

Dossier 2: Project undertaken



[Peru]

A Case of Institutional Reinforcement and Community Involvement



The snow-capped Salcantay rising to a height of 6,271 metres above sea level (Zabalketa)

Presentation

Between 2013 and 2015, Zabalketa and the Southern Network of Caritas of Peru, with the joint funding of the Basque Agency for Development Cooperation, implemented the programme “Fair and sustainable development in Andean communities” (Peru).

This programme also provided the framework for an educational scheme at institutions of higher education both in the Basque Country and in Peru, based on the “Case method”, using this actual programme as the real case to be studied.

This Dossier 2 is part of a set of teaching resources that have been prepared according to this methodology, and adopt an informative tone to briefly highlight the work strategies followed, the achievements made, and the difficulties encountered when undertaking this work in cooperation for development.

Introduction

In the foothills of the Peruvian Andes, at heights ranging between 2,500 and 4,000 metres above sea level, the farming families in the districts of Acopía and San Pedro de Cachora (which we shall refer to from now on simply as Cachora) face the daily challenge of marshalling their communities’ development.

The Southern Network of Caritas of Peru and the Zabalketa Association, headquartered in Getxo, have been working together in this part of the Andes since 2000, pursuing sundry projects.

The work undertaken in this programme has involved selecting the following eight farming communities from these two districts:

District	Population	Area (Hectares)	Community
Acopía	2,557 (52% female 48% male)	9	Acopía
			Huayrachapi
			Miskiuno
			Santo Domingo
			Tactabamba
Cachora	3,531 (51% male 49% female)	11	Ttasta Poyoncco
			Asil
			Pantipata

Source: INEI, Censo Población 2007

Based on a prior survey conducted jointly with the local governments and farming communities in these two districts, it was concluded that **the main obstacle to this area’s development was the uncoordinated and inefficient management performed by the territory’s four main stakeholders**: local government, farming communities, farmer organisations, and the adult men and women in the two districts.



Map: location of the districts of Acopía and Cachora

With a view to alleviating these shortcomings, a three-year programme (2013-2015) jointly funded by the Basque Agency for Cooperation Development was implemented, with its main brief being to **ensure that these players in the territory, under the leadership of the local government, will concertedly and efficiently manage a process of local development, by adopting an approach that is inclusive, fair and sustainable.**

The strategy chosen by the Southern Network of Caritas and Zabalketa involved working in unison with these four major stakeholders in the territory, based on the following reasons:



Work meeting between Zabalketa and the Southern Network of Caritas of Peru (Zabalketa)

- It allows working directly with each one of the organisational structures and, furthermore, impacting upon the interrelationships between them, thereby helping to further the creation of synergies.
- True local empowerment requires engaging the population.
- These players have been taking part in different schemes in favour of local development, with note being taken of the need they have accordingly for support to boost them and orchestrate them with one another.
- A greater impact is made on the achievement of gender equality, through the opportunity to work with different stakeholders and in those areas where decisions are made and inequalities generated.

The work to be undertaken therefore focused on the following **four components**:

1. The reinforcement of the management capabilities of the local governments of Acopía and Cachora,

with a view to fostering local development in a participative and concerted manner.

2. The reinforcement of the management capabilities of the authorities and leaders of the farming communities, whereby they will improve their governing mechanisms, incorporating criteria of fairness, engagement and consensus.
3. The reinforcement of the management capabilities of local agricultural organisations, whereby they will be able to adopt a more concerted approach to the management of their schemes for sustainable local economic development.
4. The promotion of the active involvement of both men and women, whereby they may exercise their rights in a due and proper manner, and become involved in managing the development of their community and district.

Programme launch

The programme was launched with two strategic actions designed to ensure its successful development.

The first activity involved holding **a workshop for launching the programme**, designed for the task forces in two Caritas offices: those located in the departments of Cusco and Apurimac, and which are part of the Southern Network Consortium of Caritas of Peru. The workshop's remit was to socialise the programme's overall strategy, unify administrative procedures and criteria, and plan the coordination of the networking. This workshop was attended by people from both the management and technical teams, as well as by administrative and accounting staff.

The second strategic action involved the **programme's official presentation** in the two target districts, which was attended by political leaders, public service staff, heads of the community, and senior members of grassroots social organisations. All these people were introduced to the programme and given a briefing document.



Taking the minutes at a meeting (Old Port Films)

These presentations revealed the major commitment and motivation among civil society in response to the programme's implementation, as these same people had been involved beforehand during the prior survey and drafting of the project.

Following these two initial actions, the next step involved working on the components identified, performing the following activities and recording the following results:

Component 1

Reinforcement of the management capabilities of the local governments

The aim of this first component was to help the local governments to acquire greater management capabilities, with a view to fostering local development in a participative and concerted manner.

The work was pursued along several lines, with the first of these being **advice and support to help the local**

governments improve and/or prepare and implement their internal management instruments, namely, the *Reglamento de Organización y Funciones* (the regulations on organisation and functions - ROF) and the *Manual de Organización y Funciones* (handbook on organisation and functions - MOF). Accordingly, through the arrangement of workshops, and thanks to their high attendance, the outcome has been, for example, that the local government of Acopía has incorporated the gender approach into these instruments, which has now led to the empowerment and involvement of women, and a service has been set up to attend to women victims of violence.

In the case of Cachora, the new instruments now clearly identify the roles and functions of public servants according to criteria of fairness, and precisely define the procedures and levels of coordination.

The second line of work undertaken with the local governments involved the **acquisition and enhancement of the capabilities of public servants for the more efficient performance of their functions**. This

involved the introduction in both districts of a diploma for participatory and concerted management for local development, referred to in Spanish as *Diplomatura en Gestión Participativa y Concertada para el Desarrollo Local*, which was attended by a total of 12 men and women from among local leaders and public servants. This diploma has improved the performance of staff functions in their respective work areas, as reflected in the improvement of the administrative procedures undertaken and the services provided, mainly in the areas of social and economic development. As examples, we could mention, among other improvements, that the public servants in the area of economic development are now responsible for arranging livestock and agricultural schemes and economic entrepreneurship, and that the government has improved its governance and organisational structures for attending to the public.

The third line of work developed with the local governments involved **reinforcing the areas for participation and the mechanisms of consensus with civil society**. Accordingly, internships were arranged



One of the streets in the centre of Acopía (Zabalketa)



to gather information on successful cases of district management in the region.

These internships were highlighted by the authorities and public servants as one of the more effective means within the training strategy implemented by the programme, which has meant that these public servants have favoured greater dialogue and coordination among them. Specifically, these people were able to learn about the experience in local management and implementation of the Cachimayo district’s development council, *Consejo de Desarrollo Distrital*, in the province of Anta-Cusco, which for the past eight years has been applying this model of consensus for territorial management and local development.

In addition, 16 authorities from the local governments of Acopía and Cachora took part in a week-long symposium on reinforcing the management capabilities of authorities in rural areas of southern Peru - *Fortalecimiento de Capacidades de Gestión de Autoridades de Zonas Rurales del Sur del Perú*, which was held in Lima. During the mornings, the delegates attended

a training programme on the introduction to the management of local governments called *Introducción a la Gestión de los Gobiernos Locales*, and during the afternoons they visited actual experiences of local management and the implementation of public policies in four institutions: the Mayor’s office of the Villa el Salvador district, the national parliament - *Congreso de la República*, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and Caritas of Peru, in order to share the management experiences of local councils and territorial administration in rural areas in Peru’s southern mountain regions.

Furthermore, the **District Development Plans were reviewed and drawn up with community participation**, with a good outcome in Acopía, as the process involved the social organisations, farmer organisations, women’s organisations, and even children. In Cachora, by the time the programme ended, the new elected authorities had updated the District Development Plan, and they were in the process of implementing it. This district has also seen the active involvement of the various local stakeholders; identifying the local issues that need to be addressed and prioritising their



Holding a community meeting (Old Port Films)

local development projects with the focus set on the year 2021.

Furthermore, on this point, the programme was also used to boost and reinforce the organisation of **technical task forces, called *mesas técnicas de trabajo***, as extremely useful and interesting areas for consensus. In Acopía, these social and economic development task forces were already up and running by the end of the programme, while in Cachora, the new elected authorities were organising areas of consensus and dialogue with the population, likewise based on the strategic pillars of economic and social development.

The last action undertaken in this third line with local governments was the design and implementation of an **information, transparency and assessment system**, which in the district of Acopía involved drafting and developing a communication plan for the mayor's office, the involvement of public servants in outlying areas, and the preparation of mural newspapers.

Based on this work performed with the local governments, the following three results were forthcoming:

- Local governments operate with an organic structure that is more effective, functional and efficient.
- The authorities and public servants have stronger capabilities for performing their duties more efficiently.
- Local governments promote and reinforce the areas and mechanisms of consensus with civil society for the management of local development.

Component 2

Reinforcement of the capabilities of the authorities and leaders of the farming communities

The aim of this component was to help the farming communities improve their management mechanisms, incorporating criteria of fairness, engagement and consensus, which involved the implementation of the following actions:

The farming communities were helped and supported in the **drafting and implementation of their bylaws**



Work meeting in the Miskiuno farming community, Acopía district (Zabalketa)

and internal regulations, which meant reviewing and improving these instruments in aspects such as women's involvement, with the right to be both heard and vote and their right to hold community offices; the acknowledgement and coordination of grassroots organisations, including youth organisations; and the management of natural resources, among others.

On the other hand, the authorities and delegates from the community organisations attended **training workshops in community organisation and management**, which were divided into 12 modules, and which provided instruction in participation, democracy, management skills, etc. The overall attendance has involved 735 leaders, of whom 313 were women (43%) and 422 men (57%), and the improvements achieved included such highlights as bigger and better participation in communal assemblies; a better understanding among the members of management committees; the greater presence and involvement of women and young people, as well as better organisation and more fluidity in the holding of assemblies. Their dealings with the municipality also reveal greater participation and improvement in their capabilities

for monitoring municipal management, demanding greater transparency with sound arguments and the disclosure of information.

In step with this training scheme, **women community leaders** were provided with support for, among other actions, the organisation of assemblies, doing the paperwork with public registries, the organisation of market fairs, and the management of purchases.

Another line of work that was pursued involved **facilitating and accompanying the farming communities in the review and drafting of community development plans**. These plans include the outlook for development, as well as the lines of action, targets and specific projects to be undertaken. The programmes ensured that the drafting of these plans was more participatory, allowing for the collective formulation of this development focus, as well as encouraging women's participation, accounting for 47% of those attending, and providing for and considering those topics of concern to them.

The programme also served as **a platform for helping community management committees to improve and**



Farming family taking their sheep out to graze (Old Port Films)

drive their participation in the **District Development Council (CDD)**, in both Acopía and Cachora. These councils are attended on average by 60 authorities and leaders from each one of the districts, and they are used to identify and decide upon the main development actions that are to be boosted, according to the development plans agreed at community and district level. One of the programme's achievements involved helping the farming communities to present several proposals in these areas of consensus, and some of them were considered and included in the following year's budgets.

The actions undertaken with the farming communities have led to the achievement of three results:

- The farming communities have a new organisational structure and a fairer and more functional management model.
- The management committees have more capabilities for better fulfilling their duties.
- The farming communities have reinforced their capabilities for engagement and agreement with the local government and outside institutions.

Component 3

Reinforcement of the management capabilities of local farmer organisations

The target of the programme's third component is to enable local farmer organisations to manage their proposals in a concerted manner, and thereby favour sustainable economic development in the area.

This involved working with a total of 13 organisations in the two districts, four of which were created as a direct result of the programme. Twenty **training workshops** were held that were attended by 160 people: 82 women (51%) and 78 men (49%). These workshops provided training on the handling of strategic instruments, as well as on associationism, among other topics. As a result, the organisations now have annual work plans, and they jointly organise market fairs for the sale of their products.

These organisations were also helped to **review their management instruments** (minutes' book, cash-book, register of members, and bylaws). The organisations showed considerable interest in these official



Cuy bred by a farming family (Old Port Films)

procedures, as they will enable them to access funds and entitle them to be heard and vote in decision-making bodies at district level.

Specifically concerning the farming side, a total of 24 **technical training workshops** were held, which were attended by 394 people: 233 women (59%) and 161 men (41%). Some of the topics addressed were food and nutrition, animal wellbeing, control of diseases, proper facilities and production records. The end result was the identification of, among others, the following improvements: rules on biosafety are upheld, proper use is made of medications, and diets are better balanced.

This technical training at institutional level was bolstered by approximately 220 **customised cases of technical support**, in which a more detailed study was made of soil analysis, land preparation, seeding, pest control, etc.

The technical level also provided support and more specific training in four areas: one of these involved the **installation of sprinkler-based irrigation systems**, which were deployed on 180 household concerns, which in turn received training in the sustainable

management and safeguarding of the headwaters of rivers and streams.

The second one of these specific technical interventions involved the **growing of nutritionally enhanced crops**, which involved selecting a variety that provides a better quality of feed for cattle, which is resistant to frost, and which is commonly found at these heights. This involved 16 workshops that were attended by 333 people (51% women and 49% men), and 44 hectares of this variety were cultivated on land worked by 340 households.

The third intervention involved **building infrastructures for the different livestock**: cuys, cows, etc. This meant first identifying the beneficiary families, and then building these infrastructures in around 100 household concerns.

The last of the technical supports provided was related to the **breeding of cuys**, and specifically the animal's technical handling, disease control and its technified management, being rounded off with training in subjects such as associationism and the commercial distribution of cuy meat, as this economic activity has proven to have a major potential for dynamising the local economy in both districts.

The work undertaken with the farmer organisations produced the following results:

- The farmer organisations have greater management capabilities.
- Farming households have reinforced their technical-productive management capabilities.

Component 4

Promotion of the active involvement of both men and women in managing the development of their community and district.

The aim of this component is to involve men and women alike in the development of both their community and their district.



Voting time at a community meeting (Old Port Films)

To do so, and on the one hand, **awareness and dissemination campaigns on Human and Citizens' Rights** were held in the two districts, which consisted mainly of radio programmes, women's encounters and street canvassing. These campaigns were used to denounce the discrimination women suffer and shed light on its consequences and the problems it causes.

These campaigns managed to actively involve the local government (through women councillors), other local authorities (governors and magistrates), institutions (schools, national police force and the health sector), organisations, leaders –above all women- which had a significant impact on their empowerment, driving the formation of new women's organisations throughout the district.

A second action involved creating **schools for leaders**. The definition of the content to be taught at this school took into account the results obtained in the

prior diagnosis of needs. The first intake of students at this school involved a selection of 97 people (57% women and 43% men), and the syllabus included the following topics: identity, personal development, and communication for social change.

These training schemes were subsequently extended to other areas, such as communal assemblies, meetings of organisations, and parents' meetings at schools, and the subjects addressed were self-esteem, values, and human rights. In general, the training worked very well in these three areas, although a highlight was the interest shown by schools, which asked for these schemes to be continued, as well as the fact they were attended by both mothers and fathers.

These training sessions were also held on self-esteem, values, and human rights specifically with women. Accordingly, the difficulty arose of getting more women involved, so more work needs to be done in terms of

raising awareness. The women who did attend had a positive opinion on the methodology used in the training, highlighting its simplicity, dynamism and the use of audiovisual resources and games, while also asking for more practice in public speaking and the use of a microphone, whereby they will be better prepared to take part in community assemblies and meetings.

Another line of work that was introduced involved individual and group **mentoring**, for both men and women, for exercising their rights (reporting cases of domestic violence to the police, taking part in community assemblies and grassroots meetings, etc.), as well as for leaders when submitting proposals (improving education services, better sanitation, meeting the local gender quota, etc.).

With a view to helping to reinforce leadership capabilities, a **leaders' meeting** was held between the two districts for the purpose of creating an area of dialogue in which to share experiences. This meeting was attended by 69 people (51% women and 49% men), and it illustrated the high level of organisation and engagement among both men and women, who revealed their skill at analysing the current state of their communities, while at the same time proposing ways of improving the management of the community and its organisations.

Also with a view to complementing the theoretical education, the leaders undertook **internships to learn about successful leadership experiences** in other provinces and regions throughout the country. This enabled them, for example, to learn about the experience of a women's organisation, which through the production and sale of arts and crafts managed to ensure their organisation's sustainability



Children playing outside (Old Port Films)

and continuity, as well as a proposal for economic development based on rural tourism in the community promoted by public and private institutions. The hope is that these successful experiences may be replicated in their own communities and districts.

The work undertaken within this component 4 has produced the following results:

- Women and men are familiar with their citizens' rights and know how important it is to exercise them.
- Leaders are sufficiently capacitated to head their community and influence public municipal management.