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Governing with an open strategy? Critical reflections on opening governance and strategy in the recent case of the Colombian peace process

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Abstract

Openness in strategy and government are gaining popular interest in the academy and public institutions. However, research shows weak linkages between open strategy and open government. To address this gap, this paper examines the dynamics of inclusion in the context of governing through an open strategy. To do so, we have gone through an archival analysis, studying the recent case of peace dialogues in Colombia in the last six years. Near 400 archives from official documents, newspapers, reports and social media, among others, allowed us to identify the intended and unintended societal and political implications of governing with an open strategy. In addition, the paper shows the influence of technology and social media as moderators of the inclusion and exclusion dynamics. This paper contributes to the understanding of open strategy into a national context and extends the open strategy field through connections with open government.

Introduction

The concept of open strategy, which emerged from scholarship on open innovation (Chesbrough and Appleyard, 2007), has over the last decade grown in prominence. At its core, open strategy is concerned with greater transparency and inclusion across organisational levels in the making and enacting of strategy (Whittington et al. 2011). Mor Barak (2015) suggests an inclusive approach in organisations promotes quality relations; cross-functional synergies; increased job satisfaction; clearer career pathways and improved performance. With increasing use of information and the growing use of social media, open strategy advocates consider the potential of mass participation in strategy work (Tavakoli et al., 2015).
More recently, scholars have begun to question the promising benefits of open strategy. For example, Hautz et al. (2017) in a special issue on open strategy in Long Range Planning have started to unpack the dilemmas and dynamics of open strategy. Other contributors to the special issue like Appleyard and Chesbrough (2017) discussed the balance between the costs and benefits of open strategy in examining its sustainability; while Baptista et al. (2017) critically reviewed the value of social media in developing more reflexive organisations.

The literature on open strategy needs to be viewed against the backdrop of open government that can be traced back to the 1970s and 1980s in the public policy field. Like open strategy, open government is concerned with transparency (Nader, 1975), and with ensuring greater accountability of those working in policy-making (Bennett, 1985). The 1990s and early 2000s also saw a greater emphasis in the idea (and ideals) of a stakeholding approach to governance across the world. In the UK, the white paper on open government in 1993 opened public access to information from official documents (Birkinshaw 1997). In the European Union, open government policy has informed the public about ongoing activities, while Scandinavian countries have allowed public access to files and registers from public offices (Grønbech-Jensen, 1998). Research has discussed degrees of transparency in public administration work, but made scarce reference to inclusion (Frost, 2003). At the end of 2000s, the Obama Administration published the ‘Open Government Directive’, promoting the public access to documents as well as encouraging active citizens' participation in public policies (Harrison et al., 2012).

Open strategy and open government involve transparency and inclusion in their foundations. However, there are weak connections between open strategy and open government research. Particularly, the dynamics of inclusion are scarcely unpacked in open strategy literature. Furthermore, research on inclusion in open strategy has discussed the inclusion of legitimate actors, either internal employees or external stakeholders; this paper addresses the inclusion of actors from an illegitimate organisation into a legitimate society.

This paper examines the dynamics of inclusion in the context of governing through an open strategy. Our focus is the recent case study of the Colombian government peace deal with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a 52-year-old guerrilla group; the oldest guerrilla in Latin America and one of the oldest in the world. This case is particularly interesting since the government of Colombian called for a plebiscite including the
participation of citizens in the agreement validation. So, this case is in line with current movements across the world that are gaining popular momentum, as seen with Brexit, the various European referenda, and the US presidential election.

Colombian peace negotiations, discussed in Havana, Cuba, during the period 2012-2016, are a reference for other conflicts in the world and show how open strategy is relevant for good organisations. On the one hand, on 10th December 2016, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos was granted the Peace Nobel Prize for his endeavours to end the conflict in his country (Nobel Prize, 2016); in parallel, The Economist chose Colombia as the country of the year for the colossal achievement of the peace agreement (The Economist, 2016). On the other hand, FARC is still far away from being included into Colombian society and from being considered as a “good organisation”, but they are taking the first steps in that direction.

The empirical analysis is guided by the following research question: What are the intended and unintended implications of governing with an open strategy? The findings show the mechanisms that the Colombian government implemented to include internal and external actors in the peace negotiations. The six-point agreement that resulted from the dialogues was not only open to the public, but constructed with public participation. Nevertheless, public participation was in ideas generation; the discussion and decision of the final agreement text were exclusive among the negotiators, generating emergent exclusions. Additionally, the paper shows the relevance of technology as a tool and moderator of inclusion and exclusion dynamics. For instance, the ‘Crystal Ballot Box’ was a government mechanism to show transparency and inclusion of citizens in the discussions of the peace process, but it also created emergent exclusions due to the limited penetration of the Internet among citizens. Furthermore, the paper shows the power of social media in an open strategy, particularly Twitter, in which half-truth sentences moulded the positions of citizens facing the plebiscite.

These findings contribute to extend our understanding of open strategy to the extent that it analyses how open strategy manifests in a national context. It also overlaps with the concepts of open strategy and open government, generating connections that enhance both fields. Although we will be seeing further consequences and implications of the Colombian peace process in the future, this paper shows some societal and political implications of governing with an open strategy. Moreover, this paper identifies technologies, platforms and social media that influence the inclusion and exclusion dynamics of open strategy. The remainder of
this paper is structured as follows: the next section describes the methods; followed by the vignette from the Colombian peace process case. Then we discuss some of the implications of open strategy implementation and conclude with the limitations of the present study and suggestions for further research.

**Theoretical background**

*Opening strategy*

Open strategy emerged from an inclusive perspective of strategy as practice (Whittington, 1996; Jarzabkowski and Wilson, 2002) and from the scholarship on open innovation, which suggest that openness could extend more in the field of strategy (Chesbrough and Appleyard 2007). Open strategy has two dimensions: transparency, referred to the communication of strategy once formulated; and inclusion, related with the range of people involved in the strategy work (Whittington et al., 2011).

One of the first studies on open strategy analysed the differences between open or closed strategy for a new product development (Lindman, 2002). The author suggests that markets with more competitors are more willing to share their innovations in product development, which promotes an open strategy; and firms without remarkable competitors favour closed strategies. So, the author defines open strategy as the ability to take advantage of external resources. Dobusch and Kapeller (2013) amplified the concept of external inclusion, considering the involvement of crowds and communities into the organisational strategy.

In addition, some successful suggest an inclusive approach to internal resources can be beneficial, inviting other firms to democratize the strategy work. ‘IBM strategy jam’ involved over 300,000 employees worldwide in strategy and innovation, increasing the businesses portfolio (Palmisano 2004). Likewise, LEGO Mindstorm project included narrative stories as a way to integrate people in the strategy discussion (Campbell-Hunt 2007). An inclusive approach of strategy could be good for businesses through the involvement of people from grassroots to discuss, develop, assess and shape strategy.

Parallel, firms are facing growing trends that reveal which traditionally has been hidden information. Social networks and WikiLeaks are examples of growing movements that, for
better or worse, are influencing a trend towards an open strategy (Whittington et al., 2011). Participation technologies used in strategy work such as event-based jamming (Palmisano, 2004), wikis (Hansson, 2015), blogging (Huang et al., 2014) and social media (Baptista et al., 2017) enrol multiple participants in strategy. The above shows the concept of sociomateriality as the indivisible relation between social entities and the materiality used in strategy work (Orlikowski and Scott, 2008). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these technology-based events is unclear; what is clear is that physical attendance of multiple events for collecting information is more complicated and expensive (Malhotra et al., 2017). Therefore the online approach can involve more stakeholders and consequently, more information and positions in an inclusive approach to strategy.

The recent work of Mack and Szulanski (2017) contribute with a pertinent clarification between participation and inclusion in open strategy. These terms have been interchanged, but they have different meanings. Participation is based on ideas generation, involvement of multiple stakeholders through interviews, surveys or some kind of technological tool. The idea is to have a sense of the different community positions regarding some topic. So, participation tends to be a collection of inputs in order to reflect on an issue from different perspectives. Inclusion involves the creation and sustenance of an active community through the discussion of strategy issues in work groups where access to information, discussion and joint decision-making exist. Centralized organisations tend to favour participation and decentralised tend to favour inclusion.

Opening governance

One of the first works on open government come from the former US president Woodrow Wilson in 1917, in which he express the need of government openness: “secrecy is inherently unethical because it is equated with immoral, manipulative, conspiratorial and corrupt behaviour. Openness, on the other hand, is associated with the worthy values of candour, honesty, sincerity and trust” (Bennett, 1985. P. 196). This idea of ethical behaviour in politics has motivated the openness of government; and recently, citizen participation has complemented political transparency as the fundamentals of open government: “the government is obliged to inform or instruct the public by making debates and decision-making accessible to the people … publicity is necessary so that the people can examine, debate, and pass judgement on the laws created by government and scrutinize government
activities” (Marquardt, 2011, P. 71). When information is available to citizens, the promised benefits of open government are economic growth, corruption reduction and government performance improvement (Horsley, 2004; Faini, 2015). Citizens also have benefits from open government: they can deal with political issues, develop an understanding that allow them to participate in the decision making discussions, reduce their disappointment with politics and increase their citizen empowerment (Koch et al., 2011).

In the last decades different countries have summed to the ideals of transparency and citizen participation in public administration. The Freedom of Information Act in US was declared initially in 1967, and amended along different administrations, allowing public access to previously classified information (Yu and Robinson, 2012). In Europe, the Scandinavian countries favour the publication and complete access of public documents to the citizens, while the European Union openness is focused on inform the public about current activities (Gronbech-Jensen, 1998). The ‘Open Government Resolution’ in Canada and the Australian ‘Declaration of Open Government’ in 2010 (Harrison et al., 2012) were steps that followed the Open Government Directive (Obama, 2009). Nowadays, the open government partnership has involved 69 countries in similar attempts to transform the public service through the citizen involvement using the technologies available (Grimmelikhuijsen and Feeney, 2016).

Open government have been growing parallel to ICT initiatives such as e-government, Web 2.0, online applications and social media (Faini, 2015). Particularly social media has two branches in open government, expressive and collaborative social media. Expressive social media facilitate the people expressions of texts, pictures, music or videos through Internet channels such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and so on; while collaborative social media deals with an interactive process through Wiki and Google Docs between citizens and public agencies (Lee and Kwak, 2012; Hansson et al., 2015). This interaction has created an ecosystem with three groups of actors: the government agents that produce the data, the common people from business and society that can consult the data, and the innovators that take advantage of the data to create business opportunities (Harrison et al., 2012).

Although the supposed benefits of open government, transparency and participation face multiple financial, technological, cultural, and motivational barriers (Hansson et al., 2015). For example, only one year later after the Open Government Directive in the US, some of the senior civil servants found that they could not reply timely to all citizens involved, so they
decided to close their blogs, creating more mistrust than before the beginning of open government implementation (Lee and Kwak, 2011). In fact, the government trust rarely depends on new technologies adoption (Nam, 2012). Yu and Robinson (2012) also criticize open government as a vague concept, useful in conversation, but hard in implementation.

Research in open government reveals that a deeper study of inclusion is needed. First, open government has been used as synonym of transparency (Harrison, 2012; Grimmelikhuijsen and Feeney, 2016), excluding inclusion. Second, the literature review on open government of Meijer et al. (2012) reveals the two mainstreams of open government are transparency and participation, which involve citizen input, but exclude the discussion, joint decision making and the co-creation of knowledge. Third, the qualitative methods used in open government research involve interviews and surveys with government executives and managers (Lee and Kwak, 2011); non-managerial people are excluded from the research. Fourth, in spite of the open government initiatives, citizens have little or non-interest in participate in public issues, and the representatives of the communities work for their own interests, not those of the communities (Grimmelikhuijsen and Feeney, 2016). Therefore, this paper intends to go deeper in the understanding of inclusion in open government and open strategy.

*Exploring inclusion in open government and open strategy*

Open strategy and open government have two common pillars: transparency and inclusion; however this last pillar has been developed more in the theory than in practice: “the rhetoric in the dominant discourse supports the concept of open government formulated by the Obama administration as transparency, participation, and collaboration, but in practice, the focus is predominantly on transparency and information exchange, while ignoring fundamental democratic issues regarding participation and collaboration” (Hansson et al., 2015). So, inclusion needs to be unpacked in order to understand how does it manifests into the context of open government and open strategy, how inclusion is different from other open approaches such as participation and collaboration, and what can contribute to construct a meaning of inclusion in open government and open strategy.

One of the first fields of knowledge that have studied inclusion is education, particularly those focused on learners with disabilities. Their motto is that all students, including those with any kind of disability, feel as full members in their classroom and school communities (Murphy,
This feeling is particularly unique from inclusion and is twofold. The feeling that included people have when they feel they are part of the group, i.e. the feeling of belongingness; and the feeling that included people have when they are valued according to their own particular characteristics, i.e. the feeling of uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011).

Inclusion have had different approaches from research in strategy: inclusion as a practice that make connections among people, creating a community that keeps in an ongoing work (Quick and Feldman, 2011; Mack and Szulanski, 2017); inclusion as a state in which the members of the organisation feel assimilated and valued for their own diverse characteristics and what they bring to the discussion, creating a sense of belongingness and mutual purpose (Smith and Lindsay, 2014); inclusion as an attitude that tolerate mistakes in order to maintain a harmonious relationship (Tang et al., 2015); inclusion as an organisational process, where the workers have access to sensible information, involvement in strategy discussions and participation in decision-making (Mor Barak, 2014). Inclusion is sometimes equated to diversity; however diversity is related with the observable and non-detectable demographic characteristics of people. The sum of inclusion and diversity in organisations is called inclusive culture (Humberd et al., 2015; Nair and Vohra, 2015).

Inclusive culture promises several benefits for organisations. Markets are diverse and multicultural; a diverse staff can fulfil customer needs and create new business opportunities (Thomas 2004). When the development of individuals and firms coincide as a fruit of inclusion, workers tend to be more committed, and this synergy promotes high quality relations, job satisfaction, wellbeing, career plans and job performance (Mor Barak, 2015). However, exclusion practices persist. We hypothesize that the inclusion and exclusion practices are intended and unintended. This paper explores these intentional and unintentional practices of inclusion and exclusion in the case of Colombian peace dialogues, where the government have attempted to finish a more than fifty years conflict, including the former terrorists in the society, but generating new exclusions.

Research has demonstrated that inclusion is normally a precarious accomplishment, which depends on the circumstances and practices (Hautz et al., 2017). The connections between open strategy and open government that address this paper pretend to contribute to overcome the precariousness of the inclusion research in strategy, which has been scarcely explored.
Data and Method

Setting

This study uses the recent case of Colombian peace dialogues to deepen in the connections of open strategy and open government through a focus on the concept of inclusion. Particularly, the intended and planned inclusion strategies, and the unintended and emergent exclusion dynamics are unpacked and analysed.

This aim led to an archival analysis as a socio historical method that may reveal phenomena that explain particular behaviours over a period of time (Novicevic et al., 2011). Archival analysis facilitates an opportunity to identify multiple variables that can affect the topic studied (Memon et al., 2008). This method examines the process a researcher needs to understand a context from a substantial collection of material, and provide a new emergent knowledge (Meehan, 2009): and is particularly useful to study processes that have occurred along a wide period of time (Hewerdine and Welch, 2008).

This paper focuses on the last six years (2010-2016), in which current Colombian government developed an open strategy to address the negotiations with FARC. However, in order to understand the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion that have led to the reintegration of FARC into Colombian society; it was necessary to study Colombian history since the beginnings of the nation. Therefore, an archival analysis (Memon et al., 2008; Gable, 2010) allowed the construction of a timeline to understand the political, economic, social and cultural aspects that have influenced in the presence of guerrillas in Colombia. The knowledge about the sources, particularly the Colombian sources; and which authors represent the different positions into the case study come from the experience from one of the authors, who has been working in the Colombian government during 21 years; who also did the correspondent translations from the archives in Spanish language.

Data collection

The archives came from a wide spectrum of sources: official history has been consulted from Central Bank libraries and official government documents. Non-official history has been consulted from FARC documents that have been released to the public since the beginning of
the peace dialogues; national and international reports of Colombian conflict from multiple perspectives; papers published by right, left and impartial authors; and national and international magazines and newspapers from the different political positions. In addition, the analysis of the Colombian peace dialogues required an archive series of social media; particularly Facebook and Twitter posts from the most relevant political and social actors, the non-government organisations involved in the dialogues discussions, and the perceptions of common citizens.

We undertook the collection of archives in two levels of search criteria. The first criterion permitted to extract the references from the sources. Terms such as “Colombian peace process”, “Colombian government”, “Colombian plebiscite”, and “negotiations with FARC” were considered. The second criterion permitted to identify the elements of open strategy, open government, and inclusion into the references. Thus, terms such as “transparency”, “internal inclusion”, “external inclusion”, “citizens’ participation”, “access to data”, “mechanisms of participation” and “emergent exclusion” were considered.

Table 1. Data collected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number of archives</th>
<th>Rationale for selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official documents</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>To identify the government inclusion strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>To check the local and international analyses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papers</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>To understand the theoretical background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>To have a wider view of the case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art works</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>To identify emergent voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>To make sense of the milestones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Websites</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>To complement the non-official data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>To have a sense of citizens participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data analysis

In order to cover the different perspectives of the inclusion and exclusion dynamics into the Colombian history, the data collected should cover as much positions as possible. Therefore, the data was organised in other five categories according to the political tendency: left wing declared; left wing not declared or with trend to be leftist; neutral; right wing not declared or with trend to be rightists; and right wing declared. Figure 1 reveals the proportion according to the type of document and the archive political position.
All the information gathered was organised in Nvivo11. The sources were classified according to the type of information such as official documents, international reports, national news, social media, etc. The first level nodes were organized by the big topics: open government, open strategy, inclusion, and exclusion. The second level nodes were organized by questions on each topic. Coding was organised from the second level nodes analysing the four big topics. For example, the initiative of the Crystal Ballot Box, which comes from papers and an official website contributed to respond questions such as how open strategy manifest into the government; and how ICT systems contribute to include citizens in a dialogue with the government.

**The dynamics of exclusion that favoured the existence of guerrillas in Colombia**

This section tells the story of emergence, development and fall of the FARC guerrilla in Colombia. The emergence subsection tells about the exclusions that originated the social movements that led to a guerrilla group formation; the development subsection shows the state abandon that promoted the FARC growing and presence in Colombia; and the fall
subsection shows how FARC lost terrain with the military action and how do they excluded themselves from Colombian society and were declared as a terrorist group.

*The emergence of FARC: The land ownership and the communist influence*

Colombia has been traditionally conservative and Catholic. The main stream of societal and cultural identity was created during the three centuries of Spanish domination (1510-1810). The territory was a conglomerate of isolated villages with their centre at the church and ruled by a priest who solved the daily conflicts; this relative peace created a society who sees any change with mistrust (Serrano, 2016). After independence, two main parties emerged. On the one hand, the conservatives, as the name implies, wanted to conserve the traditional structure, i.e. the predominance of Catholicism, the slavery, and the most important, the land tenure in hands of oligarchy. On the other hand, the liberals promoted slavery abolition, freedom of worship, freedom of press, and the most important, the redistribution of land (Banrep, 2015). Successive confrontations and international tendencies move the balance from one side to the other. The civil wars ended with near one hundred thousand dead, an economic crisis and the independence of Panama in 1903 with the support of the United States (Banrep, 2003).

The impact of the Panama loss created a spirit of reconciliation. Despite the economic crisis, Colombia began an aggressive program of infrastructure to connect the country, traditionally isolated for its three mountain chains. The conservatives boosted infrastructure projects financed by coffee and oil exports. The liberals implemented the policies related to the rights of workers and agrarian reforms, influenced by the Russian revolution, creating labour unions that confronted the elites, sometimes resorting to violence (Pruitt, F. M., 1936).

The guerrillas emerged in 1948, fracturing this half-century of relative peace. On the side of the liberals, Jorge Gaitán, a leader who represented the underdog aspirations, and was running for presidency was killed. His assassination unleashed a revolt in Bogota and other cities against establishment (Kingsley, 2014). The successive period of chaos promoted the emergence of self-organized groups of peasants known as the ‘independent republics’, which were influenced by the communist ideals. The triumph of the peasant revolution in China in 1949 and the communist revolution in Cuba in 1951 stimulated the ‘independent republics’ in their fight for land redistribution. On the side of the conservatives, who were ruling the country, they supported South Korea in the war against the ‘communism threat’ (Cano, 1953).
The idea of victory and proud, created an anti-communist spirit at multiples levels of Colombian society, particularly against the so-called ‘independent republics’.

In 1953 the military government offered a deal to the guerrillas. The military government declared an unconditional amnesty, but without any redistribution of land. (Molano, 2000). Some guerrillas took the opportunity, but others decided to keep in rebellion. Backed by Washington, the government prosecuted the dissident groups with any kind of communist influence (Stokes, 2005). However, some guerrillas resisted the military operations, leaded by Pedro Marin, aka Tirofijo, a peasant leader among his followers (Ortiz, 2002).

In 1959, a new amnesty seemed to work. The government would provide agricultural credits, release some political prisoners and increase infrastructure projects. The guerrillas would keep their weapons, but under the state control, providing security of infrastructure projects. The first two years resulted in a short peace period (Cox, 2008), but the killing of the second guerrilla on command originated Tirofijo return to clandestinely and the creation of the ‘Marquetalia independent republic’. Few years later, from air and land, the army retook the territorial control, but some survival rebels emigrated to the southern jungle of Colombia (Rabasa and Chalk, 2001). Those survival, leaded by Tirofijo established FARC in 1964.

*The development of FARC: the State abandon and the drug trafficking*

After the attack to Marquetalia, the Colombian government forgot the so-called independent republics; so FARC grew in the shadows of clandestinity, receiving support from the clandestine communist party, with Soviet influence and financing (Leonard, 2006). During the seventies, FARC created a revolutionary army, including regulations and hierarchy systems. They spread successfully throughout the country, particularly in the towns and villages with scarce presence of the legitimate state, solving disputes among the natives (Wüstholz, 2011). They formalized kidnapping practice arguing political reasons (Jenkins, 1985), and collected taxes from peasants for coca crops protection (Kingsley, 2014). FARC also made contacts with other international illegitimate groups such as the Spanish ETA, who provided weapons to FARC in exchange for drugs (Paz, 2011).

In 1981 the Colombian government offered a new amnesty. The novelty of this approach was the dialogue while the combats continue. However, there were too many conditions and a
point of understanding cannot be reached (Parada, 2011). The “coca boom” allows them to expand the irregular army throughout the country and began to attack directly the military troops. FARC sent troops to the Soviet Union and Vietnam for advanced military training in guerrilla fighting (Dudley, 2004) and decided to move closer to the cities and to sites rich in natural resources to create a stronger economic capability (Díaz, 2016).

On 28th March 1984, after a 2-year negotiation, the conservative government and FARC signed an agreement. The government offered ‘forgive and forget’ and agreed to give political space to FARC (Jenkins, 1985). They created a communist party to compete in the political arena called ‘The Patriotic Union’, which won several positions in the local elections in 1986 (Wüstholz, 2011). However, the leaders of ‘The Patriotic Union’ were systematically killed by right-wing extreme groups that FARC saw as state crimes, due to the open permissiveness of such murders (Giraldo, 1999), therefore FARC continued their fight. In 1989, the fall of Berlin wall affected the FARC communist discourse; nonetheless, FARC was now financed by drugs trafficking and expanded throughout the country (Ortiz, 2002).

Between 1991-1992 the government proposed a new dialogue with open agenda. The interest of FARC was the discussion of Colombian economic and social issues. The interest of the government was the liberation of the kidnapped. The dialogues went to a stagnation point, the delegates were interested in different topics and the attacks continued from both sides (Molano, 2000). Along 90’s FARC increased their power control of drug trafficking, and consequently their power to attack military units (Jiménez, 2014).

In 1999 Colombian government cede a non-military presence area of 42.000 square kilometres to FARC for undertaking the negotiations (Pastrana, 1998), an area equivalent to Switzerland. FARC took advantage of the cleared area to train their troops, retain their kidnapped, and increase the drug business (Padilla, 2010). In the frontstage, the mistake was the repetition of the never ending open agenda, which multiple subjects conducted to nowhere. In the backstage, FARC was preparing for getting the power through weapons (Perdue, 2012). The following table shows the attempts of different governments to negotiate with FARC and the causes of fail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Initiative of inclusion</th>
<th>Cause of negotiations fail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 2. Governments initiatives to dialogue with FARC and causes of negotiations fail.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953-1954</td>
<td>Unconditional amnesty, forgiveness of crimes against the state. Redistribution of land was not accepted by the government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959-1960</td>
<td>Agricultural credits, release of political prisoners, guerrillas would cooperate to the state in infrastructure security. The second in command of the guerrilla group was killed with the supposed complicity of the army.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Dialogue in the middle of the combats. The parts did not reach an agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-1984</td>
<td>Crimes forgive and forget plus political participation of leaders. Political leaders were systematically killed by illegitimate right-wing groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1992</td>
<td>Open agenda to discuss both parts interests. The parties’ interests were dissimilar and the discussion went to a stagnation point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2002</td>
<td>Cleared area of 42,000 km² to FARC for the negotiations and open agenda. FARC used the area for training; holding kidnapped, and increasing their drug trade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The fall of FARC power: people rejection and the military campaign*

On the 24th October, 1999 near 4 million of Colombians in 180 cities and towns went to the streets to say FARC ‘No more kidnappings’ and ‘Ceasefire’ (Santos, 1999). Every day, an average of three new kidnappings was perpetrated by FARC. This ‘financial solution’ was a fatal political mistake because practically all the Colombian society began to feel them as their enemies and a group without any sense of revolutionary spirit, only terrorists.

In 2000 the US Congress approves ‘Plan Colombia’, a direct cooperation from the US government in 4 areas: drug trade fighting, conflict political solution, social and economic reactivation, and institutional strengthening (Pastrana, 1999). This 5 billion US dollars plan, financed in equivalent parts by Colombia and US, modernized Colombian Military Forces. The core capacities were technical intelligence and the Black Hawk helicopter fleet for military transportation and attacking FARC camps day and night. The militaries have passed to the offensive (Zaltzman, 2015).

On the 28th September, 2001, less than a month after the twin towers attacks, the US President included FARC as ‘Specially Designated Global Terrorist’ (Room, 2001), at the same level of Al Qaeda. The emergence of terrorism discourse has been chasing FARC until these days. On February 2002 the negotiation ended due to the kidnapping of a senator. In the same month, the kidnapping of a French-Colombian citizen presidential candidate makes that European Union declares FARC as terrorists, closing any kind of negotiation (Bustos, 2002). President
Uribe, who took the power in 2002, declared FARC as a ‘terrorist threat’ and did not consider any kind of negotiation with them, only law enforcement (Wüstholz, 2011).

The first decade of the XXI century would see the gradual declination of FARC power. The military action was determinant. The reactions of FARC were a knife against their own neck, i.e. against their eventual possibility of any kind of legitimacy in their fight. For example, during a combat between FARC and self-defence groups, a bomb cylinder destroyed a church with 79 people inside (Neira, 2002). In addition, a car bomb against ‘The Nogal Club’, one of the most exclusive clubs in Bogotá killed 36 people (Semana, 2003). FARC had excluded themselves from the Colombian society.

In 2008 FARC lost their power. In the international context, the conditions of FARC hostages were compared with Nazi concentration camps (Minutouno, 2008). In the Colombian society, six million people marched against FARC in a march called by a few young through the use of Facebook (Morales, 2008). Inside of FARC, aka Tirofijo died from a heart attack. In the military campaign, their second in command is killed by the Colombian Special Forces; and their most famous hostages are rescued by the army in a deception operation (Dombret, 2009). FARC was significantly hit in military terms and politically diminished, but they conserved more than ten thousand combatants, financial power from the drug trafficking and presence throughout the country (IISS, 2011). FARC leaders realised they would never take the power through the weapons, and their former leaders were dying; if they wanted to survive and undertake their ideals, they would need to fight in the political arena, not with the weapons. It was the moment for a serious peace dialogues with the Colombian government.

**Opening the strategy: the road to include illegitimate actors in the Colombian society**

In 2010 Juan Manuel Santos, former Ministry of Defence in Uribe’s administration became President. He continued the offensive military strategy, but offering to FARC a negotiated and political end to the conflict (Santos, 2010). Few months after his possession, Santos presents ‘The Law of victims and land restitution’ to the Congress (ElEspectador, 2010), hitting the core of the conflict since the times of the independence, the issue of the land tenure. The law received parties and popular support; but a few months later, the conservative land owners called this law a threat to the private property (RestauraciónNacional, 2011).
At the end of 2010, the government created the ‘Crystal Ballot Box’ (*Urna de cristal*), an online tool intended to show inclusion and transparency in the public administration (Cusba, 2013). This tool has three dimensions: first, information and transparency, which shows the progress and results from the government; second, citizen consultation, an invitation to citizens for criticizing and generate interaction; third, decision-making, seeking citizen participation to find solutions to public problems (UrnadeCristal, 2017). The crystal ballot box includes traditional media such as TV, radio, call centre, SMS and printed media; and also digital media such as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook (Parra, 2015). This initiative was presented as a successful case of citizen participation in global forums (Vega, 2013), but internal studies showed the complex accessibility to the forums (Herrera and Ricaurte, 2015). The traditional media showed a doubtful transparency, and none inclusion. The digital media intended to include citizens in public debates, but an Internet penetration of 50.71% (Parra, 2015) excluded half of population, many of them, the most affected by the conflict.

In 2011, Santos declares the existence of a conflict in Colombia. This declaration removed from FARC the appellative of terrorists, opening the door to negotiation (ElEspectador, 2011). The right wing former president, Alvaro Uribe commented via Twitter: “terrorists do not meet the requirements for belligerence status, why do they (the government) open the door for them?” (Macías, 2011, translated from Spanish). Few months later, the UN Secretary visited Colombia to witness the signature of the ‘Law of victims and land restitution’, in which the Colombian State recognized all victims from the conflict and committed to repair them, regardless of which side do they belong (Estañoł, 2011). At its core, the law intends to repair more than four million victims of the armed conflict in Colombia and return more than two million hectares to those who have lost their land during the conflict (Santos, 2011). However, the idea of FARC as potential victims of state action instead of terrorists created an indignation feeling against this initial approach to the peace process. Cecilia Dueñas, a common citizen: “Law of victims? Jajaja, this is to entitle lands legally to FARC” (Dueñas, 2011, translated from Spanish); Eduardo Hernández, radio journalist: “Is an outrage that the law of victims gives legitimacy to FARC admitting an armed conflict” (Hernández, 2011, translated from Spanish). Even before the official beginning of the dialogues, a contradictory trend was emerging: the voices from abroad were constantly supporting the process, but internally the questionings to the process began to grow.
In February 2012 was the first meeting between the delegations of government and FARC; in the six following months, the delegations studied what have worked and what have not in the previous negotiations (ElEspectador, 2012). On 26th August 2012 the delegations signed a six-point negotiation agenda: comprehensive rural reform, FARC political participation, end of conflict, end of drug trade, compensation of victims, and the agreement endorsement mechanism (Jaramillo, et al., 2012). Nothing outside of this agenda would be discussed in the negotiation. Two days later, the representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs declared: “I warmly welcome the announcement by President Santos on the launch of peace negotiations with the FARC. It has always been the conviction of the European Union that only a negotiated solution can provide the basis for lasting peace in Colombia” (Ashton, 2012). The next day, the spokeswoman for the US state department commented: “we would, of course, welcome any efforts to end the hemisphere longest-running conflict and to bring about lasting peace in Colombia” (Nuland, 2012). In the international context the support was unanimous; the external inclusion of stakeholders was effective. Inside the country, in response to the international support that the Colombian president published via Twitter, the public opinion responded 24% favourably; 30% against the dialogues; and 46% without a clear position (Santos, 2012). The inclusion of internal stakeholders was fragmented.

In 2013, the first point of the agenda was agreed, comprehensive rural reform. This chapter has several inclusive policies: the creation of the Land Fund (Fondo de Tierras) to distribute freely 3 million hectares to the poorest and most affected people by the conflict; the benefits will prioritize rural women, particularly heads of households and those displaced by the conflict; the land access will be accompanied by seed capitals, technical assistance and infrastructure associated such as roadways, education, irrigation, housing and market access (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). The opposition used social media to denounce the so called rural reform was generating more violence; the ex-president Uribe in Twitter: “President Santos incites confrontations among peasants with law of lands” (Uribe, 2014, translated from Spanish). Others associate the land restitution with expropriation: “Law of lands is a buried way of expropriation to be managed by FARC” (Pérez, 2016, translated from Spanish). Parallel, the European Council President and the President of the European Commission expressed their support to the peace talks (El Tiempo, 2013).

At the end of 2013, a second point was agreed: political participation. This chapter allowed FARC conformation as a political party, providing security for their political exercise; created
a reconciliation council for difference respect and non-stigmatisation; and conceded 16 seats in the House of Representatives for two periods (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). Political participation of former ‘terrorists’ caused popular indignation. Once again, former President Uribe would be the first to protest via Twitter: “President Santos denies impunity, but offer political eligibility to FARC, drug dealers, children criminals, kidnappers” (Uribe, 2013, translated from Spanish). Some voices supported the initiative; however, the vast majority expressed their nonconformity through social media.

In May 2014 a third point is agreed: the solution to the problem of illicit drugs. This chapter created a voluntary coca crops substitution program linked with the rural reform; a national program to attend internal drug consumption; and more law enforcement mechanisms to prosecute drug dealers (Santos and Jiménez, 2013). This chapter received strong support from the public opinion; academia (Javeriana, 2016; Uninorte, 2016), NGOs (PrensaLibre, 2016) and citizens (Castellanos, 2016); expressed through social media. However, once the agreement would be signed, coca crops boosted because the cultivators are expecting the government benefits from the substitution program (Semana, 2017).

In December 2015 a fourth point is agreed: compensations of victims. This chapter recognizes both parts victims; creating a commission for the truth, coexistence and non-repetition; and a special jurisdiction for peace, in order to make justice of the conflict crimes (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). To reach this chapter, four forums were organized with more than 3,000 victims; 60 of their representatives participated in the negotiations; and more than 17,000 proposals were sent through the ‘Crystal Ballot Box’ and parallel mechanisms (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). However, the part of FARC as state victims created thousands of indignations in social media: “FARC cynicism has no limits, they call themselves victims” (Trina, 2016, translated from Spanish); “In an attitude of disrespect and outrage to the victims, FARC chiefs pretend to turn from murderers to victims; huge cynicism” (Leandro, 2016, translated from Spanish). Some citizens began to felt that this agreement was a government charade to give the country to FARC: “FARC continue extorting and trafficking despite the peace dialogues, a charade” (Angarita, 2016, translated from Spanish).

In June 2016 the last to chapters were agreed, the end of the conflict, and the implementation mechanisms. The end of the conflict guarantees the cessation of hostilities; FARC laying down of arms; and their future security and transition to society in political, economic and
social terms (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). The parts agreed a definite ceasefire. FARC would concentrate in 23 transitional zones, and in a period of six months they will do the decommissioning of weapons under the supervision of UN delegates (Santos and Jiménez 2016). The cease fire was celebrated massively by the different sectors of Colombian society, and expressed through the social media; Manuel Bolívar, a journalist: “The bilateral cease of fire and hostilities is a triumph of the Colombian people” (Bolívar, 2016, translated from Spanish); Néstor García, a victim of FARC: “Today, those who were victims of FARC and violence in or country, feel joy with the signature of the cease of fire and hostilities” (García, 2016, translated from Spanish). The Security Council of the UN issued a resolution in which they committed to certify the deposition of FARC weapons (United Nations Security Council, 2016), guaranteeing international monitoring and transparency to the reintegration process. The US President asked Congress for 450 million USD for post-conflict support policies in the ‘Plan Peace Colombia’ (Semana, 2016a). External inclusion facilitated cooperation and resources for the post-conflict.

Besides the ‘cease of fire’, the endorsement mechanism of the agreement was a plebiscite, in which the Colombian citizens would vote yes to approve it, or no to reject it (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). In any case, before the plebiscite, the signing of the agreement was carried out by President Santos and FARC leader, aka Timochenko. The international support was represented with the UN Secretary, 15 presidents, 27 foreign ministers and 10 directors of international organisations (ElTiempo, 2016a). This moment concluded successfully the negotiation between the Colombian State and FARC after 52 years in the insurgency.

After the agreement text announcement, the government had few more than three months to get the support from people for the plebiscite on the 2nd October. The propaganda had begun since the beginning of dialogues (infopresidencia, 2012), but this period intensified the debate because the definite text was available. However, the average of reading books per year per capita in Colombia is 1,9 (Libreros, 2013), which means that an agreement of 310 pages is an impossible task for the big majority of voters. So, the positions of the voters were based more on particular beliefs and trust in opinion makers, than in the analysis of the agreement text.

In addition to the government inclusion initiatives and the emergent exclusions described above in this section, the two following examples show some attempts of inclusion that ended in emergent exclusions that moved the public opinion against the plebiscite. First, the
agreement has an important component of gender focus, which is defined twofold: equalitarian access to the agreement benefits indistinctly of the gender identity; and protection of women, children and teenager as the most vulnerable people affected by the conflict (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). Opposition skilfully changed gender focus by gender ideology (Semana, 2016b), creating a wave of rejections of the agreement. The catholic organisation light, hope and life tweeted: “FARC, gender ideology, euthanasia and abortion that support the government of Juan Manuel Santos” (Luzesperanzayvida, 2016, translated from Spanish). The words ideology, euthanasia and abortion do not appear in the agreement, but in a country that during three centuries was under the catholic rule (Serrano, 2016), and where 91% of population remain Christian, the insinuation of gender ideology shocks their traditional beliefs. The former president Uribe supported the misconception: “Monsignor Victor Tamayo expressed preoccupations for gender ideology. We vote NO” (Uribe, 2016, translated from Spanish). Second, in order to explain the agreement with FARC, the government negotiation chief spoke directly with citizens through a Facebook Live event, two weeks before the plebiscite day (ElTiempo, 2016b). During his discourse, the politician explained how better is to see FARC in politics instead of see FARC in weapons attacking the country and the people. However, the possibility that the chief of FARC could be presidential candidate in 2018 moved the public opinion against the agreement. A street banner mentioned: “Do you want to see Timochenko (FARC leader) as president, vote YES in the plebiscite” (Valencia, 2016, translated from Spanish). Table 3 relates chronologically some of the most relevant initiatives of inclusion from the government and the emergent exclusions during the time of the open strategy approach to the peace dialogues.

Table 3. Inclusion government initiatives and emergent exclusions of some sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Intended inclusion initiatives</th>
<th>Unintended emergent exclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Presentation of ‘the law of victims and land restitution’ to the Congress’.</td>
<td>The Colombian government is attempting to the private property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Crystal ballot box’ promoted inclusion and transparency through e-participation.</td>
<td>A 50.71% of Internet penetration excludes half of population, especially the most affected by the conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Declaration of a conflict in Colombia instead of a terrorist threat, opening the door for the dialogues.</td>
<td>The Colombian government is giving unfair political space to terrorists and aggressors of Colombian society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>The signature of the ‘Law of victims and land restitution’ recognizes victims regardless of which side do they belong.</td>
<td>FARC as potential victims of state action created an indignation feeling against the initial approaches to the peace dialogues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Delegations agreed a six-point agenda; nothing outside of this specific agenda would be discussed in the negotiation. Other topics related to the presence of guerrilla in Colombia were excluded from the agenda.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>The law of lands will distribute land and a comprehensive support to the poorest and more affected by the conflict. Some sectors labeled the law of lands as a way to entitle lands to FARC.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>FARC will transform to a political party instead of a guerrilla group. Government is awarding FARC crimes giving them political participation and 16 seats in the House of Representatives.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Assistance to peasants in the substitution of illicit crops. Once the agreement was signed, coca crops have boosted in order to receive the money from the substitution program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Both parts victims with a guarantee of truth, justice and non-repetition. FARC combatants as victims boosted a feeling of indignation with the dialogues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>The announcement of the agreement complete text allowed the citizenship their reading and analysis. The reading levels in Colombia are small, so isolated sentences into the agreement moulded the collective conscience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>The gender focus prioritizes benefits and attention to women, children, and teenagers as the most affected victims. The change of gender focus to gender ideology created a wave of rejection due to the traditional Catholic values.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Initial implications of the dialogues**

Although the agreement had been signed with great fanfare, the endorsement was rejected by the Colombian voters in the plebiscite on 2nd October 2016. The vote for the ‘no’ won with the 50.21% against the 49.78% who voted for the ‘yes’. The citizen participation percentage in the elections was only the 27% of the potential voters (Registraduría, 2016). The results evidenced the critical consequences of intended inclusion initiatives without a delicate consideration of the unintended emergent exclusions when governing with an open strategy.

The external inclusion (Dobusch and Kapeller, 2013) was successful. The massive participation of presidents and other foreign authorities (ElTiempo, 2016a) demonstrated the support of international community and good will abroad; but the relevance of this support was counterproductive in Colombia. The international backrest was seen in the country as a personal vanity of the president. This tweet summarizes part of the collective thinking: “Santos in his vanity, looking forward to winning the Nobel peace prize, is giving the country to the narco-terrorists” (Lizcano, 2016, translated from Spanish).
The internal inclusion failed; the intention to include does not mean inclusion. The range of people involved (Whittington et al., 2011) did not fulfil the expectations. Inclusion tends to be a combined personal feeling of belongingness and uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). Instead of generate a feeling of belongingness in citizens; social media was revealing, even before the elections, an increasing feeling of rejection to the agreement and to the government. The feeling of uniqueness was harder to create in citizens due to the intention to capture the vast majority support. Inclusion also require the people have access to the information, participate in the discussion and feels part of the decision-making process (Mor Barak, 2014). The Colombian government attempted to include all Colombian society sectors in the peace process with FARC; they opened multiple channels such as the Crystal Ballot Box (Parra, 2015), and other citizen involvement events such as the forums with the participation of thousands of conflict victims (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). However, the openness was mainly in terms of information access; the participation in the discussions and the agreement as the outcome of the process were done by the government and FARC representatives. Consequently, the openness in the decision making through the plebiscite revealed that the feelings of inclusion were not felt by the majority of voters. Inclusion in open government is more a feeling in the citizens than a policy from the government. If the inclusion policy do not consider the three steps suggested by Mor Barak (2014): access to information, joint discussion and joint decision making; the inclusive policy will be ineffective in the polls.

Excess of inclusion has consequences. The insistence to include some of the most vulnerable people in the agreement worked against the mainstream of Colombian society, the traditional white catholic and conservative voter. The word gender is mentioned 55 times and the word focus is mentioned 100 times into the agreement (Santos y Jiménez, 2016), which created a fear that the agreements would benefit only a small few of the Colombian society. Although some authors highlight the relevance of uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011) joint decision making need to get the support of the mainstream. The inclusion of new players implies the exclusion of former players. In this case, the inclusion of vulnerable populations excluded the mainstream of population.

Excess of transparency has consequences as well. The president knew he did not need to endorse the agreement through a plebiscite. He could have passed and endorsed the agreement through the Congress, where the government has the majorities, but a plebiscite was more transparent because it would be validated by the people (Santos y Jiménez, 2016). He took the
risk and paid the consequences. Although the calls to greater transparency in strategy (Whittington et al., 2011) have shown benefits and increased trust in organisations; the strategists need to be aware to the most effective mechanisms available.

Coinciding with Baptista et al., (2017), the role of social media was critical to mould the decision of the citizens. Small bites of the agreements in Twitter are easier to digest than the 310 pages of the complete agreement. Despite the misconceptions of some of the agreement topics, the messages permeated well in the general public. The sound bites that permeated the best were those associated with the personal values of the voters and their fears of change. The change of gender focus for gender ideology (Uribe, 2016) affected the conception of the traditional family in Colombia created during the three centuries of Spanish Catholic rule, and along the Colombian republican life (Serrano, 2016). In addition, the street banner saying that FARC leader would be the Colombian president if people voted yes in the plebiscite (Valencia, 2016) generated a wave of fear in the citizens. Social media demonstrated that the truth in the message is not necessary, what is necessary is the feeling of inclusion that the voter has with the message. The use of technological tools that the vast majority of citizens can access, demonstrated the constant relevance and influence of sociomateriality for decision making (Orlikowski, 2008).

The president acknowledged his defeat, but announced he would persevere in his endeavours to reach the peace in Colombia and invited the opposition to discuss their concerns on the agreement (infopresidencia, 2016); opening the forgotten joint discussion (Mor Barak, 2014). Four days after the plebiscite results, the Nobel Peace Prize to the Colombian president was announced (Nobelprize, 2016), which in the words of Santos “The Nobel Prize was the ‘stern wind’ that pushed us to reach our destination: the port of the peace” (RCN, 2016). A series of meetings with the leaders of the opposition modified the initial agreement that was endorsed this time, not by a new plebiscite, but through the Congress. The president acknowledged he had learned his lesson (Santos, 2016).

Since the signature of the new agreement, new stories of inclusion have emerged; one of the most fascinating had its origins not from the government, but from a theatre company. The theatre play ‘Victus’ gathered members from all the groups immersed in the conflict; ex-members of guerrilla, ex-members of paramilitary groups, ex-militaries and also civilian population victims from the most diverse backgrounds. The people involved did not revealed
their past to their stage colleagues; they declare themselves by their names, preferences and dreams. In words of the play director, Alejandra Borrero: “Victus has been revealing … this is a project that wants to collect memory, truth; and not the truth of only one side, but all the truths, the truths from all the Colombians” (Borrero, 2016, translated from Spanish). This common space facilitated to these actors of the conflict, now actors of the stage, to remove their previous labels of guerrilla, soldier, victim, etc., allowing a space where these human beings, from the most diverse stories and backgrounds, felt they were part of the same goal and valued according their unique characteristics. Sometimes these emergent inclusion experiments can reveal more of the meaning of inclusion than the intended strategies.

Conclusions

Open strategy and open government need to go deeper in the understanding of inclusion if they want to succeed. Participation processes from government and organisations are certainly a good first step of openness, but hardly create the feelings of inclusion. Particularly, the technological participation, although is certainly useful to gather information from a wide public, exclude those who has no access to technology or those who do not understand about how to use the technology and data available. The mechanism of the ‘Crystal Ballot Box’ was transparent and promoted participation, but it did not make the citizen to feel included.

The intended inclusion strategies from governments and organisations can have disastrous consequences if a serious analysis of the potential unintended emergent exclusions is not considered. The most determinant aspects for consider in democratic decision making seem to be personal values and fears of the citizens. The personal values, for example the belief in the traditional Catholic family; and the fears, like the possibility to have the FARC leader as Colombian president; moved the public opinion to vote for the no in the plebiscite. If the transparency and inclusion policies will be submitted to the democratic decision making, it is determinant to consider a communication strategy that inform to the mainstream why this inclusion initiative worth the support of the citizens, but touching their values and reducing their fears.

The communication through sound bites in social media demonstrated to be too much more effective to mould the citizen position to the plebiscite than the agreement announcement or the president discourses. Usually, the common citizen does not read extensive documents,
even if they seem to be as important as the peace agreement after a 52-year conflict. The use of social media seems to be worked for government and opposition due to the similar results of the plebiscite votes.

The emergent initiatives such as the theatre play Victus can reveal how does inclusion manifest in a societal context, and open possible paths for further research in the understanding of the inclusion meaning, and how similar experiments can be applied to open strategy and open government.

This paper is limited to an open strategy in a government at the national level; and particularly to the context of the Colombian peace process for the inclusion of FARC as an illegitimate organisation into a legitimate society. Further research can show how does inclusion manifest in open strategy at sectorial and organisational contexts. In addition, further research can reveal inclusion not from the government approach, but from the citizen perspectives.

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