Abstract

This article describes the mechanisms through which the transition from banana to oil palm plantations in Zona Bananera, Magdalena, has been influential in forced displacement. Therefore it adds to the debate about the paths between resources and conflict in the literature on political economy of internal armed conflicts. The outcome of this qualitative research suggests that in the case in question the following pathways have operated: 1. The absence of a strong institutional presence has permitted the collection of extortions by illegal armed groups allowing their financing and generating forced displacement as a consequence of the threats; 2. The transition from banana to palm extraction reduced the intensity of manual labor and food security unleashing displacement processes; and 3. The institutional incentives for oil palm exploitation have promoted the usurpation of land by illegal armed actors who provoke the displacement in order to acquire land for their cultivation.

Keywords

Political economy, armed conflict, forced displacement, oil palm, banana, Zona Bananera.