenaventura’s geographic location also serves as an ideal space for the trade and shipping of drugs to other countries.

Despite the dramatic situation of Buenaventura, the population, which is 88.6%^x Afro-Colombian, has been able to create resistance mechanisms against the frequent massacres and assassinations that take place in the area (Nunez & Carvajal, 2007). Some of the strategies include the creation of “peace communities,” which are neutral areas in which no illegal armed actors or state forces are allowed, as well as the establishment of fluvial and terrestrial escape routes used by the population when conflict erupts. In addition, the community of Buenaventura has gained the attention of national and international non-governmental organizations. These entities assist the Afro-Colombian populations of the region protect themselves from violence and forced displacement through the creation of contingency plans.

The use of media has also been important in strengthening the communication channels among the population (Nunez & Carvajal, 2007). Specifically, it has facilitated the development of large demonstrations for peace and respect for the rights of the Afro-Colombians. These actions, along with the support of national and international organizations, contribute to raising awareness about human rights violations taking place in the region.

For instance, La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí, contributes to peace building in Buenaventura by using radio as a tool for imparting Human Rights Education to the community. By conveying a human rights message and discussing the social problematic of Buenaventura from a critical point of view, Kambirí contributes to promoting respect for human rights, especially the rights of Afro-Colombian women.

Theoretical Framework

Human Rights Education has become an important field of study in the last two decades as it is considered both a vehicle for social change and a long-term strategy for the promotion and exercise of human rights (Mirh & Schmitz, 2007). Simultaneously, the use of media and public campaigns aimed at informing and raising awareness about human rights has also increased. Tibbitts (2002), who presents emerging theoretical approaches and methodologies about Human Rights Education, argues that the *values and awareness model* is one commonly used mechanism to accomplish this purpose. This model, which is used to provide basic knowledge of human rights through media or school curriculums, has the potential of developing critical skills in the audience by promoting the practice of human rights in their everyday lives.

Tibbitts (2002) argues, when referring to the *values and awareness model*, that “the goal is to pave the way for a world that respects human rights through and an awareness of and commitment to the normative goals laid out in the Universal Declaration and other key documents” (p. 163) by using creative strategies to attract the attention of the audience. However, the author states that the challenge of this model is to avoid falling into a lecture-based methodology or “banking education” as Freire describes it. It is important that the audience develops a “critical consciousness” that allows it to evaluate specific situations of life, as well as global, national and local policies, from a human rights perspective.

But despite the growth and increasing use of media outlets to impart HRE, the universalist-relativist discourse about human rights is significant to place in context the creation and development of community radio programs for Afro-Colombian women. Although Merry (2006) acknowledges that human rights concepts are adopted in local communities around the world, she contends that “in order for human rights ideas to be effective, however, they need to be translated into local terms and situated within local contexts of power and meaning” (pg. 1). In other words, universal concepts of human rights must be “remade in the vernacular” as she calls the “indigenization” of universal human rights concepts, to represent the realities and needs as well as the cultural elements of a particular community.

Therefore, Merry (2006) suggests that human rights should not be understood as universal as opposed to relative, but rather culture as “hybrid and porous, and that the pervasive struggle over cultural values within local communities are competitions over

power” (p. 9). This understanding of culture as fluid and contested leads Merry to provide a contemporary definition of culture as,

Historically produced in particular locations under the influence of local, national, and global forces and events. Cultures consist of repertoire of ideas and practices that are not homogeneous but continually changing because of contradictions among them or because new ideas and institutions are adopted by members. They typically incorporate contested values and practices. Cultures are not contained within borders but open to new ideas and permeable to influences from other cultural systems, although not all borders are equally porous. Cultural discourses legitimate or challenge authority and justify relations of power. (p. 11)

In this era of globalization, the fluidity and adaptability of culture allows discourses of human rights to influence the cultural traditions and values of a particular society. Therefore, it is useful to associate the struggles over cultural values with contestations for power within communities, as well as between the local and the larger society (Merry, 2006). In the case of Colombia, for instance, the struggle for the recognition of Afro-Colombians as a differential ethnic group, with unique cultural values, served as a medium to earn rights in the Constitution. In addition, it has motivated the creation of human rights and women’s organizations that seek to diffuse and defend the rights of Afro-Colombians.

Merry (2006) claims that intermediaries such as non-governmental organizations and social movements play a fundamental role in the “translation” of universal concepts of human rights to the local communities. Drawing from her ethnographic research on gender violence, she states that “translators” operate in two ways: (a) they apply universal concepts of human rights and relate them based on local realities, and (b) they select

specific situations within a community and situate them in the larger human rights dialogue. These translators are constantly negotiating between transnational meanings of human rights and their local counterparts.

Furthermore, Merry (2006) argues that for translation to occur, universal concepts of human rights must be “translated” into the local “images, symbols, narratives, and religious or secular language that resonate with the local community” (p. 200). In addition, language must be framed within the local structures of social organization, such as legal, political, and economic systems, as well as targeted to specific audiences. In the context of Colombia, hundreds of organizations have emerged to impart human rights education to the Afro-Colombian population since 1991. These organizations use their understanding of universal human rights and diffuse it into the communities through the use of local cultural language. For instance, Kambirí radio programs use music, poetry, local expressions, and mundane local tasks to communicate with the audience.

Merry (2006) states that the challenge of translation is that a transformative action might not occur if national, regional, and local structures responsible for carrying out human rights abuses remain in place. If oppressive and patriarchal structures remain in power, it is difficult for the community to adopt new values and behaviors that respect human rights if they challenge existing power positions. However, I argue that in societies that claim to respect democratic values, the permeability and transformative power of “translation” remains powerful.

Definition of Terms

Culture: In this paper I adopt Merry's (2006) understanding of contemporary culture as "hybrid and porous" (p. 9), as well as constantly renegotiated by local communities.

Empowerment: In this paper I refer mainly to women's empowerment. Therefore, I use Kabeer's (1999) definition of women's empowerment: "the ability to make strategic life choices, in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" (p. 437). Kabeer argues that to accomplish this purpose, women must gain access to "human and social" resources, be able to make strategic life choices, and deconstruct oppressive structures that have suppressed them in the past.

Ethnicity: Ethnicity refers to the group to which an individual relates to because of shared history, language, race, and culture. Barth (1998) understands ethnic groups as cultural units with social organization structures that draw and negotiate imaginary and territorial boundaries with others. Barth argues that an ethnic group recognizes itself as such when it encounters the "other."

Ethnoculture: According to McCubbin (2010), ethnoculture could be defined as "shared socialization through a set of cultural practices, traditions and institutions (language use, for example). These may be traditionally associated with an ethnic group, but ethnocultural membership is less a function of actual ethnicity than of cultural participation and socialization" (p 476).

Human Rights Education: Amnesty International (2011) defines HRE as "a deliberate, participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and

communities through fostering knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with internationally recognized human rights principles” (par. 2).

Law 70 of 1993 (The Law of Black Communities): Law 70, enacted in 1993, stipulates the protection of the territorial rights and cultural identity of Afro-Colombians, as well as the role of the state in guaranteeing the socio-economic development of the communities living in the Pacific Basin of Colombia. It also grants collective territories to the Afro-Colombian community in the Pacific coast.

Pacific Region of Colombia: As Wade (1993) argues, Colombia is a country of regions. The Pacific Regions of Colombia, or the Pacific Lowlands of Colombia as I also call it, refers to the region that covers the Westernmost part of Colombia from the northern border with Panama to the southernmost limits with Ecuador along the Pacific Ocean. The population of the Pacific is mostly inhabited by Afro-Colombian communities, who represent 10%^{xi} of the total population of the country. States that belong to the Pacific Region are Choco, Valle, Cauca and Nariño. (See Appendix 1)

Radios Ciudadanas: A Space for Democracy in Harmony with Diversity: Initiative of the Ministry of Culture of Colombia that emerged in the year 2004 to promote democracy and cultural diversity through radio. Since then, three times per week for a half an hour each day, audiences across the country listen to a variety of new voices through their community radio stations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Since the early 1990's, a large number of formal and informal organizations have emerged in the Pacific Lowlands of Colombia to claim political, economic, territorial, and cultural rights of Afro-Colombian people. Women's organizations have also been in the forefront of the black social movement to safeguard the rights of women, as they have historically been discriminated against not only for their race, but because of their gender. Human Rights Education is a mechanism that has the potential to transform societies, as it is a tool for empowerment, development and conflict resolution.

The use of media outlets has been an important tool for the Afro-Colombian social movement. In Colombia, as many other countries in the world, radio is the principal means of communication used by the population in rural, as well as urban, areas. Specifically, societies with rich oral traditions value radio as a fundamental source for the transmission of information, knowledge, and values. Literature on entertainment-education media strategies acknowledges that radio has an important role, not only in education, but also in fostering social change and development. Although academics such as Etheridge (1997) and Meintjes (1997) claim that the role of media in education remains to be explored, others such as Singhal and Rodgers (1999), Brown and Singhal (1999), indicate that education through radio can be successful if it is able to engage the audience. Myers (2000), Manyozo (2010) argue that it is potentially successful if the programs are based on community participation.

Furthermore, scholars such as Hall (1995), Restrepo (2004), and Wade (1993), recognize that identity is multicontexted, dynamic, and contingent upon ethnicity as well

as social, historical, economic, and political contexts. In the case of Colombia, authors such as Wade (1993), Restrepo (2004) and Paschel (2010) acknowledge and agree that since the early 1990s, the categorization and legal definition of Afro-Colombians as an ethnic group has allowed them to gain territorial, political and social rights. Therefore, the construction of an Afro-Colombian ethnocultural identity has been a priority in the agenda of the black social movement. In particular, scholarship (Camacho, 2004; Lozano-Lerma, 2008; Asher, 2009) concurs that women have participated in the larger struggle for Afro-Colombian rights through the promotion of black women's identity from an ethnic perspective.

Therefore, the following literature review covers several areas: (a) the role that Human Rights Education plays in fostering women's empowerment in relation to the most influential theories of empowerment among feminists, as well as the development of women's rights organizations; (b) the role radio plays in entertaining as well as educating, and how its contributions have impacted communities; and (c) an exploration of the fluidity and dynamism of ethnocultural identity in the Pacific Region of Colombia, preceding an account of how Afro-Colombian women have participated in the larger black social movement for the vindication of rights.

Human Rights Education and Women's Empowerment

Research on empowerment has focused on finding the most appropriate definitions for this term. For instance, Kabeer (1999) offers a holistic approach to studying, understanding, and evaluating women's empowerment. She defines it as: "the ability to make strategic life choices, in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" (p. 437). This definition embraces empowerment as a process in which

agents acquire the necessary tools to make rational choices and overcome oppressive power structures. The author states that empowerment has three dimensions, resources, agency and achievements:

Resources refer to the possibility of women to have access to human and social resources, in the present and the future. Agency refers to the capability of women to make their own decisions, to set up their own goals, and to use all resources to achieve them. And achievements refer to the permanent transformation of power relations, which could translate into the permanent transformation of societal structures that suppress women and their behavior. (pp. 438)

This definition understands empowerment as the capability of women to access and use resources previously denied to them. In addition, it recognizes empowerment as being a process that is highly subjected to women's capability to access external resources, such as education.

Stromquist (1995) contends that education is a fundamental tool for empowerment by claiming that for empowerment to exist, women must become aware of the patriarchal structures that surround them. The author states that women's empowerment is dependent on different components such as her gaining consciousness of her subordination, desire to improve her living conditions, aspiration to foster social change, or achieving economic independence, a process that non-formal, and formal education can ignite.

Human Rights Education, for instance, can provide the tools to understand the social conditions that have disempowered marginalized women, as well as motivate them to take action in order to claim their rights. Human Rights Education, as defined by Amnesty International (2011), is "a deliberate, participatory practice aimed at

empowering individuals, groups and communities through fostering knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with internationally recognized human rights principles”(par. 2). For instance, Tibbitts (2005) states that Human Rights Education is “a practice that aspires to promote and protect human dignity and encourages trainers to involve learners in what can be termed an empowerment process” (p.107). She continues to argue that Human Rights Education is not just about learning about rights but “promoting personal action in order to guarantee those conditions” (p.107).

Similarly, Meintjes (1997), discussing the importance of taking action in Human Rights Education and empowerment, says that the role of Human Rights Education is to “enable each target group to begin the process of acquiring the knowledge and critical awareness it needs to understand and question oppressive patterns of social, political and economic organization” (p. 66). The author emphasizes that empowerment must be dynamic, which means that it requires the ability of those who participate in Human Rights Education to “transcend the previously oppressive power relations” (p. 66). By stating that rights education alone is not sufficient, he acknowledges that empowerment is possible if it motivates actions and the everyday practice of activities that reinforce new values, customs, and even the creation of new laws.

As Meintjes (1997) and Tibbitts (2005) claim, women’s empowerment can only be accomplished through Human Rights Education if action is taken to challenge existing dynamics and beliefs that reinforce inequality. In conflict situations, where violations of human rights are frequent, this is especially true as individual actions can foster peaceful relationships that initiate at a domestic level. Human Rights Education has the potential of initiating conflict transformation and fostering the creation of peaceful societies by

altering everyday relationships that dehumanize the “other” and create conflict and violence. Hicks (1997) argues that problem solving techniques should be incorporated into Human Rights Education in conflict zones as, if applied, this training could change existing behavior that is harmful towards others. Empowerment, then, can be achieved by the everyday practice of individual, as well as group behavior that fosters peaceful relationships.

In addition, Human Rights Education has the potential of promoting processes of development that could break cycles of poverty and violence. Dias (1997) argues that Human Rights Education is a strategy for development since it can “provide the rationale for development, the normative framework for development, and the criteria by which those who undertake development can be held accountable” (p. 52). For instance, Dias argues that knowledge of human rights can serve as a tool for monitoring development projects, help people decipher what is positive development in their communities, and motivate excluded and marginalized individuals to participate in the development programs.

In fact, women’s participation in politics and development projects is considered fundamental for empowerment. Narayan (2005) argues that social and political inclusion of women is considered the most important path to empowerment. She is critical of development projects that attempt to empower women, and argues that top down approaches to development are just systems in which the lower classes do not participate and tend to exclude minority groups from power positions. She suggests then, that bottom-up participation is fundamental for women’s social inclusion into society.

Although empowerment is highly subjected to the political, social, and economic contexts, Malhotra, Schuler, and Boender (2002) recognize that the creation of universal definitions and measures of empowerment are necessary, but only if they adhere to international or universal concepts, especially human rights. Knowledge of national and international laws is fundamental for women's empowerment and the creation of societies in which human rights are respected. Gierycz (1997) offers legal perspective to understanding the importance of Human Rights Education. As she states,

legal literacy, encompassing the knowledge of rights and freedoms of individuals and the existing national and international laws and regulations is a necessary condition for the ability of all individuals to apply them in practice, address the violations, restore justice through proper legal proceedings, and demand compensation for damage whenever it occurs. (p. 96)

However, some national legal systems are not created to protect the most vulnerable populations and often disadvantage those same communities. Therefore, it is possible to find means of empowerment without using legal action to restore justice. For instance, protests, letter petitions, and national and international advocacy contribute to create consciousness and to gain support for these causes. Media is a tool that could serve the purpose of facilitating communication, raising awareness, as well as uniting people towards a specific goal.

As access to information becomes more relevant in this new era of telecommunications, human rights are widely spread through various media outlets and have become easily accessible for general audiences in most parts of the world. Nonetheless, Etheredge (1997) maintains that since most media outlets such as radio and television are driven by specific agendas, it remains to be studied and analyzed whether

Human Rights Education through telecommunications can be provided in an unbiased and accurate manner. Similarly, Meintjes (1997) says that the pedagogical purpose of providing Human Rights Education is restricted when conveyed through informal sources such as mass media. He argues then that informal Human Rights Education can only be successful if the students have already established what Freire calls a “critical consciousness,” that would allow them to analyze and conceptualize the information they receive. Therefore, as the Human Rights Education field expands and telecommunication becomes more relevant for societies across the world, it is also important to explore the role and impact of using mass media, specifically radio, as an educational tool.

Radio as a Tool for Human Rights Education

Radio is the most widely used medium of communication across the world (Singhal & Rogers, 1999; Brown & Singhal, 1999). In developing countries, specifically in areas with low infrastructural levels and scarcity of resources, radio is the primary medium of communication. Specifically, the use of radio becomes more predominant in societies that carry rich oral traditions, as it is considered the primary instrument for communicating, teaching, and carrying cultural values from generation to generation. Therefore, the use of media as an entertainment–education strategy has existed for hundreds of years and has the potential to be the most important mechanism for transmitting Human Rights Education in the future. Entertainment-Education, as Singhal and Rogers (1999) describe, is “the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message in order to entertain and to educate” (p. 9).

Governments, as well as non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, and commercial media outlets have historically used radio as a mechanism to put forth

their social change and development agendas. Contrary to other mass media outlets, radio can be produced inexpensively and quickly (Singhal & Rogers, 1999, p. 124). One example is Radio Sutatenza in Colombia, created in 1947 by Catholic priest Jose Joaquin Salcedo. Radio Sutatenza proved to be a success when broadcasted to help improve the quality of living of the farmers in the region by teaching them skills of social and economic use for the community (Manyozo, 2010, p.153). According to Manyozo (2010), “Sutatenza provided a blueprint of a participatory community-oriented radio station, but also demonstrated that education for critical literacy is an effective engagement strategy that empowers ordinary people to be full and equal participants in development and thereby sustain deliberative democracy”^{xii} (p. 154). This program pioneered the future creation of radio schools in other parts of Colombia and the rest of Latin America.

Although Radio Sutatenza accomplished purely an educational role, other radio programs have included a more entertainment-oriented approach. Singhal and Rogers (1999) show how radio soap operas have been used as a strategy for education. The authors argue that dramatizations of social problems affecting specific communities proved to be effective when the BBC introduced the Archers in 1951. In addition to entertaining, this radio program introduced to urban audiences some of the problem English farmers experience in rural areas, as well provided farmers themselves solutions on how to improve their livelihood

In India, Tinka Tinka Sukh (Happiness Lies in Small Things), a radio soap opera broadcasted in 1997 intended to promote the discussion about women’s issues such as gender equality and health promotion, and was considered a success after researchers

from Ohio University and the University of New Mexico studied its impact on women's empowerment (Singhal & Rogers, 1999). The impact of Tinka Tinka Sukh was evaluated through the lens of social modeling theory, as originally proposed by Albert Bandura. This theory claims that individual behavior change happens when a person imitates the behavior of a role model. According to the researchers, after developing "relationships" with the characters, the audience of Tinka Tinka Sukh began to acknowledge negative behaviors, traditions, and beliefs in their communities, as well as to encourage them to discuss these issues with their peers. The programs also developed feelings of "efficacy" among the listeners, which means a person's perception that she or he is capable of acting to achieve personal or community goals. For instance, the letters written to the producers of the show indicated that audience members began to change their conception about the traditional practice of dowry. The letters claimed that the discussion about this practice had started to gain a negative connotation within their community after the radio program was broadcasted.

LeRoux-Rutledge (2008) concurs and argues that radio entertainment-education programs have the capability to empower individuals. After conducting an impact study of Afghan Women's Hour (AWH), a program created and broadcasted by the BBC at a national level, the author states that "findings indicate that AWH is able to enhance listeners' capacity to aspire, by giving them ideas about specific goals. It is also able to enhance their perceived ability to influence" (p. 1). Although LeRoux-Rutledge affirms that it is difficult to assess empowerment in all aspects of a person's life, the case of entertainment-education strategies through radio do in fact motivate individuals to feel

they have control over their future, and incites their imagination about what they want that future to be.

Although entertainment-education can have an important impact on people's perception of their own self-efficacy, motivate behavior change and empower individuals and communities, Brown and Singhal (1999) find that there could be an ethical challenge to this strategy as the question of "who will determine what is right for whom?" emerges (p. 275). They argue that in countries with multi-ethnic groups, or in which the state owns and controls media outlets, radio could be used as tool of propaganda for a specific agenda. Therefore, authors advocating the use of radio for development projects, such as Manyozo (2010) and Myers (2000), argue that empowerment actually takes place when there is community or bottom-up participation, not only to ensure that the content of these programs is fair and balanced, but also to promote development agendas that correspond to the real needs of the community.

In this context, community radio programs compared to mass media programs, allow the flexibility to tailor the content to the interests and needs of specific communities. Librero (1993) defines community radio or broadcasting as:

the systematic use of radio for the purpose of facilitating consciously the development of people within a geographical area having clearly defined psycho-physical boundaries. This means radio broadcasting within a limited geographical *area* in which a group of people with vastly similar characteristics, problems and aspirations reside. (p. 2)

Community Radio is becoming increasingly popular in the last three decades. According to Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada (2001), its popularity could be attributed to the "democratization and decentralization processes in many parts of the world; deregulation

of media and the relaxing of broadcasting monopolies by state institutions; and disaffection with commercial radio channels” (p. 6). In addition, one of the most important attributes of community radio is that it allows the participation and access to the general public into the radio stations and the programs. This participation happens in various forms: when members of the community are the ones who create the broadcastings, contribute to the definition of thematic agendas, when they are invited to the programs through interviews, or simply when they can call the stations and speak openly about their feelings, desires, and concerns.

In order to accomplish its participatory role, Myers (2000) and Manyozo (2010) contend that community radio programs must be independent from state or commercial purposes since particular agendas might obstruct the possibility of listeners to create, participate and have access to the radio broadcastings. The importance of community participation relies on one fundamental premise and purpose of community radio: to serve the community and increase participation. In the context of Colombia, where political participation has historically been denied to a large majority of the population, the creation of community radios becomes a tool for opening spaces in which the voices of those who cannot participate in decision-making processes at the local, regional and national level can be heard. Therefore, it is one vehicle for the construction of a democratic society in which all voices, regardless of gender or ethnicity, participate.

Furthermore, Fraser and Restrepo Estrada (2001) state that community radio must also include and promote the identity and culture of the radio listeners and the local community. This includes the use of music, poetry, and other artistic expressions that are part of the traditions of the community. Referring to the important role of culture in the

context of the Pacific Lowlands of Colombia, Maria Mercedes Jaramillo (2007)

maintains,

The rich complex of African cultural heritage of the peoples of the Pacific coast emerges in various aspects of everyday life; this way, songs, attitudes, rituals, dances, beliefs, traditions, feed into that memory. These elements are used to organize existential tasks, as well as behaviors and socialization systems that have allowed Afro-Colombians to survive the harsh conditions of slavery and marginalization^{xiii}. (p.218)

Due to the importance of cultural identity in the Pacific Lowlands of Colombia, especially those cultural manifestations related to oral traditions, radio has significant potential to become a tool for advocating human rights. For instance, Oslender (2007) states that “oral tradition as a bearer of local history, moral, and social rules, as well as the transmitter of a notion about territorial space, acquires a meaning in the struggle for recognition of land rights and cultural rights of Afro-Colombian communities. More than an abstract expression, oral tradition plays an active role in the process of raising awareness in rural communities in the Colombian Pacific^{xiv} (p.261). Culture, then, is potentially a pedagogical tool that could be applied in Human Rights Education to inform people about their rights through the use of local language and expressions. This is especially true in present day Colombia, as the right to ethnic and cultural difference is the principal political and economic tool used by the Afro-Colombian social movement to claim its rights.

Singhal and Rodgers (1999) and Brown and Singhal (1999) show that radio is a powerful tool for education. Nonetheless, in order to accomplish its role of impacting and empowering communities, radio must include community participation (Myers, 2000;

Manyozo, 2010). Community radio, then, is the most viable vehicle to achieve inclusion of the local population in the creation of the educational programs as they are created to broadcast information of interest and need to a specific community. Since the use of culture and local traditions is important to reach and engage the intended audiences, it can also become a tool for education. In fact, as culture and ethnicity have acquired more relevance in recent years in Colombia, a unique opportunity exists in the present day to impart Human Rights Education through culture.

“Constructing” an Afro-Colombian Women’s Identity

Lack of accurate documentation and research about Afro-Colombian women’s identity, as well as historic racial and gender discrimination, led to the creation of myths and stereotypes about what it means to be a black woman in Colombia. However, since 1991, when the newly created constitution of Colombia recognized for the first time in history that Colombia is an ethnically and culturally diverse country, Afro-Colombian women’s organizations have emerged to protect and promote women’s identity based on ethnocultural rights. Women’s organizations, which had traditionally organized women mainly for income generation purposes, decided to incorporate political, social and ethnic rights in their agendas (Asher, 2009). Therefore, since 1991 the Afro-Colombian social movement, including women’s organizations, has actively participated in the process of reconstructing Afro-Colombian identities based on culture difference and motivated by the vindication of rights.

Afro-Colombian women’s identity has been historically homogenized and defined from the “racist imaginary” of the dominant culture (Camacho, 2004; Lozano Lerma, 2008). According to Camacho (2004), black women’s identity has been defined in three

categories: “women, black, and slaves”^{xv} (p. 171). The author continues to argue that the use of these dimensions has contributed to the creation of myths about what it means to be a black woman in Colombia. She states that “in contrast with a white or mixed-blood woman, a black woman personifies or is represented as one with an ambivalent, indecipherable, mysterious nature, and simultaneously seductive and disturbing for the male and female imagination”^{xvi} (p. 172).

Lozano-Lerma (2008) argues that these stereotypes are the result of inaccurate academic studies that attempt to determine what it means to be Afro-Colombian as they do not come from black women themselves. In the article, “Maids, whores, and matriarchs: An approximation to Afro-Colombian women’s identity,” she claims that what is available in terms of literature derives from a perspective of racism and patriarchy. For instance, Lozano critiques the view of Afro-Colombian women related to motherhood, arguing that families in the Pacific Coast of Colombia are matriarchal not because women give birth and provide care for their children, or even because they are the main or only breadwinners in some families, but because Afro-Colombian women are the ones who make all the decisions in their households whether or not there is a male in the family. This system of family organization derives from ancestral traditions as well as historical circumstances, leading the author to express the necessity of studying black women and their social roles based on historic factors, such as colonization and slavery from a woman’s perspective.

Camacho (2004) agrees by stating that “the lack of notorious written documentation about black women, their identity, and their experience, as well as the disperse, punctual, succinct, and fragmentary character of historical sources, constitute a

limitation in the task of documenting the plurality of subjects and the multiple stories of black women, as it is not possible to speak of only one story, nor black women as an essential identity”^{xvii} (p. 170). This statement calls for the need of research, case studies, and ethnographies in which specific communities are studied in order to develop a general knowledge of Afro-Colombian women’s identity that contribute to the deconstruction of black women’s stereotypes.

But even though there is lack of in-depth studies on the topic, discrimination and exclusion accurately describe the historic and current living conditions of the Afro-Colombian population, especially women. However, the generalization and stereotyping of black women are inadequate in portraying a complex, constantly evolving and multidimensional identity that women recreate in their everyday lives. An identity that is shaped by an ethnic background based on historical and current social, political, and economic circumstances. For instance, Stanford Friedman (1991) argues that “women are themselves multicontexted; gender can never be experienced in "pure" form, but is always mediated through other categories like race, ethnicity, religion, class, national origin, sexual preference, abledness, and historical era” (p. 471).

And specifically, in the case of Afro-Colombia, the construction of gender identity is intrinsically related to ethnicity. As various authors explain (Arocha, 1998; Paschel, 2010; Restrepo, 2004; Wade, 1995), the passage of the Constitution in 1991, which declared Colombia as a multiethnic country, fostered a process of redefining what it means to be Afro-Colombian. Contrary to the black social movements in other parts of the world that claim for racial equality, Afro-Colombians have given priority to the struggle for ethnic difference.

Restrepo (2004) states that since 1991, when the new Constitution determined Colombia as a multiethnic country, a movement has arisen towards the “ethnicization of blackness” rooted on raising awareness of African ancestry. Although he found that traces of African ancestry were “embodied” in the movements, customs, cultural manifestations, and the everyday chores of Afro-Colombians, Restrepo noticed that people in the Pacific Region did not talk about their Afro-Colombian ancestry, history, or culture prior to 1991. In fact, he states that in some municipalities of the Pacific Region, entire communities were not aware of the history of slavery and the period of colonization in Colombia before the 1990’s.

Therefore, Restrepo (2004) argues that in the past two decades has emerged a process of “ethnicization in the southern Pacific Region of Colombia (that) has involved a type of production and relation with the past, a way of imagining community based on origins and historically shared experiences, as well as a relocation of subjectivities and identities” (p.704). This process of “ethnicization” has been fundamentally political, as the right to ethnic difference has served as a medium to claim the rights of the Afro-Colombian community.

As Hall (1995) claims, “the recognition that ‘black’ is essentially and politically and culturally *constructed* category (...) what brings into play is the recognition of the immense diversity and differentiation of the historical and cultural experience of black subjects” (p. 225). The use of the word “constructed” to define “black” raises the question about the meaning of race and ethnicity, as well as the fluidity of culture. Wade (1997), who studied the meaning of race in Latin America, concurs by stating that race is a socially constructed concept. Nonetheless, he argues that the creation of racial

categories dates back to the time when Europeans encountered “others” during colonization. These encounters led to the creation of stereotypes about race, most of the time charged with discriminatory meanings that in present day blur the complex and multiple social identities of the black community.

Furthermore, although race and ethnicity are both socially constructed and often reevaluated and renegotiated, Wade (1997) finds that ethnicity, in contrast to race, is subjected to the definition of the places and locations where ethnicity “happens.” Using Banks’ (1996) definition of ethnicity as “a collection of rather simplistic and obvious statements about boundaries, otherness, goals and achievements, being and identity, descent and classification that has been constructed as much by the anthropologist as by the subject” (as cited in Wade, 1997, p. 16), Wade argues that ethnicity requires the creation and recreation of location boundaries.

Paschel (2010), who explores how and why the Afro-Colombian movement changed in 1990’s from the race claim based on equality to the ethnic claim based on multiculturalism, contends that this shift was fundamental to gaining rights through the enactment of Law 70 in 1993. This law, which grants collective territories to the Afro-Colombian community and proclaims the protection of their cultural assets, resulted from the congruence of various factors: (a) global discourses about multiculturalism, (b) state instability due to increasing pressure to modify the constitution, and (c) the emergence of a number of organizations in the Pacific Region that claim the rights of the black community (Paschel, 2010).

Despite hesitance by some activists, who considered that the concept of “difference” could create ethnic conflicts, or a type of apartheid, the black movement was

able to successfully lobby for the passage of Law 70 (Paschel, 2010). The promotion of culture and identity from an anthropological perspective, as well as the assertion of lack of research on the region, served as leverage to portray to the rest of the country that the black communities of Colombia had a distinct identity from the rest of the nation. The use of culture and identity in the political discourse, then, ignited a process of redefinition of what means to be Afro-Colombian.

Nigel (1994) claims that history and culture are the basis for ethnicity. Ethnicity, which is in a constant process of change and evolution, however, is not only shaped and redefined by members of the ethnic group but also by external structures such as government and laws. Culture, then, which the author describes as the “content” within each ethnic group, is also exposed to frequent reevaluation of its meaning that results from interactions with the rest of society.

In addition, Nigel (1994) argues that there are two main ways in which culture is constructed: (a) through the “reconstruction of historical culture”, and (b) through the “construction of new culture” (p. 162). The first one refers to the recovery of ancestral or traditional values, beliefs, behaviors that were lost in the past and the latter to the adoption of new cultural elements. This process of constructing identity helps in the creation of an imagined community based on shared origins, history and culture, as well as motivates collective mobilization based on “group solidarity”.

In the case of Afro-Colombia, Restrepo (2004) argues that since 1991 the traditional process of cultural revival has taken place along the lines of reconstructing a cultural identity based on imagined origins. The process of “ethnicization” has been supported and promoted by a wide range of organizations that have emerged to promote

ethnic culture, while also raising awareness about a history of slavery, marginalization, and exclusion. Restrepo (2004) argues that “what one may call the ethnicization of black political subjects and subjectivities, must be understood as an ongoing process of articulation of blackness in Colombia that has established a specific relationship between territory, identity, cultural tradition, nature and otherness” (p. 699). In the context of the Pacific Lowlands of Colombia, political subjects, who range from individuals to small or large and formal or informal organizations, contribute to shaping and redefining the identity of Afro-Colombians.

In the Pacific Lowlands, the movement for Afro-Colombian women’s rights emerged parallel to the larger black social movement for ethnic rights. Women’s organizations that had traditionally worked on promoting economic and reproductive rights then began seeking ways to empower women by strengthening the knowledge of their territorial, cultural, and political rights, as well as raising their ethnocultural awareness from a gendered perspective (Asher, 2004). Although, not often recognized, Afro-Colombian women have been at the forefront of the struggle for gender and ethnic rights. Their contributions to the movement are noted by Escobar (1998), who argues that “gender, as an important aspect of identity construction, is also progressively becoming a salient aspect in the agenda of ethnocultural organizations. Although it is still given insufficient attention, that many of the top leaders and activists of the movement are women committed to the ethnocultural approach are acting as a catalyst for the articulation of gender issues” (p. 66).

Mainly women have led the process of recreating an identity based on cultural difference. For instance, Camacho (2004) states that “it is easy to imagine women’s main

role in the preservation of collective memories, in the construction of the community through reproduction of religious, and spiritual life, (or) in her role as the facilitator in the rituals of initiation and transition to death, but documenting it is more difficult^{xviii} (p. 180). Therefore, she argues that even though women have a social role and responsibility in the public sphere and have led a process of social organization based on ethnic, territorial, political and economic rights, Afro-Colombian women's identity is most often related to their role in the domestic sphere. For instance, the active participation of women's organizations in the larger black social movement was considered inopportune. Women received criticisms from the large black social movements in the early 1990s that considered their claims as diluting the already established struggle for ethnic and territorial rights^{xix}

Despite criticisms, black women in the Pacific Littoral of Colombia were able to organize independently from the state and the larger black social movement. They created an autonomous process of vindication of rights based on gender needs. For instance, Asher (2004) claims that "black women's activism and their texts - reflections on their lives, poems, and the stated aims and strategies of their struggles - reveal that they have an independent ability to act and reflect on their own realities" (p.41). Through the lenses of development and feminist theory, the author argues that women take an active role within their communities to challenge power relations and to organize in "productive and reproductive" (p. 48) projects. Their objective is to gain visibility and participate in larger developmental, ethnocultural, and environmental processes.

Defining Afro-Colombian women's identity in generic terms is a difficult task, not only because of a lack of research and the existence of negative stereotypes about

black women, but also because ethnicity as well as social, economic, political, and historical forces continue to shape what it means to be an Afro-Colombian. However, literature provides great insights into how the Afro-Colombian social movement, consistent with the declaration of Colombia as an ethnically diverse country, has begun to promote the redefinition of an Afro-Colombian identity. Specifically, women's organizations have taken a leadership role in the process of culturally defining what it means to be Afro-Colombian and what it means to be an Afro-Colombian woman.

Conclusion

Based on this review of the literature, it could be concluded that women's empowerment is a process in which women acknowledge those power relationships that oppress them and respond individually or collectively by claiming their rights. Human Rights Education serves as a tool for empowerment in providing informational tools and motivating people to act based on knowledge and emotions. Similarly, the use of radio as a tool for transmitting educational messages has proven to be successful, and even contributes to the empowerment of those communities by encouraging their access and participation in radio programs.

In addition, the promotion of an Afro-Colombian identity has been at the forefront of the agenda of the black social movement in Colombia. In particular, women who have been discriminated against historically and whose identity has been tainted with stereotypes have participated actively in this process. As Afro-Colombian culture, and the promotion of ethnic difference, is so closely related to human rights, a unique opportunity exists to use culture to impart Human Rights Education to women in Colombia.

Nonetheless, although literature on Human Rights Education, community radio, and the construction of Afro-Colombian identity since the 1990's has been widely explored and deepened in academia, I have not encountered any research project that articulates the three topics in one. For instance, no academic research presents how Human Rights Education, with its particularities, can be implemented through radio. Furthermore, few projects explore the issue of Human Rights Education from an ethnic and gender identity perspective. Therefore, I hope this project contributes to enrich literature available in the field, but most importantly that it motivates others to study, analyze and make visible the work that women are doing while constructing peaceful societies in which human rights are respected.

Chapter 3: Data and Discussion of Findings

Methodology

Although La Red de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí used community radio to impart Human Rights Education in four cities in the Pacific Region in the year 2010, I focus this research project on the radio programs broadcasted in the city of Buenaventura. Buenaventura is one of the most important headquarters for the Afro-Colombian social movement and a stronghold for Kambirí. In addition, the rich content and quality of the radio programs deserve unique attention.

In this process I listened, summarized, and analyzed 31 radio programs created and broadcasted in Buenaventura in the year 2010. This exercise was useful to determine the most important topics and concerns of the community, especially of women (See Appendix 2). Furthermore, it was an ideal medium to understand how local cultural elements such as poetry, myths, legends, and music are used as a pedagogical mechanism to convey a human rights message. I also read three magazines published by La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí, and a final report created by the women of Buenaventura about their experience, challenges, and successes in the process of creating these radio programs.

To complement and deepen my understanding of Afro-Colombian culture and traditions, I referred to books and articles about history, as well as Afro-Colombian written and oral literature. Due to the strong oral tradition of Afro-Colombians, music carries rich historical and cultural information. Therefore, I read a variety of traditional books about poems, myths, and legends that have been part of Afro-Colombian culture

for many years, as well as listened to a number of songs to gather information about Afro-Colombian history and cultural identity.

In addition, through local contacts in Bogotá, I was able to connect with the director of La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas Kambirí, as well as other members of the organization who answered semi-structured interview questions (See Appendix 3). The questions were formatted to gather detailed answers about the case study organization, the process of creating and defining the content of the radio programs, Afro-Colombian women's cultural identity, values and social roles, as well as interviewee's perspectives on ethnic, political, and economic rights of Afro-Colombians. I also interviewed a representative of the Ministry of Culture, who trains and supports Kambirí in the production of the radio programs and provided me with insightful information about the Radio Ciudadanas program.

Table 1.
Participants

Name	Occupation	Date of Interviews
Aura Dalia Caicedo Valencia	Director of La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí	July 7, 2001 and August 4, 2011
Liliana Ramirez	Communications Advisor, Ministry of Culture, Colombia	July 8, 2011 and August 4, 2011
Emiliana Bernard	Regional Coordinator of Kambirí	July 25, 2011
Emperatriz Arango	Member of Fundación ACUA, partner organization of Kambirí	July 21, 2011
Rosa Helena Ruiz Echeverri	Member of Kambirí, and participant in Quibdó's radio training programs.	August 3rd, 2011
Antonia Ramirez Mosquera	Member of Kambirí, and participant in Quibdó's radio training programs.	August 3rd, 2011

While in Bogota, I attended various dialogues related to Afro-Colombian rights and territory, as well as cultural events offered to celebrate Afro-Colombian Women's Day. I was invited by Kambirí and the Ministry of Culture to attend a radio production training session in Quibdó, a city in the state of Chocó in the Pacific Region of Colombia, where the programs are being broadcasted in the year 2011. This experience allowed me to witness closely how the radio programs are produced, but more importantly, how the topics of the programs are selected based on the needs and perspectives of the community.

In Quibdó, I had the opportunity to interact with people from the community who are participating in the creation of these radio programs. The committees from three different municipalities where the programs are being broadcasted in 2011 participated in the training session. This meeting gave the opportunity to the participants not only to learn about radio production, but also to freely discuss the social, political, and economic problems faced by the community. Also, the participants shared their perceptions about the role of the government, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations in the development projects taking place in the region. These discussions led to the definition of the topics that would be broadcasted through radio in 2011.

Therefore, reading a variety of literature, participating in multiple events and meetings and interviewing members of Kambirí and other organizations, allowed me to place in context the 31 radio programs I listened, summarized, and analyzed to carry out this research project. Although I was only able to study in depth the programs produced in the city of Buenaventura, I hope this research project inspires others to study the programs produced in other locations, as well as their impact in the community.

Kambirí: The Radio Project

On August 2, 2011, I arrived in the city of Quibdó, Colombia for a radio production training that the Ministry of Culture offered to a group of women members of La Red Nacional de Mujeres, Kambirí. These women in 2011 would be responsible for the creation of radio programs in three municipalities of the state of Chocó. Upon arrival, I encountered general agreement among the participants about how the radio programs were going to positively impact the community. Women such as Antonia Ramirez and Rosa Helena Ruiz shared their belief that radio is a powerful medium to communicate with the larger community because it is the most frequently used means of communication for the population in the region.

Liliana Ramirez began this training by explaining to the audience the purpose of the Radios Ciudadanas' project. The objective is to provide spaces for the community to participate and make their voices heard through radio while promoting democracy and citizenship values. Also, the Ministry of Culture through Radios Ciudadanas intends to promote Colombia's ethnic and cultural diversity. Therefore, the participants of the radio programs in the state of Chocó were given the opportunity to continue a joint process that the Ministry of Culture and Kambirí began in 2010. This process entails the use of radio to communicate information of interest to the community, as well as the promotion of ethnic and cultural difference, from the perspective of La Red Nacional de Mujeres, Kambirí, and more specifically from the standpoint of women.

In the Year 2010, a group of women from Buenaventura had the opportunity to broadcast 18 weeks of radio programs through Chimia Stereo, a local community radio station. The programs, which cover a variety of educational topics selected based on the

needs and interest of the local community, had a pedagogical purpose as they conveyed a human rights message through the critical analyses of social problems. In particular, local language and cultural elements such as music, poetry, myths and legends were used as a mechanism for sending a message that reaches, as well as gains the interest of the target audiences.

The themes of the radio programs were selected by the local committee of women in charge of researching, writing, and producing the radio programs, and also by an extended committee of outside advisors who offered suggestions on the topics they considered would be most relevant for the community. The extended committee was comprised of teachers, poets, musicians, adolescents, community leaders, local social organizations, and other community members interested in participating. The committees met once a month to determine the topics, as well as to distribute the responsibilities of researching, writing scripts, and broadcasting among the producers.

The programs, broadcasted from May to September three times per week for one half-hour each day, aired Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays between 8:30 and 9:00am in 2010. Every week only one theme was covered in order to provide in depth information to the audience in three consecutive weekly programs. According to Liliana Ramirez, this format is used in all Radio Ciudadanas programs since it allows the producers to conduct in depth research and present detailed information to the audience. In addition, it is a technique for generating listening habits in the listeners (Radios Ciudadanas Workshop, August 2nd, 2011). Although the size of the radio audience in Buenaventura was not measured due to the large costs involved in conducting such

research, the content of the programs was designed to develop audience interest and loyalty.

For instance, in Buenaventura, the content of the radio programs was enriched by the use of a variety of formats such as interviews, chronicles, short stories, poems, and dramatized dialogues to engage the audience. Furthermore, the sources of research were the people of the community itself, surveys, and print and online documents and books. Background music was used to harmonize and give a contextual ambiance to the topics and the voices of the broadcasters, as well as the interviewees. In addition, a number of carefully selected songs were played as a complement to the topics discussed.

In the final report submitted to the Ministry of Culture, the women of Buenaventura identified the process of creating radio as a positive experience (Final Report, September 2010). They acknowledged excellent relationships and dynamics within the group and argued that through the radio programs different sectors of the community were involved in the project, enriching the content and thematic presented to the audience. At a personal level, the local committee benefited as they were able to learn skills about radio production, script writing, and broadcasting.

Despite the lack of technological resources such as permanent access to computers, which impeded the broadcasting of a number of scheduled programs, the women stated that the community enjoyed and learned from the programs that aired. Although audience ratings are not available, the high quality of the programs led them to be selected by the Ministry of Culture for the creation of a national radio program about Afro-Colombian women's ethnic and cultural identity. *Cuando el Tambor nos Llama*, or When the Drums Call us, relates the story of Eulalia, a young Afro-Colombian woman

from the Pacific Region who returns to her home in a remote village. During the journey back, Eulalia nostalgically remembers the teachings and conversations with her grandmother, as well as the customs and way of living of the people in the community. Through Eulalia's account, the listener learns about the everyday life and cultural traditions of rural women in the Pacific Region. This radio program was included in the Radios Ciudadanas album created by the Ministry of Culture to show the rich diversity and content of the Radio Ciudadanas Programs across the country.

Also, the community warmly received the programs dedicated to the topic of pregnancy in adolescents. The enthusiasm about this radio broadcast resulted in the development of a workshop at a local high school in which the radio committee was invited to present and discuss in further detail the topic of teenage pregnancy. The committee believes that the support received by the Ministry of Culture, as well as from the community, resulted from the depth of the research and content of the programs. Furthermore, they believe that their extensive preparation in creating radio programs developed interest and loyalty in the audience.

In the following sections of this paper, I present the content of the radio programs created by La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí in the city of Buenaventura in the year 2010. To accomplish this purpose, I explore: (a) the promotion of Afro-Colombian ethnic and cultural identity, and (b) the promotion of Afro-Colombian women's rights through radio from a Human Rights Education perspective. Although I do not touch upon all the topics discussed in the broadcasts, I have selected discussions I consider most relevant for the purpose of portraying the role of Kambirí radio programs in promoting Human Rights Education. In addition, throughout the chapter I identify how

universal concepts of human rights are translated into local language to convey a meaningful message to the community, especially women.

Promoting Afro-Colombian Women's Cultural Identity and Rights

Our society does not understand that a black woman is in herself a political entity. Her body is territoriality. It is impossible to look at a black woman in the big cities without thinking about her ancestry. Afro-Colombian women, especially those from rural areas, exercise their political power in their daily work. It is a symbol of her culture. From her own space, she seeks the welfare of her family and prosperity in her everyday life^{xx} (Cueto Villaman, 2009, p.3).

One of the most important objectives of the Radios Ciudadanas programs created by the women of Kambirí in 2010 was to rescue and promote ethnocultural values of the Afro-Colombian community, especially women, in Buenaventura. Although culture is an everyday practice, the radio programs aimed to raise awareness of the value and importance of preserving the cultural traditions of the Afro-Colombian population, while at the same time transmitting a human rights message. According to Aura Dalia Caicedo Valencia, “the topic of cultural identity is used in every human rights training process conducted by Kambirí, since we cannot conceive women without their cultural background”^{xxi} (Author's interview, trans. July 7th, 2011).

Therefore, the radio programs created in Buenaventura portrayed hidden life stories and the reality of a specific community through the use of local culture and colloquial language. The use of familiar language contributed to sending a message that reaches the audience, that builds a connection between the broadcaster and the listener, and also that generates “analysis, thought, and dialogue” (Kambirí Radio, trans. June 2011).

For instance, three programs that aired in June 2010 were dedicated to promoting the oral tradition of Afro-Colombians. For the black population in the Pacific Region, oral communication has been the most important medium for transmitting information, values, and history from generation to generation. The programs named “Our Oral Tradition” narrated to the audience traditional short stories, myths, and legends in order to portray the richness of the oral language inherited from their African ancestors. Referring to the rich oral tradition of the Afro-Colombian population, one of the broadcasters stated,

In America, and other places of the world such as Africa, where its people for a long time did not have access to writing, the wisdom was kept in the memory of the population, and has been expressed in myths, stories and songs; in epic narrations; in festive rituals and sacred festivals. And in Africa, probably in the touches and silences of the drum; in the musical rhythms of canoes and paddles in the waters of rivers and seas; and of course in the gesture, dance, and ethics of living and dying.^{xxii} (Kambirí Radio, trans. June 2010).

The oral stories of the Pacific Region have been modified through the passage of time. Each story is adapted to the new local circumstances and contexts. Nonetheless, they remain present in the memory and conversations of the population. The radio programs, then, showed a variety of oral and written literature that have circulated the Pacific for decades and that belong to the cultural traditions of the Afro-Colombian population.

As part of the oral tradition of Afro-Colombians, music also plays a fundamental role in the transmission of culture. In the programs dedicated to traditional music, the broadcasters presented the different rhythms and instruments used in the Pacific Region

to create songs, as well as introduce the history and origins of each rhythm. The importance of music, and other forms of oral communication, relies on the fact that these are considered mechanisms for resistance of the Afro-Colombian population. For instance, through the maintenance of their own musical rhythms, the black community has historically resisted assimilation into the mainstream culture of whites and mestizos in Colombia. In the radio programs dedicated to music, an announcer made the following statement:

Music is embedded in the everyday life of Afro-Colombians as a mark, as an indelible mark that has allowed it to continue transmitting from one generation to the next, not only the melodies but a mass of ancient knowledge. (Music) allows us to know and recognize ourselves as part of an ethnic and cultural group, which reminds us about and keeps alive our ancestry.^{xxiii} (Kambirí Radio, trans. June 2010).

In the Pacific Region, music is a fundamental part of the everyday life of the population. Through music, people sing to life, to love, to social problems of the community, to the ancestors, or any other important event that takes place in the community, such as birth and death of an acquaintance or relative. The role of women in the maintenance of traditional music was also emphasized:

Women are key players in the promotion of traditional music, women who carry tradition from generation to generation. The rituals, the *marimba*, the poetry, the lullabies, the *cununo*, the *guasa*, and the *alabados*, are elements that enrich our culture and are part of the legacy of our ancestors who survived oppression, slavery, as well as modernity. Therefore, we call them elements of resistance of our identity. And today, women are also dedicated to this art, to this beautiful art

of accompanying people at parties, as well as in their final resting place. They work for their generation, and have received (the musical knowledge) from their grandparents and transmit it to their grandchildren^{xxiv} (Kambirí Radio, trans. June 2010).

For example, the *alabados* which are traditional songs played in funerals, are interpreted mainly by women in the Pacific Region of Colombia. These songs carry a melancholic voice and message and are intended to provide an accompaniment to the body and family in the resting place, as well as to pray for the safe transition of the soul. Therefore, in the radio programs the role of women as carriers of oral traditions was honored as women in the region are most often the ones that participate in social and cultural activities. Furthermore, they are the ones in charge of educating the children not only as mothers, but also as teachers of values and knowledge.

Aura Dalia Caicedo Valencia argues that women are “predominantly all the main transmitters of cultural values of the black community. That is, a woman sums up all these symbols of black people. Because a woman makes those values endure. A woman is an umbrella, everything converges in her, and she is the matriarch. She is the linchpin of our families”^{xxv} (Author’s interview, trans. August 4th, 2011). Women are the ones that articulate black families, and despite the high levels of single-motherhood in Afro-Colombian households, black women are able to create family and build social networks.

In the radio broadcasting dedicated to Mother’s Day, the announcers and interviewees highlighted throughout the program the important role of women not only as mothers raising children, but also their responsibility in constructing a better society. Accompanied by songs and short dramatizations that celebrated women, it was discussed the role of mothers in the transmission of culture:

Our mothers send us back to our origin, our identity and memory, to the process of generating life and its care, to the many forms of sacrifice with which the mothers continue to give life after having given birth. A mother is the center, the cradle; she is home, she is school. She is the refuge of life, she is our homeland. She is our star and our compass. Mothers show a special love of God and reveal the face of God's love. A love that is merciful, loving, faithful, caring and compassionate. In motherhood, this great love that develops between mother and son sees no color, no status or class. Only the purity of a type of love that goes beyond the material and that is perpetuated in time, and deified in eternity. The mother is the face of God on earth "(Kambirí Radio, trans. May 2010).

Women, for being the ones who most believe in culture, promote and recreate it in their everyday lives. They are the ones who nostalgically look at the past and attempt to rescue those traditional values that have been lost through time as they feel responsible for the future of their families and society. For example, Emperatriz Arango, member of Fundación ACUA a partner organization of Kambirí, argues that the community midwives in the Pacific Region see their role in assisting birth, not only as a responsibility with the family, but also with protecting human life within their communities (Author's interview, July 21st, 2011). Therefore, women's role in society transcends the private sphere to impact the larger society by promoting culture, protecting life, and defending the rights of their community.

For Teacher's Day, for instance, Kambirí radio programs celebrated the contribution of those professionals who dedicate their lives to sharing knowledge with others. These programs provided a short history of this celebration and also presented short dramatizations and poems to highlight the importance of teachers in society. For example, a short poem read by a young child says, "My mother gives me life, my father

gives me livelihood, my school teacher shapes my feelings. To my dear teacher who shares with me her science, her affection, and care with infinite patience, I offer her my gratitude and sincere love, because she fills my soul with noble knowledge^{xxvi} (Kambirí Radio, trans. May 2010).

Through radio the role of teachers as defenders of traditional values and customs was commemorated. Despite national and international discourses that attempt to “assimilate” Afro-Colombians into modernity and global culture, teachers play an important role in harvesting the seed of tradition in the younger generations. One of the announcers argued:

Afro-Colombian teachers, who have been a key part in the transmission of our ancestral knowledge, face the greatest challenge today of addressing the ethnic diversity of our country as a horizon for understanding, promoting, and maintaining our cultural identity. It is not by chance that education is currently being rethought to include different categories such as multiculturalism, interculturalism, inclusiveness, articulation, difference, and gender equity^{xxvii} (Kambirí Radio, trans. May 2010)

Therefore, the radio programs recognized the importance of teachers in educating their students on relevant topics and knowledge that are useful for them based on their ethnic membership and place of living. Kambirí, for instance, believes in the significance of offering education that is relevant to the particular context of the learners. Aura Dalia Caicedo Valencia states that education must be rooted on ethnic traditions. She argues that instead of teaching students that the letter *a* is a letter in the word *avión*, or plane, teachers in the Afro-Colombian region should focus on showing their students that *a* is also in the word *almeja*^{xxviii}, which is a popular food in the region (Author’s interview,

July 8th, 2011). Therefore, the radio programs emphasized those cultural values that are of great importance to the Afro-Colombian community and that reflect the reality, local traditions, and language of the population of the Pacific Region.

For instance, food is an important part of Afro-Colombian tradition. Not only do a lot number of women earn a living by cooking and selling traditional food, but the local gastronomy is considered a cultural patrimony of the people of the Pacific Region. Consequently, another set of programs broadcasted in July 2010 was dedicated to acknowledging the people in the community who participate in the promotion of the gastronomic cultural patrimony of Afro-Colombians, and who unfortunately are often invisible and underestimated in society. A statement made by one of the broadcasters said:

The cuisine of our Pacific coast is as diverse as its landscapes and its cultural manifestations. In addition to the fertility of the land, the rivers and seas are filled with food riches and the ancestral knowledge, love, and imagination of our black women. Women, who for centuries have made of our gastronomy a cultural value that has become part of Afro-Colombian people's resistance. Black women have kept alive this practice, and with it, this cultural legacy that remains alive and satisfies us all^{xxix} (Kambirí Radio, trans. July 2010).

The gastronomy of the Pacific Region is also a source of pride for its population. Traditional food is another mechanism to resisting cultural assimilation, and therefore was celebrated and recognized in the programs “Matrons of Flavor” broadcasted in July 2010. The program invited women from the community, who make a living cooking traditional food, to share their experiences in their profession. Despite being invisible and not valued in society, these women were honored in the radio programs for contributing

to maintaining the culinary richness of Buenaventura, and of the Afro-Colombian people in the Pacific Region.

A woman such as Doña Chenchá, interviewee of Kambirí, has been cooking traditional food for more than 30 years. Doña Chenchá states that lack of financial resources and high costs of raw food have impacted the profitability of her small business. Nonetheless, Doña Chenchá does not relinquish and continues cooking because doing so is a ritual of love for her. According to the announcers:

The “Matrons of Flavor” offer an unlimited number of dishes that are not only gourmet recipes, but are part of a cultural legacy that continues to be transmitted from generation to generation. A cultural legacy that carries secrets, prayers, love, care, and the imagination of every woman. Women whose emotions lead them to find new shapes, colors and smells to the taste. They find new ways to spice up the love for their family and community. Black women, who with their ancestral knowledge are part of who we are and continue to weave the history of our region and our country with the magic of their flavor.^{xxx} (Kambirí Radio, trans. July 2010).

Although women are often recognized for their social roles in the promotion of culture, men also contribute to its reproduction in everyday chores such as mining or fishing, as well as cultural manifestations such as dancing, writing literature, creating and narrating oral stories, and singing. Nonetheless, Emiliana Bernard, regional coordinator for Kambirí, claims that the role of black women from the Pacific Region in promoting culture is more evident, as they accomplish triple responsibilities in their societies: they have a domestic role within their families, a responsibility with their extended family or community, and a spiritual and religious role in their society (Author’s interview, July

25th, 2011). Women then are constantly flowing between these roles and recreating culture in each one of these spaces.

In addition to their domestic sphere, women have a social responsibility within their communities. In community events, each woman takes a specific role. In funerals, for example, some women sing, others decorate the house of the deceased person, others bathe the body, and others simply pray. Nonetheless, the religious act has an important meaning as it connects them with their community and allows them to strengthen their social networks. For Afro-Colombian individuals, in particular, their community becomes their extended family. In this type of social networks, the involvement of the general community in events such as funerals, weddings, and baptisms gains meaning and importance.

Also, women accomplish a social role while participating in town meetings, or similar gatherings in which people talk about specific topics of interest to the community. Emiliana Bernard states that women in the Pacific Region easily flow among their roles and take high responsibility and commitment when carrying out each one of them. However, she argues that these spaces are limited as they do not encourage women to transcend and get involved in political participation or to discuss about their rights (Author's interview, July 25th, 2011). Therefore, Kambirí has worked eagerly towards the promotion and creation of women's organizations in which its members have the possibility to freely discuss politics, as well as their rights as Afro-Colombian women. In these spaces, women express their feelings, concerns, and offer solutions to personal or community problems.

In addition to entertaining and promoting Afro-Colombian identity, the objective of the radio programs created by Kambirí was to make visible the contributions of women to society, while conveying a human rights message and promoting women's organization. Also, it intended to show the capacity of women to make their own decisions in the domestic sphere, as well as to participate and contribute in deciding social, political, and economic issues that impact their lives. Kambirí believes in the vindication of those rights that women and Afro-Colombians have been denied historically, in particular, the rights that secure the dignity, identity, and territory of black Colombians.

When Afro-Colombians speak of the promotion of ethnic and cultural identity, they also refer to the right to a physical space, or territory. For Aura Dalia Caicedo Valencia, it is impossible to live and recreate culture without having a specific geopolitical space for people to navigate and live (Author's interview, July 8th, 2011). Therefore, the right to ethnic and cultural identity is also linked to the right to have a territory free from violence and private interests that take away natural resources and cause forced displacement, poverty, and death in the local population.

For women, specifically, territory is that space where they experience multiple social roles. It is the place in which they carry out their domestic chores, recreate their culture, and in which they build relationships with others. The river, in particular, is where women meet to converse while they wash and iron their clothes. For example, women discuss what they learned the day before in the Kambirí local meeting, or in the Kambirí radio programs, while sharing and recreating the acquired knowledge with other women in their community (Emiliana Bernard, Author's interview, July 25th, 2011).

Therefore, the territory is that place that reinforces the identity of women and the space in which they participate in social, political, and economic affairs.

Kambirí works to bring realization to women that their everyday chores and their way of life is part of their ethnic and cultural identity and their rights. Afro-Colombian women without territory are women whose hopes and aspirations are destroyed.

Therefore, the role of social organizations in assisting displaced populations in large cities is fundamental to bringing them back to life, and motivating them to organize and actively participate in those processes that aim at restoring justice in Colombia.

Furthermore, the promotion of culture is also important as it is a mechanism to deter violence. For instance, Emperatriz Arango argues that the local population of the Pacific Region believes that the land used to harvest plants, for example, is territory that is taken away from the conflict. Similarly, when people plant *chonta*- a traditional crop in the region- used to make *marimbas*- a traditional musical instrument- and motivate the youth to learn how to play this instrument, they are combating violence (Author's interview, July 21st, 2011).

In the radio programs created in Buenaventura, the importance of promoting youth's adoption of traditional cultural activities was reinforced. For instance, in a program dedicated to the promotion of traditional music of the Pacific Region, a broadcaster stated:

By promoting culture, we are also making a contribution to the peace project. Because when a young person or an adult takes a musical instrument, sings a few notes, or writes a poem, we are preventing that he or she joins other processes, ones which are not very good to our own society. Therefore, culture is a positive contribution our societies.^{xxxii} (Kambirí Radio, trans. May 2010)

Through the radio programs, Kambirí women translated everyday customs of the local population into a human rights conversation. The programs' purpose is using local realities to motivate the community to analyze situations that impact their life, find solutions or ways to transform this problematic, and apply the acquired knowledge to change the status quo. For instance, the first program of Kambirí broadcasted in May 2010, was dedicated to International Workers' Day. After sharing a historical introduction about the origin of the labor rights movement in the world, along with its accomplishments, the broadcasters focused their attention to the national and local context. The announcers provided a critical view of the large number of informal, non-contractual forms of labor that exist in Colombia, and stated that particularly women lack legal support or unions that guarantee that their labor rights are respected. An example provided are those women who prepare and sell traditional food in the community markets, but do not have access to health insurance, pensions, or unemployment benefits.

Therefore, women are the ones more vulnerable to be victims of labor violations. Nonetheless, in this program the contributions of women to the worldwide movements for the promotion and defense of the human rights of every individual were recognized. Although the struggle and recognition of rights have often been attributed to men, the announcers stated that women have also contributed and played a fundamental role in every human rights movement:

Women have always been present at these vindication parties, and today we cannot speak about leadership, or development, without talking about women. This is true even in countries like ours, where women generally are the ones that take responsibility for their homes. The image of a female head of household stands strongly in our society, but from the vital force that characterizes them, our

women move quietly and strongly against a world that attempts to make them invisible and discriminates against them, but that also gives them the force to fight against injustice^{xxxii}. (Kambirí Radio, trans. May 2010)

In a future program broadcasted in July 2010, the hard work and sacrifice of domestic workers were honored while also recognizing the labor violations they suffer. In Colombia, a large number of young rural women abandon their homes and migrate to the cities to find work as domestic help, with the hope to achieve a better quality of life. However, these women find disappointment when they realize that the work as domestic workers is highly undervalued and that their labor rights are often violated. Many families abuse the hours of work permitted for any domestic worker, deny time-off requests, and underpay their employees.

Through four interviews with various domestic workers of Buenaventura, the announcers presented some of the sacrifices these women have to experience in order to earn an income to maintain their families. Most women who work in domestic service are single mothers who do not have the possibility to earn the necessary education to seek better quality and better paying jobs. For instance, one broadcaster argued, referring to domestic service jobs, that “it is an occupation that occupies most of the time of women and that is poorly paid. Therefore, it does not allow women to access educational spaces that would provide a better future for them, and a job that is more dignified”^{xxxiii} (Kambirí Radio, trans. May 2010).

Ana Milena Riasco, one of the women interviewed in this radio program, is 15 years old. Despite the fact that she is three years under the minimum legal age to work, Ana Milena migrated to Buenaventura at the age of 10 and has been working as a

domestic worker since then. Poverty and lack of education are the main reasons why she, as well as other women, decided to leave their hometowns to find employment in the main cities. Unfortunately, upon arrival these women find that their opportunities to progress, gain education, and receive decent treatment in their places of employment are limited. Therefore, the broadcasters emphasized that there are legal options for this women if they feel that they are being exploited, or if their rights are violated.

In addition to the violation of labor rights, which are a prominent social problematic in the Pacific Region, domestic violence is another theme that impacts often and negatively the women of Buenaventura. For this reason, a radio program broadcasted in August 2010 was dedicated to this discussion. To introduce the topic, an announcer claimed:

Violence against women brings disastrous consequences that have not been taken into account in terms of social, cultural, and even historical development. According to the UN, violence against women is a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights. It causes unbearable misery, loss of lives, and leaves countless women living in pain and fear in every country in the world. It harms families for generations, impoverishes communities and reinforces other forms of violence in society. Violence against women prevents them from achieving their full realization, restricts economic growth, and hinders development." (Kambirí Radio, trans. July 2010)

The broadcasters presented the different types of domestic violence and statistics of this crime in Colombia and the rest of Latin America. As an expert in the topic, the director of the local women's organization FundeMujer, Mercedes Segura, was invited to share her knowledge with the audience. In the program, she argues that the causes of domestic violence are related to chauvinistic and patriarchal beliefs in the Colombian

society. In terms of the local reality, Mercedes Segura states that Afro-Colombian women are specifically vulnerable to domestic violence due to the triple discrimination that they suffer. Women are discriminated for being women, for being black, and for being poor. To conclude the program, listeners were invited to approach FundeMujer if they have suffered from domestic violence in the present or in the past. The right to a life with dignity was reinforced, and consequently, women are encouraged to come forward and denounce physical and psychological abuses.

And the importance of stopping domestic violence is also related to its social consequences for other family members, such as children. Families are the nuclear center of society; building a better future for the next generations also depends on the quality of life children receive in present day. In two programs dedicated to exploring their rights, the history of the human rights of children was presented, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child by UNICEF was comprehensively explained. In addition, in the voices of a number of children, each one of their rights stated by UNICEF was communicated to the audience. To support this background, the announcers played short dramatizations, poems, and traditional children games in the Pacific Region. With local music and children's voices to complement and support the information, the programs portrayed the importance of raising fulfilled children, despite the marginalization and lack of development projects targeted towards the children of the Pacific Region of Colombia.

Specifically, throughout the programs it was argued that children in Colombia are the most vulnerable members of society. Due to the high levels of poverty some children do not attend school, are forced to work by their parents, and in some cases, become

homeless living in the streets. In the context of the armed conflict, many children lose their parents to violence, are abandoned, or forced to enroll in militant groups. Furthermore, girls suffer more discrimination than boys as a result of chauvinistic stereotypes that continue to exist in Colombian society. Therefore, the programs reinforced the importance of protecting children, defending their rights, and treating boys and girls in equal conditions, because they are the future of the society.

Emiliana Bernard, who was interviewed for Mother's Day, asks mothers to start participating in those political, social, and economic processes to vindicate their rights and guarantee a better future for their children. Political Participation is the vehicle to ensure women's inclusion in society, and an effective mechanism to position themselves as decision makers in their communities, and at a regional and national level. When asked about the role of mother's today in society, Emiliana Bernard states that women must question themselves:

How can I be an active person, based on this social restoration process we have to undertake? I cannot be a silent woman, who holds, who observes, and says nothing. I must have a leading role in my community if I want save my family first, and society second. We cannot be spectators of suicide, disappearance, or abuse of our sons and daughters. What can do to build wealth for my Pacific Region? What is my social role as a mother, as an educator, as a friend, as a lover, as a grandmother? What I can do from this perspective? And the answer is very clear, I have to save society. I am part of society. My daughters are part of society. My children are part of society. I must act. In these times of conflict, of violence, of abuse, we must be protagonists of our own development. And hopefully, women understand that our role is not in the house cleaning. Our role is outdoors, in public spaces, in political participation. In making decisions and being linked to all development processes.^{xxxiv} (Kambirí Radio, trans. May 2010)

The topic of women's participation in the public sphere is important for Kambirí, as well as for women such as Antonia Ramirez Mosquera and Rosa Helena Ruiz Echeverri, who participate in Kambirí radio programs in 2011 in the state of Chocó. Kambirí believes that women must be aware of their right to participate in social, political and economic processes that take place in their community. It also has confidence that radio is that tool that could lead many women to organize in order to claim and protect their rights. Particularly, the radio programs are intended to generate dialogue and discussion and lead women to take action and organize with others for a specific objective.

Kambirí radio also inspired the audience to find meaning in their lives and work for their goals, despite the high conflict and poverty levels of the region. Three radio programs broadcasted in August 2010 motivated the audience to create a life project and provided the tools to maintain and accomplish each person's goals, despite potential difficulties. The first program of this series highlighted the importance of defining personal objectives. "This means each person must take responsibility in building his or her future"^{xxxv} (Kambirí Radio, trans. September 2010). The second and third programs discussed how to maintain those goals despite the difficulties one may encounter. For example, one announcer stated:

We cannot ignore that we live in a capitalist country, which means that value is assigned to the economy. But money must be a means, not an end. We must find alternatives, not relinquish on the same limitations our parents faced. Culturally, our beliefs and habits must be present when creating a life plan. Nonetheless, it is a risk that our society is in conflict since the groups outside the law divert young people's ideals. Conflict has a great impact, as it touches the personality of human

beings. But with the support of our parents and people around us, we can overcome it and achieve our dreams^{xxxvi}. (Kambirí Radio, trans. September 2010).

Throughout the programs, Kambirí was presented to the audience as an organization that helps women build their future, and contribute to society. It was also portrayed as an organization that supports and encourages those organizational processes Afro-Colombian women undertake around the country. The broadcasters aimed at showing how rewarding and fulfilling is being organized, and participating in social, political, economic affairs. For instance, the role of Kambirí in promoting the cultural identity and rights of Afro-Colombians was highlighted in one of the programs aired:

Kambirí means open words, welcome to my home, we hug you; It is an African word. It is an autonomous, organizational process, for identity and culture, that promotes the organization, participation, and development of Afro-Colombian women through the permanent communication, dissemination and protection of their rights based on the principles of solidarity and equity. We work for the vindication of our ethnic, territorial, political, social, cultural and economic rights. This network has been a leader in finding solutions to social, economic and political problems.^{xxxvii}. (Kambirí Radio, trans. September 2010)

As Aura Dalia Caicedo Valencia argues, Kambirí has been strengthened through Radio Ciudadanas. It has been an opportunity for the organization to present itself to the community through radio, to become more visible, and to portray an encouraging and hopeful future to the people of Buenaventura (Author's interview, July 8th, 2011). But most importantly, Radios Ciudadanas became a medium to show the hidden life of some brave people in the community who contribute to the construction of a better society. It was also a mechanism to present the history and social realities of the local population.

Through the use of colloquial language, Radios Ciudadanas conveyed a human rights message while creating an implicit fraternal relationship between the broadcaster and the listener.

Let's thank God for another day of love, one more chance to enjoy life, and for being able to taste the sweet company of our loved ones. We also want to thank our God, Mother and Father, our ancestors for allowing us to complete this Radios Ciudadanas project in a successful manner. A place where we were able to do something for the community and where we make visible the work of men and women, who despite being the essence of our history have not been recognized. A place in which our cultural identity was the star and the desire to know and recognize each other as family and hold our hands was our goal^{xxxviii}. (Kambirí Radio, trans. September 2010)

Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations

The word Kambirí, which means “Let me be part of this Family,” accurately states the mission and objective of La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí. This organization works to unite Afro-Colombian women across the country for the vindication of their rights, and to create a large family of organized women. Since the year 2000, Kambirí provides an autonomous space for women to redefine and recreate their culture, as well as to inform and motivate them to take action to claim and protect their rights.

Kambirí’s radio programs provided a space of entertainment as well as Human Rights Education, not only for women but also for the general community of Buenaventura. Through the promotion of Afro-Colombian cultural identity, the creators of this radio project were able to convey human rights messages through the use of local realities of the population and colloquial language and expressions. The programs, which were produced based on complete and detailed analyses of the interests and needs of the community, were created to offer the people of Buenaventura different voices in their local radio station, *Chimia Estereo*. Also, the programs presented the voices of women members of La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí, who offered a gender and ethnic perspective to the topics introduced in the broadcastings.

To create these programs, the producers convened a variety of experts and social organizations in the community to determine the topics that were going to be discussed in each program. In addition, a diversity of formats such as interviews, short dramatizations, music, myths, and legends were introduced to support the theoretical content of the

programs. Through community participation and creative production formats, the programs aimed to engage the listeners and develop audience loyalty.

The promotion of ethnic and cultural identity of the Afro-Colombian population was an objective of Kambirí radio programs. Since 1991, when the Constitution recognized Colombia as a multi-ethnic country, a large number of organizations have emerged to promote the cultural as well as social, political, and economic rights Afro-Colombians. In fact, the black population of the Pacific Region in Colombia gained special rights, such as collective territorial concessions, when they were legally recognized as an ethnic group.

Therefore, the promotion of cultural identity of Afro-Colombians is in itself the right of this ethnic group to live and recreate their culture in a specific territory free from violence or discrimination. The Pacific Region is that territory in which a large number of Afro-Colombians experience culture. Nonetheless, this area has been tainted with armed conflict, forced displacement, assassinations, disintegration of families and social networks, along with poverty and misery. But despite the negative scenario, the radio programs represented the voice of a brave group of women who, critically analyzing the social problematic of the region, hoped to inspire analysis and evaluation in the local audience.

The radio programs created by Kambirí also focused on the role women play in the redefinition of what it means Afro-Colombian and promoting respect of the traditional culture Afro-Colombians inherited from their African ancestors. Women are not only the matriarchs in Afro-Colombian society, but they are also the main promoters of culture. This emphasis is important, taking into consideration that women are easily

able to communicate with others in their society, raise their children, and organize in times of conflict. Therefore, through the promotion of culture, Kambirí and the radio programs informed women about their rights and promoted their participation in the construction of a better society.

Furthermore, the radio programs also introduced to the listeners of Buenaventura universal concepts of human rights through the use of local realities and language. In the programs, topics such as lack of labor rights, children's rights or domestic violence were first introduced in the context of international law through the presentation of international declarations and global human rights movements. These topics, then, were related to the local social problematic of the Buenaventura and shared from the perspective and life experiences of people from the community. Presenting the hidden stories of those living and experiencing human rights violations was a compelling way to portray the need to claim their rights as Afro-Colombian women, as well as to respect the rights of others.

Although the radio programs were created by a group of women without previous experience in the field of radio, or without any particular social, political or economic interests, the broadcastings presented rich content and high production quality. Despite the fact that audience measures were not available, the success of the radio programs was evident in the prolongation of the radio contract to the committee of Buenaventura to the year 2011. The Ministry of Culture, which usually supports financially each radio project for a maximum of 18 weeks, extended the provision of financial resources to this committee for one more year. In addition, it invited the radio committee of Buenaventura to create a national radio program in the topic of gender and ethnic identity of Afro-

Colombian women. This program was broadcasted in a national production album to portray the rich diversity of the Radios Ciudadanas Projects across the country.

In addition, lack of previous radio experience did not prevent the local committee from producing radio programs that were highly informational and creative. As Emiliana Bernard argues, an introduction on how to gather information, as well as to present their ideas in an organized manner, was sufficient to lead these women towards the creation of radio programs with rich content and creativity. Their imagination, everyday traditions, concerns, and culture were evident in the information presented and the methodology used to deliver their message (Author's interview, July 25th, 2011). This led them to create scripts in the form of poetry or to dramatize everyday situations, adding creativity to the broadcastings.

Moreover, one of the most important accomplishments of Kambirí radio was to successfully be able to integrate the local population, not only in defining the topics of the programs, but also in the radio programs themselves. Community participation, fundamental for the success of radio as a mechanism for education, was present through an extended committee of social organizations and individuals who contributed to the definition of thematic agendas based on the needs of the people of Buenaventura. Likewise, people from the community were invited to participate in the programs by offering interviews. These people were honored and celebrated for their contributions to society.

Furthermore, La Red Nacional de Mujeres Afrocolombianas, Kambirí, was strengthened as it was presented to the community as an organization that aims to inform about and claim the rights of Afro-Colombian women. The content of the Radio

programs, and each woman who spoke through the microphone, successfully represented the mission of Kambirí and the power of the oral tradition of the people from the Pacific Region. In addition, the fraternal messages and colloquial language in which the programs were delivered leads me to conclude that a connection was created between the broadcaster and the audience. This is important in order to send a meaningful and lasting message to each individual who listens to the programs.

Although radio does not always allow for two-way communication between the broadcaster and the listener, the programs' content and mechanisms employed to deliver the information were designed to generate analyses and dialogue in the audience. As Singhal and Rogers (1999) argue, social learning through peer interaction generates “conversations (that) can produce a social learning environment in which participants consider options for change” (p.175) initiating a process of empowerment. In addition, the use of cultural language and colloquial terminology familiar to the audience triggers the development of an imaginary relationship between the parties. This relationship potentially leads the listener to recognize and understand the message that is conveyed and to perceive the broadcaster as a counselor (Singhal and Rogers, 1999).

The challenge of organizations such as Kambirí, working in the promotion of Afro-Colombian cultural identity, is ensuring that new generations assimilate and participate in the recreation of traditional culture. Therefore, the role of the Ministry of Culture in the maintenance of a multi-ethnic nation is fundamental for the subsistence of the larger Afro-Colombian social movement, which has achieved political, territorial and economic rights through the “right to difference” of Afro-Colombians.

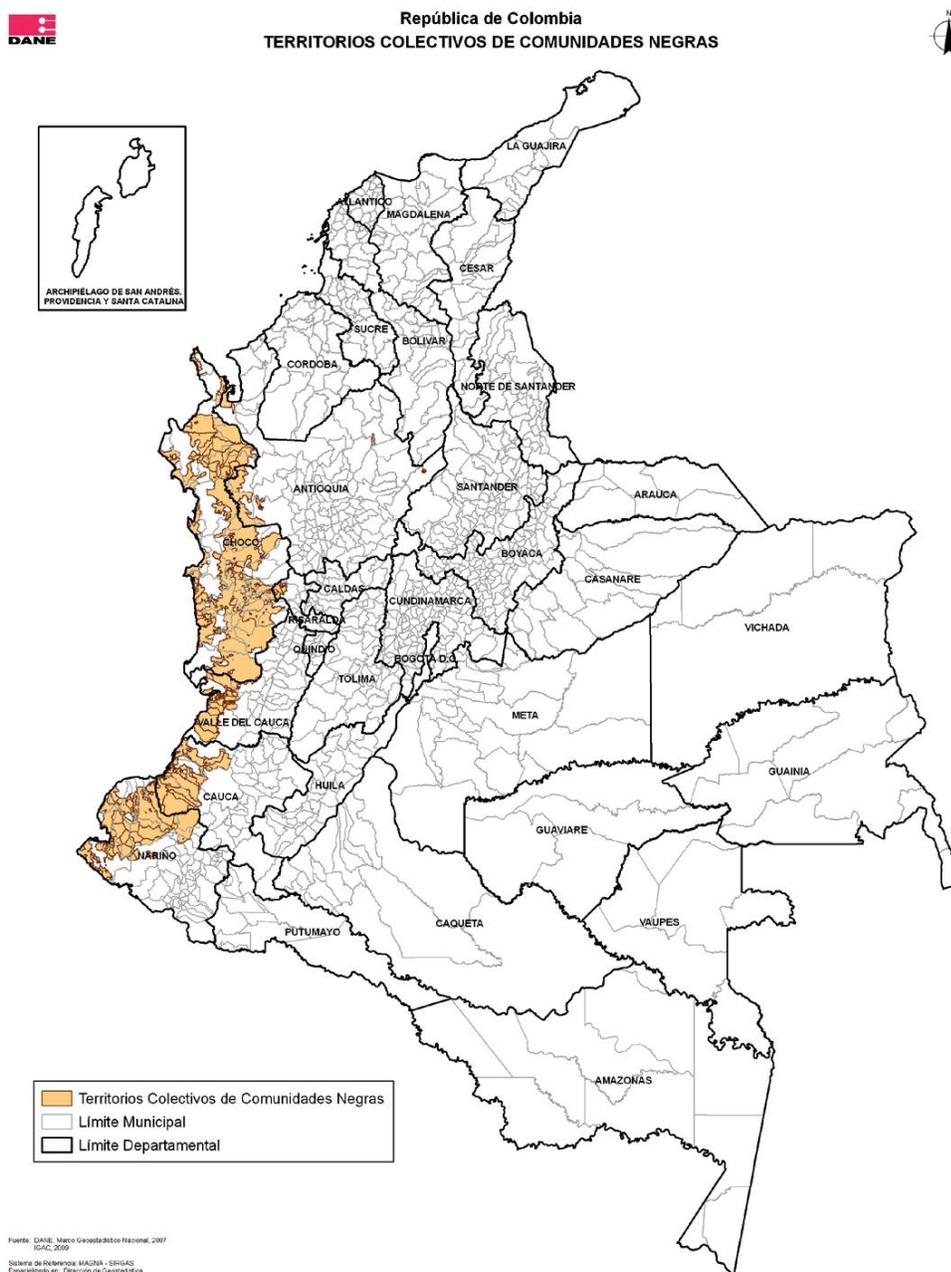
Future research of the impact of the Kambirí radio programs in Buenaventura and the other three participant cities is necessary and relevant for this organization, for the national government including the Ministry of Culture, as well as human rights organizations. As the Colombian people aspire to find peace, all efforts to educate in and promote human rights deserve unique attention. Overall, I hope this research project is relevant to those educators around the world seeking innovating and effective ways to impart Human Rights Education.

Finally, I recommend that scholars study the impact of the radio programs in the city of Buenaventura, as well as in other participant cities. An impact study can provide clear and concise suggestions for improvement of the programs, and be useful for human rights educators interested in using radio as a tool for education and empowerment. Specifically, a study that analyses the levels of empowerment achieved in the target audience would be of great support to the Ministry of Culture as the number of radio stations enrolled in this program continues to increase. Women's organizations that intend to foster social change and improve the quality of life of women across the world would also benefit from a study that concludes how women can be empowered through community radio.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Afro-Colombian Collective Territories (Marked in yellow)



Source: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Statistics (DANE)

Appendix 2

Topics of the radio programs I listened and analyzed.

1. May 1st-International Worker's Day
2. International Mother's Day
3. Children: The future of our world
4. Commemoration of Teachers Day 1
5. Commemoration of Teachers Day 2
6. Our oral Tradition: An encounter with an ancestors 1
7. Our oral Tradition: An encounter with an ancestors 2
8. Music of the Pacific 1
9. Music of the Pacific 2
10. Music of the Pacific 3
11. Portraits of Identity: Musicians and Poets
12. Celebration of Buenaventura: 470 years
13. Youth in Culture
14. Praying to the Virgen del Carmen
15. Everyday Profiles: Domestic Service
16. Everyday Profiles: Matrons of Flavor
17. Teenage aggressiveness
18. Family Violence: What is it?
19. Family Violence: Violence against women
20. Family Violence: Consequence in Children
21. Teenagers
22. Who are the youth from today?
23. Youth and Sexuality
24. Life Project: The ideal road to achieve your dreams
25. Life Project: How to maintain it?
26. Life Project: A road full of hopes, but also conflicts
27. Family: The place where society begins
28. No more violence against women!
29. Final Program - Acknowledgements
30. Every end, is a new beginning
31. National Program: When the drums call us.

Appendix 3

Interview Questions

General Questions.

1. Where are you from originally and where do you currently live?
2. When did you become a member of Kambirí? And why did you decide to join this organization?
3. Specifically, why does Kambirí choose to work with Afro-Colombian women?
4. The network has approximately 7,500 women members in Colombia, what percentage of women are living in rural, and how many in urban areas?
5. What is the biggest area of impact of Kambirí?
6. What are the major challenges the organization faces?

Human Rights Education.

7. Why does Kambirí decide to impart Human Rights Education?
8. What human rights are the most important to Kambirí?
9. How does Kambirí integrate cultural identity in Human Rights Education?
10. From your perspective, what is the impact of human rights training on women?
11. How does the organization empower women, and how does it motivate them to move from theoretical learning to practice? Please provide examples.

Cultural Identity.

12. What pedagogical tools does Kambirí use to reinforce the cultural identity of Afro-Colombian women?
13. The territory is central to the Colombian Pacific communities; based on your experience do you think that culture influences the attachment to territory?
14. What cultural aspects manifest this attachment?
15. Are women the main promoters of culture and why?
16. What are the main values, as well as roles, of Afro-Colombian women?

Radio Programs.

17. When and where did Kambirí radio programs begin?
18. Who is the audience interested in hearing Kambirí programs?
19. Do measurements of audience exist?
20. How is radio used as a medium for Human Rights Education?
21. What outstanding topics are covered in the radio programs?
22. Who is the audience?

23. Can you provide examples of the impact of the radio programs in the communities?
24. What were the major successes and challenges of the radio programs?
25. What are the future plans for this radio project?

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NOTES:

ⁱ The term Afro-Colombian is used frequently in to refer to the African descent population, as well as denominations such as black communities or population, and Afro-descendants.

ⁱⁱ Although the national paramilitary groups demobilized in 2005, there continues to be smaller fractions of this right wing actor operating in Colombia.

ⁱⁱⁱ Although there were additional programs created and broadcasted by Kambirí, I had access to 31 of them. The remaining ones aired live, and therefore, there are not recordings available.

^{iv} According to the National Administration Department of Statistics (DANE) at http://www.dane.gov.co/files/censo2005/etnia/sys/visibilidad_estadistica_etnicos.pdf

^v Text originally in Spanish reads: “Radios Ciudadanas: Un espacio para la Democracia en Sintonía con la diversidad.”

^{vi} Interview was conducted originally in Spanish: “Haciendo un énfasis claro en diversidad, no solo en colores de piel sino en formas de ver la vida, forma de sentir la vida de las poblaciones que se vinculan a nivel local en las producciones De Radios Ciudadanas.”

^{vii} Mission Statement of the organization at: <http://redmujerafro.tripod.com/id1.html>

^{viii} Interview was conducted originally in Spanish: “Hemos decidido que cada territorio que vamos con la red, empiece con un proceso de escuela porque es s hermoso vivirla. Todas las que entren, deben empezar por el proceso de escuela. Nosotros podríamos tener mucha más gente afiliada, pero no es solo cuestión de número, queremos que pasen por un proceso de formación en escuela y una vez finalizan, las mujeres quedan afiliadas a alguna de las organizaciones.”

^{ix} Original text in Spanish reads “Esto ha llevado a que se hable de confinamiento y desplazamiento interno.”

^x According to the National Administration Department of Statistics (DANE) at <http://www.dane.gov.co/files/censo2005/perfiles/valle/buenaventura.pdf>

^{xi} According to the National Administration Department of Statistics (DANE) at http://www.dane.gov.co/files/censo2005/etnia/sys/visibilidad_estadistica_etnicos.pdf

^{xii} In this quote the Manyozo explains Adolfo Gumucio’s argument, 2001.

^{xiii} Original text in Spanish reads: “El rico complejo legado cultural de origen africano de las gentes del litoral Pacífico aflora en diversos aspectos de la vida cotidiana; así, cantos, actitudes, ritos, danzas, creencias, tradiciones, se nutren en esa memoria. Con estos elementos se organiza el quehacer existencial y se organizan comportamientos y sistemas de socialización que han permitido a los afro-colombianos sobrevivir a las duras condiciones de esclavitud y de la marginalización.”

^{xiv} Original text in Spanish reads: “La tradición oral como portadora de historia local, de morales y reglas sociales y como trasmisión de una visión territorial y espacial adquiere un significado en la lucha por el reconocimiento de los derechos territoriales y culturales de las comunidades afrocolombianas. Más que una expresión abstracta, la tradición oral viene a jugar un papel activo en el proceso de concientización de las comunidades rurales del Pacífico Colombiano.”

^{xv} Original text in Spanish reads: “La mujer negra sigue encarnando no solo la alteridad, sino una alteridad múltiple como mujer, negra y esclava.”

^{xvi} Original text in Spanish reads: “Así, en contraste relativo con las mujeres blancas o mestizas, la mujer negra personifica o es representada como de una naturaleza ambivalente, indescifrable, misteriosa, simultáneamente seductora e inquietante tanto para la imaginación masculina como para la femenina.”

^{xvii} Original text in Spanish reads: “La ausencia notoria de reflexiones escritas acerca de la mujer negra, de su identidad, y de su experiencia, así como el carácter disperso, puntual, sucinto y fragmentario de las fuentes históricas, constituyen una enorme limitación para documentar la pluralidad de sujetos y las múltiples historias de las mujeres negras, ya que no es posible hablar de una sola historia, ni de la mujer negra como identidad esencial.”

^{xviii} Original text in Spanish reads: “Es fácil imaginar el protagonismo femenino en la preservación de la memoria colectiva, en la construcción de la comunidad a través de reproducción de la vida religiosa, lúdica y espiritual, en su papel como facilitadora de los ritos de iniciación y tránsito hacia la muerte, pero documentarlo es más complicado.”

^{xix} Although El Proceso de Comunidades Negras (Black Women Process) understood the importance of dealing with gender rights, Kiran Asher argues that there was tension between the Black Social Movements and Organizations working more specifically on women’s rights.

^{xx} Original text in Spanish reads: “Nuestra sociedad no comprende que la mujer negra es, en sí misma, política. Su cuerpo representa territorialidad. Es imposible mirar a una mujer negra en las grandes ciudades sin que su imagen no nos evoque algo de su ancestralidad. La mujer afrocolombiana, especialmente la campesina, ejerce su poder político en su

quehacer cotidiano. Es un símbolo de nuestra cultura. Desde su espacio propende y busca el bienestar de su familia y de su cotidianidad.”

^{xxi} Original text in Spanish reads: “En Kambirí el tema de la identidad cultural lo utilizamos dentro del proceso de formación, o sea toda la herencia cultural de las mujeres entra en el proceso de formación, no podemos concebir las mujeres negras sin todo ese bagaje de cultura que tienen.”

^{xxii} Original podcast in Spanish: “En América, y en otros lugares del mundo como en África, donde sus gentes durante mucho tiempo no tuvieron acceso a la escritura, muchas de la sabiduría permanecieron en memoria y se han expresado en mitos, cuentos y cantos. O en narraciones épicas. También en rituales festivos, en fiestas sagradas. Y como en África, seguramente también en los toques y los silencios del tambor. O en los ritmos musicales de canoas y canaletes en aguas de ríos y mares. Y desde luego en el gesto, en la danza, y en la ética de vivir y de morir.”

^{xxiii} Original podcast in Spanish: “La música está inserta en la cotidianidad del pueblo afrocolombiano como una impronta, como una huella indeleble que le ha permitido a través de ella seguir transmitiendo de generación en generación no solo sus melodías sino un cúmulo de saberes ancestrales, que nos permite conocernos y reconocernos como parte de una étnica, y cultura inmensa que nos recuerda y mantiene viva nuestra ancestralidad.”

^{xxiv} Original podcast in Spanish says: “Las mujeres son protagonistas en este tipo de música, las mujeres son las que la llevan de tradición en tradición, de generación en generación. Los rituales, la marimba la poesía, los arrullos, el cununo, el guasa y los alaba. Son elementos que enriquecen nuestra cultura y hacen parte del legado de nuestros ancestros que sobrevivieron a la opresión, a la esclavitud y a la modernidad. Por ellos los denominamos como elementos de resistencia de nuestra identidad y que hoy en día también las mujeres que se dedican a este arte, a este, acto tan lindo tan hermoso como es acompañar a las personas en las fiestas, Como también en su última morada. Ellas trabajan de generación, y lo han recibido de sus abuelos y se lo llevan a sus nietos.”

^{xxv} Interview was conducted originally in Spanish: “Las mujeres somos predominantemente las principales transmisoras de todos los valores culturales de la comunidad negra. Es decir, en la mujer se sintetiza toda esa simbología del pueblo negro. Porque la mujer hace que perdure eso. La mujer es la que aglutina, en ella convergen, ella es la matrona. Ella es el eje articulador de nuestras familias.”

^{xxvi} Original podcast in Spanish says: “Mi madre me da la vida, mi padre me da el sustento, mi maestra de la escuela curtea mis sentimientos. A mi maestra querida que me da su ciencia, su cariño y su cuidado con infinita paciencia le ofrezco mi gratitud y mi cariño sincero, porque llena mi alma de noble conocimiento.”

^{xxvii} Original podcast in Spanish says: “Maestros y Maestras afrocolombianos quienes han sido un pieza clave en la transmisión de nuestros saberes ancestrales cuyo gran reto hoy es el abordaje de la diversidad étnica en nuestro país como horizonte de comprensión, divulgación y permanencia de nuestra identidad cultural. No por casualidad hoy el espacio educativo está siendo repensado desde diferentes categorías como multiculturalidad, interculturalidad, inclusión, articulación, diferencia, equidad y perspectiva de género.”

^{xxviii} Almeja translates as clam in English.

^{xxix} Original podcast in Spanish says: “La gastronomía de nuestro litoral pacífico es diversa como los son sus paisajes y sus manifestaciones culturales. Porque además de la fertilidad de una tierra que produce mucho, de unos ríos y mares llenos de riquezas alimenticias, está el saber ancestral, el amor y la imaginación de nuestras mujeres negras, que son quienes desde siglos atrás hicieron de nuestra gastronomía un valor cultural que se convirtió en elemento de resistencia del pueblo afrocolombiano. Las mujeres negras han mantenido viva esta práctica y con ella todo el legado cultural que permanece vivo y que a todos nos satisface.”

^{xxx} Original podcast in Spanish says: “Una infinidad de platos típicos hacen parte no solo de un recetario gastronómico, sino hacen parte de todo un legado cultural que se sigue transmitiendo de generación en generación. Un legado cultural que se viste de secretos, de oraciones, de amor, de cuidados y de la imaginación de cada mujer que con su sentimiento va a encontrando nuevas formas, colores y olores al sabor. Van encontrando nuevas formas de sazonar el cariño y el amor por los suyos. Mujeres negras que con su saber ancestral hacen parte de lo que somos y siguen entretejiendo la historia de nuestra región y de nuestro país con la magia de su sazón.”

^{xxxii} Original podcast in Spanish says “Con esto también estamos haciendo un aporte al proyecto de paz. Porque cuando un joven o un adulto toma un instrumento musical, entona unas notas, escribe una letra de un poema, estamos evitando que se pueda vincular a otro tipo de procesos, no muy buenos no muy al adueño de nuestras sociedad, entonces eso un aporte a nuestras sociedades.”

^{xxxii} Original podcast in Spanish says “La mujer siempre ha estado presente en estas fiestas reivindicatorias y hoy no podemos hablar de liderazgo, o desarrollo sin hablar de la mujer. Y más aún en países como el nuestro donde en general la mujer es quien lleva o asume la responsabilidad de sus hogares. La imagen de madre cabeza de hogar sobresale en nuestra sociedad y desde la fuerza vital que las caracteriza nuestras mujeres avanzan silenciosamente y avasalladoramente contra un mundo que las invisibiliza y las discrimina, pero que a su vez la llena de fuerza para combatir contra la injusticia.”

^{xxxiii} Original podcast in Spanish says: “Es una labor que por disponer de casi todo el tiempo y de ser mal remunerado pues no le permite a estas mujeres acceder a espacios educativos que le permitan un futuro tener un trabajo mejor, más dignificado.”

^{xxxiv} Original podcast in Spanish says: “Como puedo ser yo una persona activa, dentro de este proceso de restauración social que tenemos que hacer. Yo no puedo ser la mujer silenciosa, que aguante, que observe y que no diga nada. Yo Debo tener un papel protagónico dentro de mi comunidad si quiero salvar primero a mi familia, segundo a la sociedad. No podemos ser espectadoras del suicidio, de la desaparición, del maltrato de los hijos y las hijas. Ósea, nosotras tenemos que decir, bueno yo tuve la oportunidad o no tuve la oportunidad de hacer muchas cosas, pero aquí estoy y aquí estoy participando. Que puedo hacer para construir un bienestar para mi región del pacífico. Cuál es mi función social como madre, como educadora, como amiga, como amante, como abuela. Que puedo yo hacer desde esta perspectiva. Y es que la respuesta es muy clara, tengo que salvar a la sociedad. Yo soy parte de la sociedad. Mis hijas son parte la sociedad. Mis hijos son parte de la sociedad. Debo actuar. En estas épocas de conflicto, de violencia de violaciones tenemos que ser las mujeres protagonistas de nuestro propio desarrollo. Y ojala! las mujeres entiendan que nuestro papel no está en la casa en hacer el aseo. Nuestro papel está afuera de la casa en los estamentos públicos, en la participación política. En tomar decisiones y en vincularnos a todos los procesos de desarrollo.”

^{xxxv} Original podcast in Spanish says: “Debemos tomar decisiones y labrar nuestro destino”.

^{xxxvi} Original podcast in Spanish says, “No podemos desconocer que vivimos en un país capitalista, lo que significa que se le da un valor a la economía. Pero el dinero debe ser un medio, no un fin. Hay que buscar alternativas, no quedarse en las limitaciones de los padres. En el aspecto cultural las creencias y hábitos deben estar presentes cuando se crea un proyecto de vida. Es un riesgo que la sociedad viva en conflicto. Ya que los grupos al margen de la ley desvían los ideales de los jóvenes. El conflicto afecta gravemente, ya que logra tocar la personalidad del ser humano. Pero con el acompañamiento de los padres y personas alrededor salimos adelante.”

^{xxxvii} Original podcast in Spanish says, “Kambiri quiere decir palabras abiertas, bienvenidos a mi casa, lo abrazamos, es una palabra africana. Es un proceso organizativo, autónomo, por identidad y cultura, que promueva la organización, participación, y desarrollo de la mujer afrocolombiana a través de la comunicación permanente, difusión y defensa de sus derechos basados en los principios de solidaridad y equidad. Trabajamos por la reivindicación de nuestros derechos étnicos, territoriales, políticos, sociales, culturales y económicos. La red ha sido líder en las pautas de solución para problemas sociales, económicos y políticos.”

^{xxxviii} Original podcast in Spanish says “Demole gracias a Dios por un día más de amor, por una oportunidad mas de disfrutar de la vida, y sabores de la dulzura de la compañía de nuestros seres queridos. También queremos agradecerle a nuestro Dios, Madre y padre, a nuestros orichas, a nuestros ancestros y ancestras el habernos permitido realizar este proyecto de Radios Ciudadanas espacios para la democracia de una manera exitosa. Un espacio donde logramos hacer cosas por la comunidad. Donde visibilizamos el trabajo de hombres y mujeres que a pesar de ser la esencia de la historia nuestra no han sido valorados. Un espacio donde nuestra identidad cultural fue la protagonista y donde las ganas de conocer y reconocernos como una misma familia que se fraterniza, que se extiende la mano, fue nuestro objetivo.”