

■ Dossier 2: Project Report



[Bolivia]

Engaged environmental governance in farming communities in the Río Grande basin



Summary

A model of unsustainable development	[3]
Engaged environmental governance	[5]
LINE 1: ENGAGEMENT of men and women in rural areas in local environmental management	[6]
LINE 2: Improving the ORGANISATION of community stakeholders for defending their environmental rights based on gender equality	[9]
LINE 3: Reinforcing institutional CAPABILITIES for territorial organisation and management	[11]
LINE 4: Improving the SUSTAINABILITY of the natural resources involved in socio-economic processes	[12]

A model of unsustainable development

The region of Valles Cruceños is located in the westernmost part of the Department of Santa Cruz in the country officially referred to as the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

In spite of the area's numerous features for its favourable development, such as good soils and land for agriculture and livestock farming, several water resources, and tourist attractions, it has a series of problems that impact upon its sustainable development and, therefore, the wellbeing of its population and preservation of the environment in the future.

Faced with this situation, since 2003 a Bolivian training institute called *Instituto de Capacitación del Oriente* (ICO) and the Zabalketa Association from Getxo (Spain) have been applying their combined efforts in Valles Cruceños.

In 2015, these two organisations began a new stage in their work, conducting a diagnosis that involved an in-depth examination of the social, political, economic, environmental and cultural aspects of the development model in place.

The preparation of this diagnosis involved the local population (men and women of all ages), as well as public institutions (government, local and regional authorities, universities, colleges and schools) and private ones (farming associations and women's organisations).

On the back of this detailed work, it was concluded that the main problem facing the area of Valles Cruceños was its development model of a significantly primary and unsustainable nature, with the result being that it was affecting the overall wellbeing of communities and individuals alike, the health of the environment, and the local ecosystem's ability to provide goods and services, which were being seriously compromised.

This critical situation has been aggravated by the effects that global warming is having on this region. Due to the area's specific geographical characteristics, climate change is altering the pattern of rainfall, drastically reducing the availability of water for human consumption and for livestock farming and agriculture. These changes in weather conditions have led to a loss of environmental wealth and quality in the area, as well as



Panoramic view from Alto Veladero (Municipality of Moro Moro, in the province of Vallegrande)

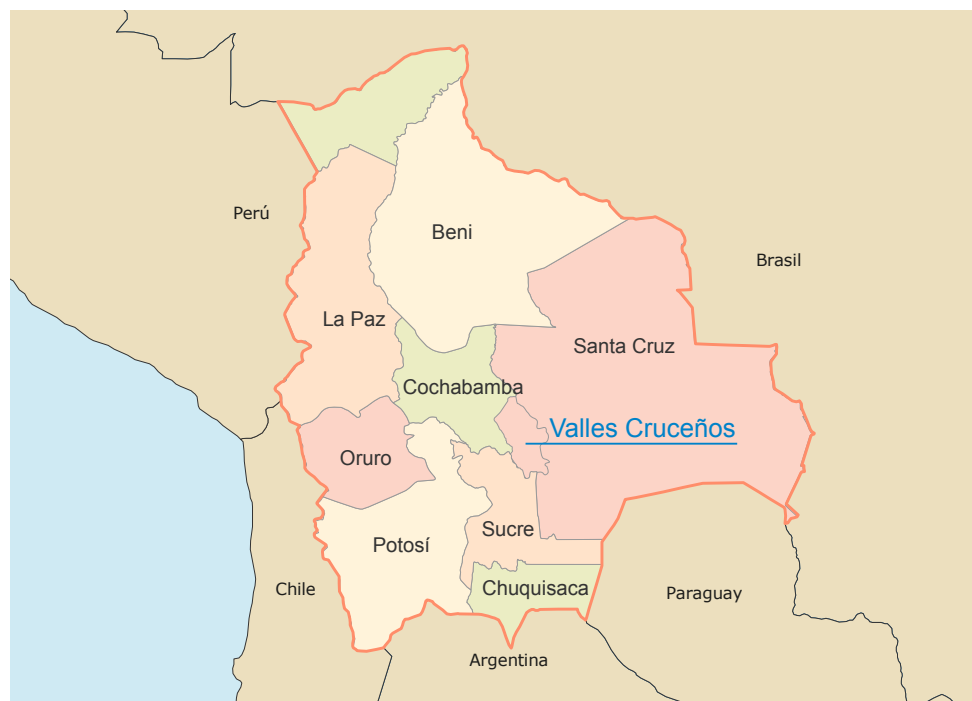
forcing the abusive use, and in some cases even the exhaustion, of natural resources in search of greater financial gain.

Ninety percent of households in the Valles Cruceños region live off agriculture and livestock farming, using little technology, and obtaining narrow profit margins, and therefore scant savings. These households depend entirely on natural resources and on the rain cycle, which means they are in an extremely vulnerable situation and have very uncertain futures. This has led to a significant increase in the conditions of poverty for farming communities in Valles Cruceños, making them weaker at coping with the consequences of the new circumstances arising in terms of the environment and productive and social matters.

With a view to tackling these issues and improving the quality of life of these communities, both these organisations, ICO and Zabalketa, designed a comprehensive operating strategy for confronting the weaknesses detected and, in turn, reinforcing the strengths available. Thanks to the co-funding provided by the Basque Government's Agency for Cooperation for Development, 2016 witnessed the launch of the programme **“Gobernanza Ambiental Participativa” [Engaged Environmental Governance]** in 36 farming communities in the Río Grande Basin, pertaining to the towns of Comarapa, Pampagrande and Vallegrande, benefitting a total of 1,055 households. This project has focused its efforts on environmental protection and preservation through a strategy of fostering a local development model based on the sustainable, fair and systematic

use of the region's natural and productive resources in order to reduce the population's vulnerability. The decision was therefore made to implement a regional management system based on criteria of environmental sustainability that would also take into account socio-political and economic factors.

The choice of working strategy was based largely on the need to opt for a sustainability model because of the pernicious effects of the primary production model in place in Valles Cruceños. These practices, together with the regional effects of climate change and the pressure the local population was putting on natural aquifers, made the region extremely vulnerable. This is a very important region in terms of water and food production, as the hydrogeological services provided by the local ecosystems also impact upon the urban population in the city of Santa Cruz (the departmental capital), with over a million inhabitants. The bulk of the fresh water available for domestic consumption and for agriculture is produced, stored and filtered in the mountains, which means that the preservation of these ecosystems is vital for the department as a whole.



Map of Bolivia with the location of Valles Cruceños within the Department of Santa Cruz.

Population in terms of men and women in the three municipalities.				
Municipality	Area	2012 Census		
		Total	Men	Women
Vallegrande	Urban	10158	4868	5290
	Rural	7050	3901	3149
	Total	17208	8769	8439
Pampagrande	Urban	3572	1785	1787
	Rural	5626	3011	2615
	Total	9198	4796	4402
Comarapa	Urban	5315	2569	2746
	Rural	10604	5534	5070
	Total	15919	8103	7816

Source: National Statistics Office. 2012 Population and Housing Census.

Farming communities

MUNICIPALITY	DISTRICT	COMMUNITY
COMARAPA	EL TUNAL	El Tunal, La Aguada
	SIBERIA	Siberia, Agua Blanca, Capillas, Punillas, El Churo, Abra de Capilla, Manzanal
PAMPAGRANDE	RODEO PAMPA	Sivingalito, Rodeo Pampa, Lagunillas, Hoyada 7 de Septiembre, Hoyada Palmar
VALLEGRANDE	LOMA 25	Aguaditas, Alto Citanos, Chujllas, Churo la Koillpa, Hornos, Islas, Kasamonte, Manchones, Palmitas, Plan Citanos, Torneado Chico, Torneado Grande
	ALTO SECO	La Ceja, Rancho Novillero, Santa Elena, Pampillas, Alto Seco, Jaboncillo, Naranjal, La Cruz, Fernández, Aposentillo
MUNICIPALITIES: 3	DISTRICTS: 5	COMMUNITIES: 36

What's more, this working strategy has the backing of Bolivia's own public institutions at state level through the country's legislation, which is vital for achieving the goals established. The following three laws are specifically important:

- **Ley Marco de la Madre Tierra y Desarrollo Integral para el Vivir Bien [Mother Earth Framework for Integral Development for Wellbeing Act]** (2012), which seeks to enshrine the vision and fundamentals of integral development in harmony and in equilibrium with Mother Earth, guaranteeing the continuity of Mother Earth's capacity for regenerating life's components and systems.
- **Ley de Revolución Productiva [Productive Revolution Act]** (2011), which champions sovereignty for the wellbeing of all Bolivians, and which calls for the preservation of areas for production, the protection of genetic resources, and risk management.
- **Ley de Educación "Avelino Siñani - Elizardo Pérez" ["Avelino Siñani - Elizardo Pérez" Education Act]** (2010), which introduces the mainstreaming of the subject of the environment at all levels of education.

In addition, the Department of Santa Cruz has a Development Plan in place until 2025, which includes programmes on Integral Health, Education, Basic Services and Housing,

Development of Equal Opportunities, Management of Cultural Heritage, Prevention of Crime, Sport, Competitive Productive Development, and the Development of Tourism, among others. On a specifically environmental level, there is a line of action called "*Santa Cruz Planificada, Ordenada y Sostenible*" [*A Planned, Organised and Sustainable Santa Cruz*], which encompasses all matters related to quality, conservation, and sustainable environmental management.

Engaged environmental governance

Environmental governance involves managing the natural environment and its resources by securing agreements among the different stakeholders that interact with the territory. It is a model that actively promotes civil society's engagement at all stages of the management of natural resources, whose goods and services are considered to be of common ownership, in terms of ecological and social justice. This approach highlights the importance and duty of preserving and safeguarding a rational use of natural resources, as these are limited, and the health of ecosystems and human welfare depend on them. It is therefore essential to share the responsibility for managing these



ICO's technical team holding a monitoring session with a farming community.

goods and services provided by ecosystems. This is particularly important and pressing when we consider that the people who are going to suffer most from the deterioration of the environment are precisely those that are already in a vulnerable state, which in our case means the farming communities.

With a view to enabling everyone to contribute to these achievements, since 2106 the project *“Gobernanza Ambiental participativa en comunidades campesinas de la cuenca del Río Grande”* [Engaged Environmental Governance in farming communities in the Río Grande basin] has organised parallel and support activities for the decision-making processes involving the management of natural resource in Valles Cruceños. This has involved schemes designed to further the coordination between the various stakeholders and reinforce their capabilities. Backing was also provided for their community organisations in defence of their collective interests, and a boost was given to the empowerment of local women leaders and the engagement of the educational community. The overriding aim was to bring about a change in attitude among the

population as a whole in support of sustainable practices that reduce the environmental impact of livestock farming and agriculture in the Río Grande basin.

This has involved working at the following levels:

- a) Supporting the development of **administrative capabilities** in those community organisations and institutions involved in local environmental governance.
- b) Reinforcing the **systematic and engaged** formation of environmental management tools at local, municipal, and district level that cater for the region’s environmental issues, the effects of climate change, and the basic and strategic needs of the farming population.
- c) Developing a project in **livestock farming and agricultural productive systems**, reducing the impact of human activities, and incorporating adjustments to the new climate conditions prevailing in Valles Cruceños.

The involvement in these different dimensions in practical terms has required implementing four lines of work: engagement of the local population; development of community organisations; reinforcement of institutional capabilities; and improvement of environmental sustainability. These are complementary actions, and they all contribute to the joint construction of a fair and sustainable model of human development.

LINE 1: ENGAGEMENT of men and women in rural areas in local environmental management

People’s engagement is a mechanism for building democracy, and is in itself a constitutional right that should be exercised within a framework of respect for human rights and the rejection of any kind of exclusion, discrimination or inequality.

Environmental Governance promotes civil society’s engagement in the design, planning, implementation and assessment of governance policies and instruments that favour sustainable development.

Within this framework, the Programme has worked with local development agents to reinforce the shared responsibility of government and society in environmental

School, levels and participation of boys and girls in Bolivia. Two school years: 2017 and 2018					
Municipality	School	Grade	Participation		
			Total	Girls	Boys
Vallegrande	Isabel Villegas Mariscal	5th	46	29	17
		6th	87	47	40
	Monseñor Julio Terrazas	6th	85	63	22
		5th	50	36	14
Comarapa	Mariano Eliodoro Saucedo Sevilla	5th	32	17	15
		6th	60	34	26
	Lidia Quintana	4th	20	11	9
		5th	26	15	11
		6th	26	14	12
Pampagrande	Pedro Aristides Sejas	5th	37	18	19
		6th	16	6	10
	Delfin Arteaga Taborga	5th	11	4	7
		6th	12	8	4
TOTAL FIGURES			508	302	206

management and policies, and thereby guarantee the preservation of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources.

To achieve this, work has been undertaken through the perspective of awareness and education, as tools for social transformation, with two groups: the civil population (farming families and students at secondary schools in the urban area) and public institutions (local authorities, and teaching staff at secondary schools in the urban area). Awareness and specific training campaigns have been held for men and women on environmental rights and environmental legislation at national, departmental and municipal level.

The work has focused on generating public opinion in matters of sustainable human development through the production of radio programmes on subjects such as Public Management, Environment, Gender, Food Safety, and Environmental Rights. Audiovisual broadcasts and articles in the press have been used to disseminate successful experiences in environmental management within the region.

In addition to these awareness schemes, training has been provided for management and technical staff in local authorities through workshops on environmental education. This has led to the application of public policies in favour of the community's sustainable development, and new territorial planning instruments have been developed that integrate the population's social and economic requirements with the values of protecting and respecting ecosystems, according to current legislation.

This work has involved communal organisations (Grassroots Territorial Organisations, Agricultural Labour Unions, and Water Committees), helping them to understand how engagement is internally pursued, how the different groups in the community are represented, and how opinions are heard and decisions made. Based on this diagnosis, these organisations have been supported through the formulation, updating and application of their management instruments, such as statutes, regulations and plans. Given the contextual circumstances regarding the inequality between men and women, it has been essential to dedicate efforts to narrowing the gender gap in people's participation within these communal spaces.

Further work has involved building and promoting areas of coordination and interaction between public and private institutions and civil society. These areas have been used to disclose the progress made and the results obtained by the activities in sustainable environmental management undertaken both on the ground and at research level, thereby contributing to information in matters of environmental law and its application.

Work has also proceeded within the ambit of formal education, both at secondary schools in Valles Cruceños and at the University and Vocational Schools in the Basque Country. This has involved dynamising sessions and workshops for analysing and discussing environmental issues, proposing solutions at local and global level, and incorporating students' valuable viewpoints.



Students explaining how their project contributes to Sustainable Development Goals.

The Basque Government’s Department of Education has sponsored work at Vocational Schools in the Basque Country through the Challenge-based Peer Learning Method (ETHAZI).

The above educational centres have initially worked internally, and then the information and conclusions have been shared among the schools in the South and the colleges and university in the North, using Information and Communication Technologies, such as videoconferencing via Skype.

This has all been used to generate awareness about individual responsibility regarding environmental issues, and the students have drawn up realistic proposals that allow implementing feasible solutions to the problems identified. In addition, proposals have

Table on the participation of students and lecturers at 7 training colleges and the University of the Basque Country, 15 groups in total, broken down by sexes.
Three academic years: 2016-2017 / 2017-2018 / 2018-2019

COLLEGE/ UNIVERSITY	DEGREE	No. female students	No. male students	TOTAL STUDENTS	No. female lecturers	No. male lecturers	TOTAL LECTURERS
Egibide (Vitoria-Gasteiz)	Education & Environmental Control	11	8	19	1	1	2
		8	10	18	1	1	2
		8	10	18	1	2	3
Politécnico Easo (Donostia)	Education & Environmental Control	9	10	19	3	0	3
		8	10	18	3	0	3
		7	9	16	3	0	3
		6	13	19	3	1	4
Tartanga (Erandio)	Environmental Health	4	5	9	2	0	2
Don Bosco (Errenteria)	Environmental Chemistry	6	3	9	3	0	3
Don Bosco (Tolosa)	Environmental Chemistry	6	8	14	1	2	3
	Chemical Plant	3	7	10	0	1	1
Somorrostro (Muskiz)	Education & Environmental Control	4	11	15	2	0	2
		3	4	7	3	0	3
UPV/EHU (Vitoria-Gasteiz)	Teacher Training	9	15	24	1	0	1
		15	6	21	1	0	1
TOTAL		107	129	236	28	8	36
PERCENTAGES		45%	55%		72%	28%	

been developed and submitted to local government institutions, thereby galvanising real processes of transformation, generating benefits that go beyond the school setting and encompass the entire community.

LINE 2: Improving the ORGANISATION of community stakeholders for defending their environmental rights based on gender equality

One of the project's outcomes has been the reinforcement of organisational levels and the orchestration of community and supra-community stakeholders with a view to improving the defence of their environmental rights. This has involved **the creation of planning instruments** that orientate local environmental management, articulating actions at communal, district and municipal level, in engaged processes that have considered the viewpoints of both men and women, and have given rise to the generation of areas of consensus between the population and the authorities.

One of the actions undertaken involves the drafting of **a study on the potentialities and management of communal natural resources** in Valles Cruceños. This research has led to the identification of areas of environmental importance, as well as the relevant biophysical and socioeconomic processes to be considered for proper development planning.

There are now a series of key maps:

- 1) map of catchment areas and the hydrographic network
- 2) map of water sources for human consumption and associated infrastructure
- 3) map of specific focal points of contamination
- 4) map of diffuse sources of contamination.

Following the programme, this Line 2 for improving the organisation has been included in the **drafting of the Environmental Management Plans** for the three local authorities: Comarapa, Pampagrande, and Vallegrande.

Communal workshops have been held in tandem with the population in each community to examine those areas most suited to the productive development of livestock farming and agriculture, as well as for identifying the most vulnerable areas that need to be protected or exploited according to restricted systems of sustainable use.

This has led, in an engaged manner, to the zoning of the entire community and to the organisation of livestock and farming activities, identifying the areas recommended for



Workshop on drafting Environmental Management Plans.

each action. Based on these results, work has been proceeding on the implementation of specific strategies, policies and plans for each community, which are necessarily compliant with regional and national legislation.

A further one of the programme's key aspects has been the boost given to the **articulation of the farming communities** for their local environmental management. These new areas of intercommunal coordination have informed the drafting of **"Zonal Plans for Environmental Management"**, which have allowed identifying their degree of environmental vulnerability and formulating strategic plans for adjusting to climate change. One of the particular aims in these initiatives has very specifically been to involve women for the purpose of identifying their specific vulnerability to climate change and guarantee their empowerment and their active engagement in the drafting of the strategic plan.



Work session with students in the Basque Country using the “Problem Tree” tool.



Workshops with students at a secondary school in Vallegrande.

Another of the actions undertaken involves supporting communal organisations and stakeholders in civil society in the process of drafting **Municipal Environmental Management Plans**. These plans are long-term instruments for strategic planning at municipal level, and they allow responding to local environmental challenges, priorities and issues. These environmental priorities and issues have been identified through workshops involving civil society as a whole (the population at large, and public and private institutions and organisations). These tools have provided the groundwork for the strategic lines and the priorities for the actions to be undertaken in the communities regarding the sustainable use and preservation of natural resources, biodiversity, and the environment, with a view to improving the local population’s quality of life.

In a complementary manner, and with a view to promoting awareness of the Human Right to a Healthy Environment, the schools, colleges and university in Bolivia and

the Basque Country have worked to bolster their engagement in local environmental management. This has involved the creation and implementation of a platform on Facebook called “*Yo creo un mundo más sostenible*” [*I am building a more sustainable world*], which has provided a bridge for connecting the two educational communities, with the shared goal of defending the Human Right to a Healthy Environment, and favour people’s commitment to, and engagement with, its compliance at both local and global level.

This platform has led to the launching of two campaigns: “*Ecología cada día*” [*Ecology every day*], designed to include more sustainable lifestyle habits in everyday life, and “*Un planeta sin contaminación por plásticos*” [*A planet free of contamination from plastics*], whose aim is to reduce the use of plastics.

LINE 3: Reinforcing institutional CAPABILITIES for territorial organisation and management

This line of work has focused on the use of training schemes and educational tools for improving the skills of those people, from the grassroots up to the local authorities, that are going to be involved in one way or another in the construction and management of the sustainable development model in Valles Cruceños.

This has involved three courses:

- **“Diplomado en Gobernanza Ambiental” [Diploma in Environmental Governance].** This has been designed for technical and political staff in the three local councils, and has received support from the Faculty of Agrarian Sciences at Bolivia’s Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno. This 180-hour diploma, attended by 13 women and 13 men, has addressed the principles of environmental governance; an understanding of the local, national and global environmental context; environmental legislation; environmental rights, conflict resolution, and the use of tools for sustainable planning of the territory in an engaged manner. The final dissertation has involved the drafting of proposals that contribute to local environmental sustainability, and which have been used for drafting Municipal Environmental Management Plans.
- **“Curso de líderes en Gobernanza Ambiental” [Course for Leaders in Environmental Governance].** This course has involved those men and women who are already leaders in their communities. Its aim has been to reinforce their expertise, skills and competencies for driving the regions’ social and economic development, including the vision of environmental sustainability, respect for rights, and gender equality. The 240 hours of classes have been taught by the *Escuela de Gestión Pública Plurinacional [Plurinational Public Management School]*. The course has been attended by 31 women and 28 men, and they have then implemented what they have learnt back in their own communities by strengthening grassroots organisations, with coordination at district level and the collective management of natural resources.
- **“Diplomado en Educación Ambiental” [Diploma in Environmental Education].** This course has been designed for teachers in secondary education, and has served



Class in the Diploma Course on Environmental Governance.

the purpose of incorporating mainstream environmental education into Bolivia’s formal schooling system. The course has also counted on the support of the Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno and specific instruction has been provided on the fundamental principles of ecology; an understanding of the local, national and global context, as well as the use of new teaching instruments and the implementation of learning methods that are more dynamic and engaging. Each teacher’s final task has involved returning to their schools and giving their full support to the socio-productive projects with an environmental approach that each school is required to implement within the context of the “Avelino Siñani - Elizardo Pérez” Education Act. This diploma course has lasted 180 hours, being attended by 16 women and seven men.

The Basque Country has also taken part in this diploma course, as the classes have used teaching materials provided by the Egibide Vocational Schools in Vitoria-Gasteiz and, in turn, Zabalketa’s technical staff have been part of the teaching staff, holding several classes in Bolivia.

LINE 4: Improving the SUSTAINABILITY of the natural resources involved in socio-economic processes

Within the framework of the building of a fair, just and sustainable human development model, it is essential to commit to the implementation of a sustainable model for the management of natural resources.

Along these lines, the zoning of land uses in the main micro-basins in Valles Cruceños is vital for guaranteeing the water supply for the local population. A survey has therefore been undertaken through the use of GIS tools and satellite data for identifying the most vulnerable areas or those most at risk due to climate conditions and productive activities. The maps of environmental vulnerability produced will lead to the better planning of local development, and in turn introduce guidelines for water management, both for human consumption and for its more sustainable use in productive activities.



It is vital to protect water sources for local development.

This survey's results and findings have been disclosed and shared with all those direct and indirect stakeholders at both regional and national level involved in environmental governance in Valles Cruceños. The data are also being used for the drafting of environmental proposals at technical, political and regulatory level. At community level, Environmental Management Plans have been drawn up to ensure the sustainable exploitation of local natural resources over the next five years, together with Action Plans for taking immediate steps in those areas at greatest risk and in support of projects for protecting local springs.

The Río Grande basin is the backbone of the region of Valles Cruceños. This means the region has protracted experience in the establishment of conservation areas and dealing with springs referred to as REPANAs. REPANAs are “*Reservas de Patrimonio Natural*” [Natural Heritage Reserves], and constitute a legal vehicle for protecting water sources, pursuant to the provisions of the *Ley Forestal* [Forestry Act]. These REPANAs also have a buffer zone around them, and together they make up areas of extreme importance in both environmental and development terms. The maintenance and preservation of these areas is vital for their ability to collect and store water, and also because they are extremely vulnerable to productive activities, mainly livestock farming.

The supervision of the buffer zones around these REPANAs has involved specialised courses in livestock farming practices, and in the cultivation and management of pasturelands. The outcome of this training process has been the drafting of **Plans for the Supervision of Buffer Areas**, involving the technical demarcation and physical implementation (barbed wire, troughs, and fodder) of *Campos Naturales de Pastoreo* – CANAPAs [Natural Pasturelands], with intra-community agreements on controlled livestock husbandry and the protection of these buffer zones, which are of high ecological value.

This ambit has also included actions for narrowing the gender gap, which have consisted of a series of workshops that have analysed women's involvement in environmental management. These workshops have provided an opportunity to raise awareness, and explain and appreciate the importance of women's work in social, political and productive matters. Women have also been able to attend specialised courses on livestock husbandry, designed specifically for them.

Another significant aspect in terms of environmental sustainability and the rational use of natural resources involves the support that has been provided for farming households to help reduce, on the one hand, the environmental impact caused by their farming activities, and on the other, reduce their exposure to climate change. This has involved working hard on the optimisation of irrigation systems for the efficient use of water in farming, organising short courses for technical training in the installation and operation of efficient irrigation systems. These courses have also focused on honing women's practical skills.

Households' livestock farming and agricultural activities, based mainly on the traditional primary model, have a direct impact on the environment, affecting each and every one of the stages in the water cycle, soil quality, and the plant cover, being reflected in the reduction of flows, water contamination, loss of fertility, and the area's gradual desertification.

This programme has been used to encourage households to implement models of sustainable agriculture, which may act as a bridge toward an **agroecological model**. To do so, there has been a process of introducing model farms that have implemented practices on the use and preservation of soils, organic fertilisation, biological handling of pests, crop rotation, bee-keeping, agroforestry systems, and introducing them to the changeover from yearly crops to perennial ones. Over this period, there have already been a number of positive results that can be measured over the short term, and the agroforestry systems now put in place will start to show their effects over a longer period of time. The programme has also prompted the drafting of a plan for adapting today's farming system to a livestock farming and agricultural system that is consistent with today's new climate conditions.

Events have been held involving **shared experiences** in the application of specific practices undertaken by leaders of both sexes, and by the households that have previously experimented with sustainable practices.



Agroecological potato field provided with a technical irrigation system.



Women attending a course on leadership.

The process has also been reinforced by other short specialised courses on a range of sustainable practices, which had already been identified and agreed with local households, based on the specific conditions and aptitudes in each area.

With a view to narrowing the gender gap, workshops have been held with women to analyse the part they play in a household's productive tasks, and thereby raise awareness of their contribution to household income, identify their difficulties, and design areas suited to them, with the purpose being to provide an opportunity for women as heads of the household.

School and colleges in Valles Cruceños have also helped to improve the sustainability of natural and energy resources, as innovative and creative socio-productive projects with an environmental focus have helped to reduce the consumption of water and electricity in schools, and have raised awareness and taught people to manage urban solid waste in a more appropriate manner.

The sum of activities undertaken within the framework of the Proyecto “Gobernanza Ambiental Participativa en comunidades campesinas de la cuenca del Río Grande” [Engaged Environmental Governance in farming communities in the Río Grande Basin], undertaken by the Instituto de Capacitación del Oriente (Vallegrande, Bolivia), in collaboration with the Zabalketa Association (Getxo, Spain) and the local population in the Bolivian region of Valles Cruceños, have helped to galvanise the transition from a development model that had proven to be unsustainable to an environmental governance system that is systematic, sustainable and fair.

Environmental governance involves all the stakeholders in the local community: from the authorities through to non-governmental organisations, the private sector, and civil society. Cooperation and organisation are essential for effective government, which may help to usher in a more sustainable future.

Within this framework, work has been undertaken with the various stakeholders of development in the region to reinforce the joint responsibility of government and society in environmental management and policies, with a view to guaranteeing the preservation of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources. As a result, the population has been provided with the expertise, skills and tools needed to implement local projects for proper environmental management and the re-establishment of environmental equilibrium. All this has laid the foundations for the generation of synergies between local authorities, civil society organisations, and the local population in order to establish a development strategy that mobilises the sum of the region's potentialities and opportunities, and provides the necessary tools and strategies for generating local projects for re-establishing environmental harmony and the holistic wellbeing of people in the community.

This document has used information contained in the data and reports on the programme “Gobernanza ambiental participativa en comunidades campesinas de la cuenca del Río Grande (Bolivia)” [Engaged Environmental Governance in farming communities in the Río Grande Basin] (FOCAD PGM 2015/BA001), developed by the Instituto de Capacitación del Oriente and the Zabalketa Association, with the support of the Basque Government's Agency for Cooperation for Development.

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