

Thinking about the autonomy of rural women: the case of Guapi, Cauca¹

Words have meanings, but some
words also produce 'feeling'.

The word 'community' is one of them, as we have the feeling that
community is always a good thing (Bauman, 2006, p.7).

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Introduction

One of the present challenges for the application of a gender equity approach is the concept of autonomy; This is understood as, "the ability of people to make free and informed decisions about their lives, in order to be and do based on their own aspirations and desires in the historical context that makes them possible" (CEPAL, 2011), It is a fundamental factor to guarantee the exercise of their human rights in a context of full equality and in this sense a condition for overcoming gender injustices (Observatorio de Equidad de Género, 2019). Exercising autonomy is a fundamental element to guarantee the full exercise of human rights within a context of equality, since it contributes directly to overcoming gender injustices.

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Autonomy, in this sense, becomes a central element to achieve not only equality between the genders, but also and above all in a fundamental human right. Hence, it becomes almost a precondition for women to act as full subjects of development.

Although gender injustices are anchored to the symbolic and material universe of patriarchy towards women, we will never be able to universalize the experiences of women regarding this patriarchal structure. Consequently, we want to place autonomy not only as an indicator in the measurement of gender inequality, but also as a meter of our privileges as women compared to other women in the same male dominance. This last statement is of great importance, since it is precisely from this perspective that the struggle for women's liberation has given its best contributions and debates. Black and indigenous women since the 1970s have repeatedly pointed out the various oppressions, in addition to gender, that they also experience; exercised even by white women from the upper classes. Consequently, not discerning between gender, class and race relations is unthinkable today. Indeed, it is precisely at this intersection where autonomy comes to life. This is how, although some of the experiences of women can be profoundly close to and critical of the patriarchal model, their socio-cultural realities with respect to other women are distant and often misunderstood.

Within the framework of this commitment, we were invited to monitor the formulation process of the Public Policy on Gender Equality (PPEG) for Guapi, specifically in the design of the instrument for defining the baseline. We attended: Salomé Arias-Arévalo as part of the *Observatorio para la Equidad de las Mujeres* and Ana María Agredo as part of the Gender Studies Program of the *Universidad Icesi*. As a scenario prior to the design of the baseline instrument, we carried out a qualitative approach through five focus groups with women and men from the municipality of Guapi, Cauca. In this document we will focus on sharing the main findings on the ways of understanding autonomy in personal, family life and in the field of work of the women of Guapi.

One of the focuses of analysis in our field work was to trace the relationships between the experience of autonomy from the private and the use of time dedicated to care of the children, of the house, food, pleasure and leisure. In relation to autonomy within other spaces such as

economic or health, we inquire about the use and management of resources, income, quality of services, care, among others; in public, on the knowledge of their participation and leadership. The intention was also to trace these relationships, strengthening the socio-cultural specificities of the region, that is, recognizing that the reality of Guapi has the presence of Afro and indigenous communities in dispersed rural areas, which coexist in the same territory in the middle of a context of forced displacement, poverty, and corruption.

Regarding the geographical and sociodemographic characteristics, Guapi is located on the Pacific coast of the municipality of Cauca. It has approximately thirty thousand inhabitants and is made up of six community councils: Alto Guapi, Bajo Guapi, Napi, San Francisco, Guají, Chanzará and the area of the Gorgona and Gorgonilla National Natural Park. 60% of the population is located in urban areas, the remaining 40% in rural areas. 97% of the rural population is considered Afro-descendant (Jaramillo-Mejía, 2019). During our visit, we were in the Quiroga village, an area located in the Council of Guají; as well as in Temuei in the Council of Bajo Guapí; We visited the indigenous town hall of Bella Vista located in the Chanzará district and, finally, in the urban area of the municipality. In these territories we work with the indigenous and Afro-descendant population of the rural area and with central actors in the process of the Public Policy of Gender Equality for this municipality.

Thinking about the public policy of urban and rural women in Guapi undoubtedly made us reflect on what our place was as urban women who work for gender equality in a private and academic context, with respect to the fight for equality and autonomy of women in Guapi. We plan, then, for our arrival in the field, to be able to trace the exercise of autonomy from the aforementioned dimensions: (1) from the private, which constitutes traditional spaces of the practice of the concept, that is, understood as the time dedicated to care of the children, the house, food, pleasure and leisure; (2) economics understood as - health, use and management of resources, income, quality of services, care, among others; (3) finally, the dimension of politics in terms of spaces for participation and female leadership. Although we knew in advance that these spaces of autonomy have been approached mostly from an urban reading of women, we wanted to understand them from the socio-cultural vicissitudes of the region, that is, from all

those particularities and phenomena that, as we said before, they cross the south west of Colombia.

Theoretical boundaries: sex, intersectionality and autonomy

To think about the autonomy of women in a rural area, in the first instance, we must delimit the place of reflection from which we start. Talking about women and gender places us in theoretical discussions of several decades and with different edges. However, due to the purpose of this writing, we will focus on describing our theoretical bets for analysis. Regarding the above, it is worth clarifying that this section seeks to describe our positions of observation to interpret the lives of women in Guapi in terms of their autonomy. In this sense, the categories that we will describe below –gender, sex, intersectionality and autonomy– were constructed with the intention that they would serve as a kind of observation lens. This in order to problematize the perceptions of women in Guapi regarding their autonomy. In this way, without subordinating theory to empirical data, or vice versa (Rappaport, 2007), we identify the richness of our field work to expand and debate our personal ways of theorizing gender from the places of subordination and emancipation of women.

Now, getting into the subject, we will start with the notions of sex and gender. Regarding these two terms, we take an anti-essentialist position. In other words, we recognize the constructed character of the category of sex and its interrelation with gender. In this order of ideas, we start from the premise raised by Anne Fausto-Sterling (2006) in her work *Cuerpos Sexuados*. In this writing she describes the social construction of sex and its relationship with the ways of constructing knowledge. Regarding this idea that the author gives us, we focus on how in our societies the binary sexual division of reality - between men and women - is taken as natural under the idea of objectivity of biological arguments. In Fausto-Sterling's words:

The sex of a body is simply too complex. There is no black or white, but degrees of difference (...). One of the main theses of this book is that labeling someone as male or female is a social decision. Scientific knowledge can assist us in this decision, but only our conception of gender, and not science, can define our sex.

Furthermore, our conception of gender affects the knowledge about sex produced by scientists in the first instance (Sterling, 2006; p. 17).

Taking the above into account, when we think of women, we are thinking of a constructed category and, consequently, we are challenging the naturalized view of them. Therefore, it is our purpose to highlight the particularities of women in Guapi. However, up to this point we have not addressed one of the central elements regarding the problem of the naturalization of the sexes and gender, that is, power. In other words, we think that the relationships that are established between sex and gender, that is, how the notion of man or woman is enunciated and socially shaped at a given moment in history and cultures, is mediated largely because of power. In this sense, with regard to the notion of gender in particular and its relationship with power, we take the definition of Joan Scott (2008). Roughly speaking, this author defines gender as a primary stage where, in a symbolic way, power is distributed and articulated. Scott emphasizes the symbolic and constructed character of sexual difference, being a new way to understand the meaning of human interactions. Thus, the category of gender is a scenario to analyze the distribution of power and its naturalization in a particular historical context, placing this category in the field of politics and politics. Therefore, it manages to disassociate the use of the category from the private or kinship sphere and introduces a new way of approaching it: questioning the processes of production of meaning or meanings of sexual difference, which used to be taken as natural, and introducing gender in fields other than family, kinship or education.

Scott raises four elements or dimensions in interaction that allow analyzing the category of gender: symbolic, normative, institutional and subjective identity. In relation to the symbolic, it emphasizes the analysis of the processes of representation in a given context, that is, the perceptions that have been built around the binary classification of men and women. From the normative concepts, it refers to the *duty* of man and woman, feminine and masculine, framed in religious, educational, scientific, discourses *legal*, among others. Regarding the institutional aspect, it is necessary to include gender in the analysis of political, economic and institutional systems. In the last category, subjective identity, it is proposed to study gender from the ways in which their identities are constructed. With these four categories, Scott specified how gender can be analyzed in social relationships.

Now, although we share the idea of the gender category as central to the analysis of the ways in which power is distributed in social reality, we consider that when it is put into practice in the rural Colombian context, these dimensions are exceeded and are insufficient to analytically approach the phenomena studied. In other words, we start from the idea that rural areas are strategic settings to understand how other notions of analysis are articulated with gender for construction of subjectivities and certain realities that affect women and their autonomy. Hence the need to expand from other authors the characteristics and forms that are given to power and its way of operating in the context of our Latin American countries. From this articulation of the gender with other categories that account for the various forms of oppression or execution of power in society, other categories appear that Aura Estela Cumes (2012) raises. In this regard, we rescue two central points of the author that enrich our theoretical building on gender. In the first place, we highlight the importance that Cumes gives to colonialism and its patriarchal heritage in our Latin American context when organizing and distributing power giving life to a specific social order (Cumes, 2012). Around these elements a whole matrix of complex oppressions is woven that at some moments come into tension and, in others, they enhance and complement each other. That is, by articulating Cumes's bet with the theory of point of view, the women of Guapi have particular ways in which they manage to be in conditions of domination and in situations of oppression based on their race-ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, among others. Regarding Cumes's critique of colonial forms of knowledge production, we return to the idea that this is produced from specific epistemological places. Places that show or hide certain conditions of the realities they address. In this sense, we can add this element to our analytical framework of gender in our particular context. Hand in hand with the foregoing appears the criticism made by the author about the partial and fragmented vision of discrimination and the ways in which power is distributed in the processes of participation and in the production of knowledge. As a solution, he proposes to conceive the various oppressions as a bundle of complex relationships. This is how we conceive women in the urban and rural areas of the municipality of Guapi, that is, as subjects immersed in a web of power relations that allow us to analyze various forms of discrimination and emancipation from it. In other words, we could conceive it as a type of kaleidoscope that accounts for how it is distributed, whether to dominate or to emancipate oneself.

Leaving aside the previous discussion a bit, we can move on to the concept of autonomy. In general, autonomy is for us a social phenomenon related to freedom and emancipation. In other words, autonomy is the ability to build an identity from thought and action based on the individual's own choice (Lagarde, 1999). In short, as a central component of autonomy appears the ability to make decisions and their execution. However, we cannot forget that this capacity to decide is not abstract, but is situated spatially and temporally in a bundle of factual and symbolic relationships; that is, autonomy can be conceived in the individuals who embody it, located in a specific place in social reality. This social reality - that is, social, economic, cultural and political factors - enhances or hinders such capacity (Lagarde, 1999). Hence, our field work has focused on how the women of Guapi understand autonomy in itself and applied to their personal and family life, economic and public participation.

Methodological boundaries

To reflect on the autonomy of the women of Guapi, we decided to use a qualitative approach through focus groups. This tool is based on social interaction and communication. From social interaction, we recognize a position that mixes the objective with the subjective, where the limit between researcher-research subject is diffuse. Focus groups are precisely created scenarios of social interaction (Kratz, 2010). Our interest focused on knowing the ways in which women give meaning and meaning to the notion of autonomy and the ways in which it is applied in their personal, family, economic and public participation lives.

From our reflections, in methodological terms, one of the factors that facilitated entry to the territory was to do it with actors from the area such as the *Fundación Chinyagua*⁵, representatives of the Indigenous Council, among others; as well as that the visits were framed in the closing of a project of the *Universidad Icesi*, which had been in the territory for more than a year. Regarding the factors that hindered the process, we recognize that although entering the territory with the

⁵ The *Fundación Chinyagua* is a non-profit organization that was in charge of the process of formulating the Public Policy for Gender Equality of Guapi. This entity contacted the *Universidad Icesi* and the *Observatorio para la Equidad de las Mujeres* to request support in the design of the baseline instrument.

aforementioned actors facilitated the opening of the inhabitants to participate in the focus groups, also starting from these individuals implied sharing tensions that they had with other actors prior to our visit. In the case of the *Fundación Chiyangua*, certain villages located in the upper area of the Guapi River did not allow our visit because they did not want to have any interaction with the Foundation. We also identify tensions between the Afro population and indigenous communities. Despite this, both Afro and indigenous people shared their dissatisfaction regarding issues related to the participatory planning processes and the execution of projects. Likewise, the indigenous communities shared about the exclusion they felt in projects with resources from the General Participation System, to which they are entitled due to their recognition as Indigenous Council.

It is important to note that one of the tensions between the indigenous and Afro communities is traversed by the dynamics of the armed conflict that both communities have experienced. Especially the indigenous community that is in an undefined symbolic territory. This is due to the fact that, on the one hand, they are displaced by the internal conflict and, on the other, they are culturally relegated by the Guapi community. The ancestral narratives about who are the true natives of the land are still in dispute, the indigenous community of Guapi continues without the recognition of their Indigenous Reservation, which generates an institutional and resource separation between both communities.

In relation to the methodological bet, it was an experience with multiple learnings. Working in rural areas requires questioning the methodologies applied in urban areas. Although we had a plan and some ways to carry out the focus groups, such as the realization of maps, participation groups, games and theatrical dynamics, it was not possible to carry out the activities as planned due to the characteristics of the territories in terms of mobility, the communicative components such as the indigenous language and the times of each community to congregate. These times or rhythms read from urbanity as slow are interwoven and dependent on mobility to each place across the river, which translated into a variable of being flexible with meeting times and duration of the meeting.

In terms of communication, much of the focus group time is spent capturing attention and expressing questions in the simplest way possible. This added to our feeling of foreigners, which made us look for less institutional and more empathic communication strategies; such as, for example, making questions more topics of conversation, and thus through the joke blur the cultural barriers of our urban and academic presence in rural areas. Also, a great strategy for achieving the focus groups was to put our experiences in terms of gender and sexuality and, based on this, generate a safe environment for the participants to share about themselves. In sum, according to our experience in the field, the methodology must unquestionably adapt to the times of the communities, recognize that they are different processes and that when communicating with them, the cultural position of each actor must be questioned. that is, both the researcher and those who are being investigated. Beyond imposing a way of seeing the world; it is to try, as far as possible, to recognize the ways in which these communities see it.

Rural women and autonomy

Through our qualitative approach, women associate autonomy with the idea of freedom applied to the materiality of their lives, a central factor being the non-resistance to external decisions. In his words:

“(..) It is a process that allows me to do what I want to do, that does not have controversy with another person, to choose, to sing, to write, without that action bringing me rivalry (...) I am autonomous from walking, talking, taking into account that wherever you go one is autonomous without harming anyone ”, " Make a decision freely. Without someone behind. Dancing, having my own money, working my time ”(Focus Group, Temuey).

Likewise, they recognize the relational nature of this notion: “(..) it is also relational, my decisions or those of others affect me (...) One is always autonomous, it is a free expression, but the context sometimes does not allow it, no let someone else take it away ”(Temuey Focus Group). They emphasized the absence of autonomy in the political sphere and in the use of public space:

“It depends, in politics there is no autonomy. In politics, one can be autonomous if the others are also (...) If autonomy is freedom, we are not autonomous in all spaces, but after 10:00 pm you cannot walk, due to the social order. For all. Or if I am threatened with death ”(Focus Group, Temuey).

Turning now to the perception of autonomy in their relationships, women defined the autonomy of women as the absence of a partner. The feeling of autonomy revolves around the ability to access leisure settings, especially associated with parties. However, they recognize differences between gender roles, specifically between men and women, in the spaces of sociability. In his words: “(...) one cannot take too much trust, one has to limit oneself. If a woman does something the next day the husband knows it, I saw his wife dancing like this, like this and like that (...) ”(Focus Group, Temuey).

Cultural machismo is recognized by all; the superior authority of man in the home is legitimized. Likewise, they recognize the role of the socialization process in the construction of the gender roles present in their community. This is stated:

“If the child grows up seeing that the father is on top of the mother, they will do the same. For example, the boy says, I hear my grandfather say that he has to tell my grandmother where he is going, and I will do the same when I have my wife, she has to tell me where he is going ”(Focus Group, Temuey).

However, it is common for women who live in a sexist context to perceive themselves as free when they find partners who do not inhibit them from partying. However, their behaviors are regulated socially and by themselves by reinforcing stereotypes such as: “a woman must know how to behave without her husband (...) a woman can have freedom, but not debauchery” (Focus Group, Temuey).

This social control through gossip not only operates in spaces of pleasure and leisure, but also in health and sexuality. Access to health care for women, especially in relation to their sexual and reproductive rights, is popular knowledge and is used as a device to categorize and control

the sexual behaviors of women in Guapi. In his words: “There are no ethics. I come to see a patient, which one, the one with gonorrhoea? Transportation is very difficult, or there are no doctors, no gynecologists ”(Grupo Focal, Temuey).

In the men's focus group, they directly related autonomy to freedom. This is how they expressed it: “If I feel autonomous, because you decide yourself, it is not that anyone tells me what to do. At home I feel autonomous, at work, it depends on the boss ”(Men focus group, Quiroga). In relation to gender roles, men reinforce naturalized biological differences between men and women. The masculine gender is associated with strength and wisdom. In his words:

“I do believe that in things man is stronger. Yes, the man has more strength, being a man is a number of things, always the man in a home, as much as there is now gender equality, the man is always a man. The man is always necessary, because he is always the one who leads, even if the woman says, let's go this way, but he ends up doing what the man says ”(Men focus group, Quiroga).

Similarly, they recognize the social conditions that produce and reproduce this construction of genders, which legitimizes violence and continues to associate women with mystical and sacralized perceptions. Although men recognize social changes and more equitable distributions, the spaces for agreement are limited by traditional gender roles. This is stated:

“Before there was machismo, now ideas are shared. One lived a part of that life, sometimes the men came, they stepped on the house and as soon as they stepped the women were trembling with fear, because of the machismo, he comes very drunk, he comes to see another woman and so that nobody says anything to him they hit him. When you are going to board, if the woman tells me not to board, and you leave with that feeling, there are things you have to listen to women ”.
(Men Focus Group, Quiroga).

Regarding autonomy in the personal and family sphere, we managed to reflect that, from an urban gender perspective, **the division between care work - domestic and paid work or**

trade is blurred in the rural area of Guapi. When we arrived in the boat to the area of the indigenous council of Bella Vista around ten in the morning, the first image we got was that of an older woman - later we found out that she was a senior spiritual guide - washing some dishes in the river . After finishing washing, the woman went home to continue weaving the baskets of her community. Beside her was a younger woman, looking perhaps in her twenties, with her daughter in a small boat. While the woman bathed, the girl constantly cried because her mother did not hold her in her arms.

When we started the focus group, if we can call it that, the indigenous women continued weaving, carrying their children and talking to us. Regarding the general findings: **care economy tasks are mostly carried out by women and child-rearing processes are also focused on the female population.** On the contrary, we emphasize, in terms of gender in rural areas, that indigenous women do not perceive a substantial difference in their domestic work and economic activities. They even place cooking within their moments of rest. Regarding motherhood, which is a permanent task, we were able to observe that children are always with their mothers while they weave, cook or farm.

The main economic activities are handicrafts, fishing, the transformation of wood and the cultivation of Chinese potatoes, bananas, and cane, among others. Both sexes cultivate, “men graze (prune), women cultivate” (Bella Vista Focus Group). The collection of fiber for handicrafts is done by men and weaving is done by women. The commercialization of food is carried out mainly in Guapi. For the crafts specifically of the Indigenous Council, women travel to other municipalities (Bogotá, Medellín, Bucaramanga).

In terms of the satisfaction of basic needs for both the indigenous and the Afro population, **cultivation by women in their home plays a fundamental part in the survival of the dispersed rural population of the municipality of Guapi.** In the words of an inhabitant of Quiroga: “You live here without problems, you live better, on your own, you don't pay rent, the fish, the crab. Not like in the city that if you don't have money, you don't eat ”(Bella Quiroga focus group).

For both communities, the **provision of basic needs is not substantially crossed by formal work or income directly**. Fishing is mainly for own consumption and its commercialization is precarious. They manage to bring some proportion to Guapi, but present limitations in terms of transportation due to the cost of gasoline from the village to the rural area. This work is done mainly by men. Although, access to money is precarious for women, when they manage to exchange products for money, they invest their income in maintaining the home, unlike the income earned by men: “The woman's money is to solve everything, but their money (couples) for their pocket”. (Focus group, Quiroga).

Regarding health, the indigenous population is attended first by the traditional doctor *-jaibaná-*, who is paid through barter. The traditional medicine is yagé through the wax pencil. The *jaibaná* can be men and women. Likewise, midwives and midwives. When the disease persists, people from the community go to the doctor in Popayán or Cali. On the other hand, the Afro community affirms the precariousness of the services and the recurring solution is the transfer of patients to nearby municipalities. With respect to public services in rural areas in general, they have neither aqueduct nor sewage, drinking water is collected from rainwater. The waste treatment is carried out from the incineration of the same. Likewise, education is assumed in a community school from grade zero to fifth grade.

With regard to erotic-affective relationships, **the norm is monogamy for both indigenous and Afro women. It is generalized to establish relationships through free union and, specifically for the indigenous population, interracial crosses are avoided**. In terms of motherhood, indigenous women associate it with the permanence of their ethnic group:

If several [couples] are admitted, the indigenous community will also prosper like Afros, because Afros have the right to have three, four [couples], as many as they want. In contrast, the indigenous do not. That is why there are few indigenous people, I would apply that mentality, because indigenous people do not have that abundance [children]. The Afros, yes, because they have two, three women and a lot of children that come out [...] If I were a man, I would have my four women (Bella Vista focus group).

Afro-descendant women openly recognized physical and psychological violence as a daily practice in their lives as a couple. This is how they express it: “You are not saying anything to him, as long as he is with drinks, whatever you say to him: now. They gobble up his hand. If you answer, bad ”(Focus group, Quiroga). They affirm their permanence in their relationships because separation is socially repudiated and due to the absence of opportunities in the economic field:

You don't leave your husband here like that if you get hit, it's because you don't have a job here. So for example I have two children. He is supporting me, he is giving me food, he is giving me clothes, he is supporting me. So I say: I can leave him, but I'm not going to leave my children (...) What do I do to support my children? (...) There is no road here too. If there is a road, you go, here you have to take transport [boat] and where do you go? has no money (Focus group, Quiroga)

However, **within the perceptions of this community, women who are linked to formal paid work are categorized as liberated:** “If the woman gets a job they say: 'She has already freed herself, she is available, bossy'” (Quiroga focus group). This idea of liberated is related to the forms of symbolic domination to which women are subjected based on the configuration of their gender. Although, monogamy is the rule, but only for them. Through rumor (gossip), these communities generate processes of control over women: “Friend, my mother, since she knows that something can happen to me, she does not say anything” (Focus group, Quiroga). When this woman mentions: “something could happen to me”, she refers to the possibility of being a victim of femicide for alleged infidelities or for helping a woman in her community. This is how they put it: "Don't come here to leave a man (...) I tell her 'I'm going to take her.' I'm going to be the first to be implicated for him to cut my throat ”(Quiroga focus group). Also from the idea of being bossy or liberated, women from the dispersed rural area of Guapi conceive that decision-making within the home should be assumed by their male partners. Socially penalizes the idea of women who want to assume the same tasks or freedoms that men in this territory possess: “I believe in my ignorance that he has a bit of an impulse to dominate

the house, the woman, the children in home. If we make everyone the same, it looks ugly” (Focus group, Quiroga).

Regarding the institutional sphere, understanding and gender discourses remain confusing and traditional. One of those confusions is to assume the category of gender as an opinion that seeks to make women *equal in* front of men. A perception of the gender category is presented in terms of equality and not equity, which indicates the need for a deep work on the understanding of gender as an analytical tool to review our constructions and ways of relating between the masculine and the feminine and vice versa, reinforcing reflective exercises to promote socio-cultural changes.

The masculinized view on the duty of gender hinders and creates barriers to taking public policies seriously. Critical reflection is imperative to understand why the dynamics of men and women have been and are different, as a tool to overcome perceptions such as "that when women are intelligent or boar they are true males" (Institutional focus group).

Reinforcing the above, the institutionality assumes gender issues as separatists. Questioning why women do workshops for women or are taught only by women, is a reflection of the lack of understanding about feminine spaces, not recognizing autonomy and the negativity of questioning their masculine privileges in public spaces, such as having open spaces participation and political decision-making. We consider it important to point out that masculine spaces must be worked by themselves and, of course, create mixed spaces to feed back experiences and knowledge.

Regarding participation in calls, women who decide to lead or participate in calls experience situations *bullying*. These situations generate a hostile environment that ends up discouraging the process for many of them in their political projections. Likewise, some calls that are designed for women end up being designed or executed by men under the premise that women do not have the experience. Another finding was to compare the training of rural and urban women, in which urban women are surprised why rural women do not commit to such training, they have a duty to be like urban women and that generates distancing.

Another of the findings was regarding the electoral roll. We find that women vote the most and mostly vote in order to elect men. Although some associate that women are responsible for these votes, women have more electoral representation not because it is because of their political empowerment, but because on voting days men are generally drinking or because they were given money for that vote. However, the fact that within politics people continue to vote for men is not a matter of women's responsibility; On the contrary, it makes us question those traditional places of politics exercised by men where it is still associated that these positions are typical of masculinity. Regarding this instance, we consider that it would be necessary to inquire about why there are more male candidates than women. Continuing with the same theme, some men express that women who develop or want a political life suffer more. In her words: "Empowered women sometimes live less happily than the other, because the other lives in her world of" Daddy my love, the meat is yours ", she suffers more because they give her the capitulation, but she does not have the tools to tell him half of the meat is yours and half is mine "(Focal Group, Institutional).

Faced with the political culture in Guapi, not only is the gender gap in the political participation of women, in decision-making or occupying high positions, but another factor that largely affects processes of confluence is the Experiences and feelings of rural women compared to women in the urban area. In other words, the problems related to the political participation of women are closely related to the hierarchization of the urban over the rural; since this generates a disparity of inhuman situations in the community. As an example of this, we can find the fact that humanitarian aid takes shifts in non-flexible working hours for rural areas, since it excludes people who find it difficult to move either for money or for times when they arrive in the urban area no longer there are chips. This is due to the fact that it is not taken into account that these communities live two hours or more from the urban area and make a great financial effort to pay for the gasoline for the boat, and when they arrive there is no such aid. This situation of the cards is also repeated in health, rurality continues to be within a framework of marginality.

Conclusions

Based on our findings, thinking about the autonomy of women in Guapi places us in a place of reflection on the capacities of individuals to be and to do. Martha Nussbaum (2003), taking up the capabilities approach of Amartya Sen, states that individuals end in themselves for development. Progress must be analyzed in terms of people's ability to make decisions in ontological and practical terms. If we observe the data collected in our visit to Guapi, we can infer that it is necessary to initiate public policy processes that seek to enhance the different core capacities of women in this sector.

Let's start with what Nussbaum calls life capabilities, can Guapi women live an average human life? In what was shared through the focus groups, various factors that put women's lives at risk were recognized: lack of access to public services, precarious health and education services, presence of violence due to the armed conflict. Specifically in health and bodily integrity, the women of Guapi have conditions that hinder their freedom to be and to do: the use of rumors as a means of social control, deficiencies in sexual and reproductive health services, and the presence of domestic violence such as daily practice in their erotic affective relationships. From the places of emancipation, women in Guapi are central to the survival of families in their areas through care and cultivation for self-sufficiency. Similarly, in the rural area of Guapi, the distribution of economic tasks, specifically farming or fishing, are generally equitable. On the contrary, access to money by women is perceived as a transgression of their traditional role.

Regarding agency capacities, women who seek to decide on the urban planning of their territory are also perceived in a pejorative way. Institutions deepen this perception with biases towards gender equity processes or that seek to question the traditional roles assigned to men and women.

In short, for us this work is valuable because it allowed us to know the specific challenges of the Guapi municipality in terms of gender equity and autonomy. We join Nussbaum's position where people end in themselves, and beyond seeking development in economic or profit terms, the Colombian State must generate actions to improve the well-being and good living of the inhabitants of this municipality, emphasizing rural communities.

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