

Dossier 2: Project undertaken



[Peru]

Community engagement for the joint promotion of local development

Presentation

Zabalketa and the Southern Network of Caritas in Peru have now been working with Andean farming families for more than 20 years in pursuit of fair and sustainable development in the local community.

These years have seen a great deal of progress made in this local development, although it has been noted that this region has two circumstances that continue to hold it back: one of them is people's lack of engagement; and the other is the absence of a culture of shared and orchestrated work between civil and political institutions.

This means that those projects put in place at municipal level often do not cater for the population's real needs; the plans rolled out have no continuity; and what's more, they have only a limited impact on development processes.

To help resolve these difficulties and seek to improve both engagement and orchestration, a three-year long programme has been developed that has received funding from the Basque Agency for Cooperation for Development, which is a body attached to the Basque Government.

This dossier provides an instructive and summary overview of the main work strategies undertaken, as well as the successes and difficulties recorded during the programme's development.

The project has been undertaken in partnership with local government, social organisations, and farming communities in Peru's Andean region, although there has also been an opportunity to work with occupational training centres in Euskadi-The Basque Country, and specifically with the students and teaching staff in the Higher Diploma in Social Integration.

Introduction

This programme goes by the name "*Community engagement for orchestrating local development*", and its specific purpose is to encourage local authorities and communities to work together to implement those strategies that will allow furthering local development based on criteria of engagement, inclusion, equity and sustainability.

The project has involved 13 farming communities in the districts of Acopía, Sangarará and Checacupe, belonging to the Department of Cusco and, in turn, seven occupational training centres in the Basque Country's three provinces: Álava, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa.

Over the three years, these are the programme's five lines of work:





Line 1. Reinforcing the management capabilities of Local Government

As part of a country's organisational structure, Local Authorities, or Municipal Governments, are normally the grassroots institutions that constitute the population's most immediate channel of participation in political affairs. Local authorities have independent control over their resources in order to satisfy the community's collective needs.

The local authorities in the three districts where the programme has been undertaken have a series of weaknesses and face challenges for the equitable and sustainable exercise of their public duties, due mainly to the fact they have not received any instruction in public management, which is why the programme's first line of work has focused on creating and improving these people's management skills.

The programme has worked with the management team and staff in the three local authorities in these three districts: Acopía, Sangarará and Checacupe, with the remit being to draw up and implement policies that favour shared and orchestrated work among the community's sundry agents, as well as people's engagement in those public fora in which decisions

are made that affect the future of these farming communities.

One of the strategies implemented accordingly has involved instructing both political representatives and public workers in values and principles, such as inclusion, equity, participation and consensus, thereby enabling them to carry out their duties and responsibilities according to these criteria. They have also received instruction on Peruvian legislation, and specifically on the laws governing equal opportunities, public procurement and the treatment and preservation of the environment. They have also been instructed in the skills and competencies required for the resolution of conflicts, the due and proper exercise of leadership, and the development of emotional intelligence.

Based on this instruction, these people have been supported and coached to enable them to embrace these criteria and competencies, both in their everyday work, as in, for example, the meetings of the District Development Committees, in the workshops for drawing up the local budgets, the *Presupuestos Participativos*; as well as regarding the management instruments they use, which include the District Development Plans, which now embrace specific targets for gender equality, human rights and ecological sustainability, among others.

New fora have also been created for coordinating with other social agents, such as the associations of farming families and the farming communities' management boards, with which visits, encounters and workshops have been arranged for meeting, fraternising, forging ties, and working in an orchestrated manner.

The people working for the local authorities have undergone internships or work experiences in other councils in order to gain a first-hand understanding of success stories in orchestrated management at local or council level. These displacements have enabled them to identify a series of best practices that they have then transferred and adapted to their own particular circumstances.



Situational diagnosis workshop for reviewing the Development Plan for the district of Sangarará

Furthermore, a number of communication strategies have been created and put in place to favour the transparency of council information, whereby the local population is kept informed, and which in turn improves relations and the level of trust between the local authorities and the community at large. The strategies used include radio campaigns, television broadcasts, websites, and the deployment of information models and panels.

This has been supplemented by training the members of the Social Surveillance Committees to better monitor and supervise local government. This instruction has involved analysing these committees' mandate, the rules and legislation regulating them, as well as different topics related to local development, community engagement and transparency, among others.

Table 1: Political representatives and public workers in the three districts.

District	Type	Men	Women	Total
Acopía	Mayor	1		1
	Councillors	4	1	5
	Public Workers	20	8	28
Sangarará	Mayor	1		1
	Councillors	3	2	5
	Public Workers	15	7	22
Checacupe	Mayor	1		1
	Councillors	4	1	5
	Public Workers	43	22	65
Total		92	41	133



Men and women working on a review of communal development plans

Line 2. Reinforcing the capabilities of organised civil society for engagement and orchestration in gender equality

In this region of the Peruvian Andes that has hosted the programme, there are a series of grassroots organisations of considerable importance that should be suitably taken into account when drawing up and implementing a Local Development Plan.

On the one hand, there are the **Farming Communities**, which are the organisations specific to the Quechua culture. They are governed by a management committee of seven people (chair, deputy chair, secretary, treasurer and ordinary members), who in turn organise themselves into specialist committees (water, lands, livestock, etc.). They hold monthly assemblies to address, discuss, report and decide upon those issues

of importance to the community; for example, if there has been some problem of law and order, if there has been a neighbourhood complaint, or to report on the management committee's business and the work it has undertaken. The assemblies are also used to address those issues related to the management and administration of natural resources in the area: water, woodlands, ponds, etc. These assemblies are attended by men over the age of 18, who are the acknowledged "heads of the household", while in the case of women only widows and single mothers are present.

Table 2: Communities involved in the project and the census of people over the age of 18.

District	Communities	Registered		
		Men	Women	Total
Acopía	Acopía	270	259	529
	Santo Domingo	163	187	350
	Tactabamba	69	85	154
Sangarará	Sangarará	SD.	SD.	481
	Marcaconga	223	229	452
	Unión Chahuay	57	5	(*) 62
	Yanampampa	68	67	135
Checacupe	Occobamba Norte	29	27	56
	Occobamba Sur	38	36	74
	Cangalli	93	32	125
	Llocllora	106	121	227
	Chari	SD.	SD.	234
	Palccoyo	SD.	SD.	180
Total	13	1.116	1.048	3.059
Average		52%	48%	100%

Fuente: En Algunos casos se ha tenido también acceso al padrón comunal.

SD.: Sin Datos

(*) Corresponde sólo a los y las comuneros titulares.

A series of weaknesses have been identified among the people that hold office and make decisions within the farming communities; these include a lack of leadership skills, a scant understanding of communal management, and an inability to handle long-term planning instruments. These weaknesses are infor-

med by the fact their social and financial situation has not allowed them to receive an education or develop the necessary competences for the proper exercise of local government. Furthermore, there is a high turnover among the people holding these offices, which is compounded by young people migrating to the big cities or even to other countries. The strategies and activities undertaken within the programme's framework have been designed to compensate for some of these weaknesses.

The first action has involved a training course designed for the members of the management and specialist committees. A total of eight training modules have been held in each participating community, working on, among others, the following topics: leadership, gender equality, communication, strategic planning, the General Law on Farming Communities, community engagement, ethics and good governance, conflict resolution, and water management.

The outcome of these training sessions has been the new Communal Development Schemes, which now include specific projects and targets for promoting equal opportunities among women and men and women's economic, social and political engagement. In addition, the 13 communities have submitted several projects to the central government, and in each one of them there was at least one scheme designed to cater for women's specific demands.

Proposals have also been drawn up for the sustainable management of natural and productive resources that have involved both women and men. These proposals include the following highlights: the building of water storage infrastructures, reforestation for reducing soil erosion, and the deployment of technified irrigation for the better use of water.

Communal bylaws and internal regulations have been reviewed to ensure women now take part in assemblies, along with young people and the disabled.

A further success is that farming communities are now involved in the fora for coordinating with local

authorities, and district and inter-district encounters have been held involving communal authorities and the heads of the specialist committees, providing an opportunity for personal contact, the sharing of best practices, and the implementation of agreements and commitment on joint work.

This has involved dynamic and participatory working methods in small groups, with the building of knowledge, fostering the exchange of each one's expertise, experience and most immediate circumstances. This training has involved the joint participation of men and women in an approximate proportion of 60% and 40%, respectively.

In this region of Peru, and besides the farming communities, there is another type of organisation known as **Organizaciones Sociales de Base**, grassroots organisations, which have also been involved in training and empowerment schemes. These organisations involve mainly productive households of women or arts and crafts. Overall, the project has involved nine different organisations in the three districts:



Women attending a leadership workshop



Women leaders from the district of Checacupe raising community awareness of women's rights

Table 3: Grassroots organisations in the three districts

District	Name of the organization
Sangarará	Asociación de Artesanos "Munay Ñusta"
	Red de criadoras de cuy
	Asociación de personas con habilidades diferentes "Fuerza y Unión"
Acopía	Organizaciones de mujeres FEMUAC
	Organización de personas con discapacidad San Roque
	Red de productores de cuyes 4 Lagunas
Checacupe	Red central de criadores de cuyes
	Organizaciones de Base de mujeres de las comunidades de Checacupe
	Federación de mujeres de Checacupe

As in the case of members of the management and specialist committees, these grassroots organisations, the Organizaciones Sociales de Base, also suffer from the weaknesses of the limited knowledge and skills of

the people involved, in matters of management, engagement, orchestration, and equity. These shortcomings are compounded by other difficulties, such as internal coordination and liaising with other institutions, as well as the limited capacity for adopting a long-term vision and planning.

One of the activities undertaken has involved instruction in matters associated with the internal management of the organisations themselves, with this involving an analysis and reflection on the current laws in place for regulating this management, such as the "Law on Farming Communities". Instruction has also been provided on the building and handling of certain major instruments, such as strategic planning, based on people's engagement and adopting a gender approach. In addition, workshops have been held on leadership, communication skills, self-esteem,



Men from several communities attending a workshop on social involvement in gender equality

gender, conflict resolution, and project management, among others.

All this work has now enabled these organisations to better handle and use their management instruments, to ensure their internal governance and participation are more equitable, women are more empowered, the social and productive projects submitted to the call for local budgets are more robust and viable, and these organisations are now more visible and participate in the areas of orchestration and decision-making alongside the local authorities.

Line 3. The empowerment of leaders for hands-on and equitable involvement in the development of their community and district.

The women and men in these rural communities have to deal with certain weaknesses and difficulties in their ability to participate and express their opinions, needs and demands in the public arena due to their low le-

vel of education, their low self-esteem, and personal insecurity. This situation is more accentuated among women, as they have experienced a situation of marginalisation and violence that has led to an imbalance of power between them and men.

With a view to achieving this empowerment of both women and men, and thereby actively engaging them in their community's development, specific work has been carried out with women only, men only, and jointly with both women and men.

In the women's case, workshops have been held in each one of the 13 communities taking part in the project, focusing on self-esteem, nurturing engagement, and explaining their rights. In addition, women's gatherings have been held in each one of the three districts, with the aim being to create a forum for dialogue, the sharing of experiences, and political influence at the level of farming communities and local government.

The workshops involving men have focused on the male role, gender equality, self-esteem, citizens' rights and values with a view to encouraging and facilitating women's involvement in politics.

As regards the work undertaken jointly with women and men, on the one hand this has involved the launch of a School for Leaders that has provided instruction in local engagement, leadership, team management, and the drafting of projects in development, among others. Following this instruction, they have been coached in the preparation of their proposals and their presentation to the local authorities, and they have also travelled to other parts of Peru to learn about successful experiences in local government.

Besides this work with women and men, a range of awareness campaigns have been introduced through radio programmes, the organisation of meetings, and the sharing of experiences. The following are some of the topics addressed: dissemination of the right to participate in gender equality, the allocation of roles and housework, and the eradication of all forms of violence against women, among others.

One of the more outstanding achievements has been the organisation, at district level, of the Mesas Técnicas de Género [Technical Gender Committees] involving the different local agents, whose purpose is to narrow the gender gaps in the different ambits: politics, work, home, education, etc.

Thanks to this programme, women now acknowledge their own status as citizens and therefore their right to take part in the social and political life of both their community and their district. In fact, those women that have studied at the School for Leaders now hold office within their communities and in their organisations.

In turn, men acknowledge these equal rights and opportunities with women and positively value their presence and involvement in the areas of communal and district orchestration and decision-making. For this to be possible, they have begun to take joint responsibility for housework and the care of their children.

Line 4. Reinforcing the capabilities of local government and civil society for designing and implementing strategies that guarantee sustainable local development

This area in the Andes is already feeling the effects of climate change, which include the disappearance of certain water sources, such as the glaciers in the cordillera, and some springs in catchment areas. There are now more extreme climate events, such as unseasonably hot weather and hail and frosts.

Ninety percent of the population in these communities live off agriculture and livestock farming, economic activities that depend entirely on natural resources (soil and water) and climate conditions.

Crops and livestock in the area are being affected mainly by the shortage of water for irrigation, which means smaller fruit and vegetable yields and less grassland for animals.



Women and men taking part in a reforestation programme involving native species



Faced with this situation, measures need to be taken to mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt to them, so this project has involved a series of activities for this purpose. Firstly, a diagnosis has been made in the three districts that has gathered data on the following: existing water sources, the irrigation infrastructure available, climate variables, potential plant cover with the water available, and the relationship between water supply and demand.

This has been followed by the arrangement of several awareness workshops designed for local authorities and public workers on the need for joint actions across the three districts for the sustainable management of water resources in the area.

Communal leaders have received a training course on the management and preservation of natural resources, as well as on sustainable agriculture and livestock husbandry. The following are just some of the subjects addressed in the course: the use and exploitation of water, soil erosion, the hazards involved in the use of agrochemicals, preserving the landscape, and the handling of planning and assessment instruments with a gender focus.

Farming and livestock households have been invited to several theoretical and practical training workshops, such as the cultivation and management of pastures and grazing land for feeding livestock; improving the breeding of cuys; and planting new alfalfa seeds that are better suited to the area's geography and climate conditions. In step with these workshops, the households are monitored and coached to ensure the proper practical application of what they have learnt.

In addition to all this training, agricultural and livestock fairs have been held at communal and district level, with the aim being to drive the sales of their products, establish contacts between suppliers and buyers, showcase new products, and reward enterprising farming households.

The result of all this work has been the incorporation of a series of specific measures and actions that constitute a qualitative change in the population's environmental awareness, in the ways of using natural resources, and their farming and livestock practices, which are now more respectful of nature and eco-friendly. These changes include a reduction in the amount of water used, as it is now consumed more responsibly and, furthermore, people prepare and use their own organic fertiliser.

These changes have also been reflected in the rules and regulations, with the local authorities drawing up a series of council and district bylaws on the preservation, care and measured exploitation of natural resources: water, soils, woodlands and waste management.

Line 5. Students in the North and South acquire community awareness for engagement and orchestration, presenting and sharing inclusive, equitable and sustainable local development proposals.

This task of boosting people's engagement with the joint advancement of local development led to the identification of two groups with a noticeably smaller presence in decision-making circles in Peru, namely, women and young people.

The previous four lines of work have explained the activities undertaken and the achievements made in improving women's participation in the various areas of their lives. This Line 5 will cover the project specifically involving young men and women in Peru, as well as those in Euskadi-The Basque Country.

This programme has allowed working with the young people in these communities with a view to enlightening the local authorities about their interests and needs. At the same time, the programme has involved young Basques, on the one hand to help them understand the reality of life in this Andean region, and on the other, to encourage their participation and mobilisation in their more immediate environment in favour of those matters of greatest concern and interest to them.

The overall aim is to help young people develop their leadership skills and communal awareness; improve their capacity for engagement and organisation; pledge themselves to upholding human rights throughout the world, assume their responsibilities; and learn how to propose viable actions that contribute to integral and sustainable development both locally and globally.

The work involved has been undertaken in the educational centres themselves, with the following student profiles: in Peru, boys and girls across different courses in secondary education, while the Basque students were in the first year of the Higher Diploma in Social Integration.

The programme in Peru has involved 60 secondary school pupils, of whom 60% were girls and 40% boys. In Euskadi-The Basque Country, over the course of two academic years it has involved 380 students at training college, of whom 75% were women and 25% men.

The Peruvian pupils have conducted a small survey within each participating school in order to identify those issues and needs that affect them more directly within their school setting. Following this analysis, the following topics have been singled out:

- Environmental care and protection: pollution and more green areas
- First aid and risk avoidance regarding natural disasters
- Equitable and inclusive relationships between pupils of both sexes
- Fair use of games and sports facilities at the schools

These topics have been addressed in a diverse and broad manner: through training workshops; awareness campaigns inside and outside the school or college; parent meetings; participation in the events organised by producers' associations; and at a political level these demands have been submitted to the District Development Committees for their consideration and the allocation of the necessary budgets.

Through the different educational resources, the Basque students have been able to know and learn about the situation in which these communities live.

Table 4: Schools in Peru by district and type of ownership

Name of school	District
Miguel Ángel Hurtado Delgado	Acopia
Sagrado Corazón de Jesús	
Almirante Miguel Grau	Checacupe
Libertadores de América	Sangarara
Laguna Azul	

Table 5: Colleges by province and municipality

	Name of school	Province	Municipality
1	EGIBIDE	Álava	Vitoria-Gasteiz
2	FRANCISCO DE VITORIA	Álava	Vitoria-Gasteiz
3	CRUZ ROJA	Bizkaia	Bilbao
4	TARTANGA	Bizkaia	Erandio
5	SAN JOSÉ DE CALASANZ	Bizkaia	Santurtzi
6	MARIAREN LAGUNDIA	Gipuzkoa	Bergara
7	INMAKULADA	Gipuzkoa	Tolosa

This has enabled them to become aware of the impact these issues, such as engagement, equality and the environment, have not only locally but also globally. Their powers of criticism have been reinforced, along with the values of solidarity, social justice, and responsibility.

The Basque students have also considered their own more immediate problems and needs, choosing such topics as domestic violence, and the upturn in sexist mindsets and behaviour among young Basque men. This has involved the design of a series of dynamics and the preparation of a range of educational materials that has been worked on within the colleges themselves, involving students on other occupational training courses.

Besides these activities undertaken separately in Peru and Euskadi-The Basque Country, there has



Students from Peru and Euskadi share their local projects via Skype

been joint cooperation between the educational centres there and here via Skype. This experience has involved the pupils reviewing the topics and work proposals made by the Basque students, making suggestions and recommendations, and vice versa. This arrangement has improved their respective proposals and given them new approaches.

This programme has enabled further steps to be taken in the construction of a new local development model, placing specific emphasis on engaging the entire community in the different fora on an equitable basis involving dialogue and looking to the future.