



World in transition: Managing Resources

How Sustainable Was The ITDG Intervention?

Narrator:

So just how sustainable was ITDG's approach? In the text we use a four sided framework of sustainability. For the rest of this audio, I'll be looking at the project in the light of those four main dimensions. Starting with the actual technology itself. In fact the design of the intervention was informed by lessons learnt from mistakes that had been made in the past.

Male:

We fell into the trap of trying to impose technologies on people. I call that the techno dumping phase. New and unfamiliar technologies were dragged out of British industry and elsewhere around the world, and given to thrown at communities in the south.

Probably technology institutions had become a sort of genre of their own. And spent all their time talking to each other. And they had conferences, and they all met each other. And they all talked to each other. And they exchanged similar kinds of equipment. And I would hesitate to even mention some of them. But one of the four person pedal powered thresher. We'd sort of lost out way a little bit.

Narrator:

Carlos Delatorre was project leader for many years. He is very concerned about the relationship between technological change and culture. He sees culture in it's broadest possible sense. And believes that it is crucial in his work to appreciate the norms, values and practices of the communities of the Andes. For Carlos, the success and the sustainability of the project, depends upon the sensitivity with which it has been introduced to Ketchua society.

CD:

Speaking in his native tongue.

Male:

One of the reasons for this, is the transparent handling of resources. So that budgets are clear. That people are informed about what is spent on what. Never before has a development agent, asked our engineers to give accounts to the communal authorities. So I believe ethically we're very reputable. Another aspect which has brought us into the Ketchua world, has been to share their religious practices. Which date back to very ancient times.

Female:

They take into consideration all the cultural aspects. So they have to make like a ritual every certain time. Then they consider this. And to give people the ability to recognise themselves as important as with knowledge. Because I don't know, Peru is a country where you have different cultures in only one place.

Narrator:

It's also important to tap into the wisdom that the society already has. You might be able to achieve irrigation by other kinds of technological change. But that would be missing a number of key dimensions of Campasino's social life and technical knowledge.

Male:

Irrigation water is not just water. But is also fertility. So any kind of system which is used to distribute water has to take that into account. It has weed control properties when used in a certain way. You can use it to help in tillage, by pre soaking the fields and then breaking it up manually. You use it obviously with germination. Use it for growing plants and so forth. There's a whole understanding, which sometimes the college trained technicians forgot.

Narrator:

One of the most intriguing aspects of this project, is that the design of the new irrigation technology builds upon the system that was used by the Inca's.

Male:

The major task that most of us have had to do, in all parts of the world is re-school or de-school the experts. Help them to get off that pedestal of the technical diploma or whatever it may be, their degree. And be able to sit on a level with the real experts. Who are the farmers who actually know the resources. And help them to working together to develop alternatives.

Male:

The methodology of our approach is expressed in the search for technical alternatives to a particular problem. But which come from people. How do they come from people? Through talking. So we organise events where people talk with people who come from different communities. Some in the south and some in the north, who have never met each other, since they rarely come to the market at Sequani. And in these meetings they get together, debate and show each other how much they know. And I think these meetings stimulate new ideas. So all this theme of technical change is rooted in the exchanges between people.

Narrator:

This leads also imperceptibly to the institutional aspects of sustainability. At the core of ITDG's project, was the need to introduce administrative and managerial structures. As well as new technologies.

Male:

We incorporated what we call this advisory committee. It's a permanent body which we meet with them about three or four times a year. And we review the progress of the work. And we decide what's coming next. They have the power of that. And they can say 'We don't like to do this in that way.' So incorporate in their culture. Incorporating their authorities. And also allowing different stakeholders in the community to make an opinion.

Narrator:

One of the most important institutional changes was to regenerate the idea of Camayok. Some of whom we introduced in the video. These Campasino's to Campasino trainers and innovators could help discriminate and build knowledge in all areas of agricultural activity. Including irrigation and water management.

Male:

The leaders of the ITDG programme they took a risk, because they provided these technical assistance to these communities. Not by using professionals. But rather by using the person produces themselves. So that was the model. And then the model has been successful, from the perspective of producing these Camayo's. They have really produced at least a dozen of good Camayo's.

Male2:

Sometimes when you start a new project, you have many doubts. About different stakeholders. Whether how to start that. How to incorporate this priority. How to go ahead with this. And they were so so beneficious. So useful on this. And also to correct that. And also to help local families to make decisions also. I think without Camayok, we couldn't have achieved what we achieved. And now for us, when we talk about sustainability. It is sustainable, because they will be there. They will stay there.

Narrator:

The Camayok are agents of change on more than one level. In fact one of the aims of their introduction, was to bring a new market to the area. A market in technical information. We asked Gonzala LeCruz and Manuel Glouk about the sustainability of the Camayok in such monetary terms.

Male:

We don't think that the Camayok and now work as a kind of perfect, poor, capitalist market. Because they are not paid in cash most of the time. They are paid sometimes in kind. They are promised to payment at the end of a seasonal period with harvest and so on. But we think that it is crucial, it's important that we strengthen relationship between people. And Camayok have proved to be more efficient than an external professional. What do people want. They would like to have one expert from [one word] University, Cornell or from Reading University. They would like somebody there, and they want to pay less than one dollar per hour service. That's what they want. That's not real. Right. They can pay one or two dollars for each. And the one who can provide the best advice in that circumstances are the Camayok.

Male2:

There is a sort of [one word] of Camayok. Camayok Class B. Camayok Class B. Camayok Class C. Camayok Class A, really have a local market. They really can survive selling their services. I would say that there are no more than a dozen of Camayok's Class A. For these those in Camayok's I really believe that there is a local market. And I really believe that these local Camayok's will really be professionals of providing local services, of technical assistance. But for the other Camayok's I am not sure what will be the future of them. And more than the usefulness of having been in this experience for them as an individual, as a family.

Narrator:

Economists define sustainability in terms of livelihoods. And this is a key part of many people's understanding of the term. If this development programme can claim to be sustainable, we'd expect to see an improvement in people's livelihoods. Not just for the Camayok, but also the wider community of which they are part.

Male:

Certainly in the six original communities, which were targeted. The changes in most of those communities are immediately noticeable. The better allocation of the resources. In terms of water, that's the first step. But beyond that it is, as my colleagues would put it, is how inclusive society is to accept those people and to enable them to share in the benefits of the wider society. It is very much looking at a way of bringing that community up to a level where it can now integrate with the modern sector. In ways which are beneficial.

Female:

Right now, for example the Camayok's they can find jobs in other institutions. That if could think about this five years ago, it was almost impossible. Nobody was going you as a person to do some technical training. So for me, I think is the most important. I remember that for example there is one Camayok, he has one daughter. And she has already finished the school, and she wanted to go to the University. And nobody from that village has ever gone to the university. But now she is studying at the Cosco University. So for me it was like 'Oh my god, they're really doing something good.' Because they are improving the validity of the people.

Narrator:

But not all Campasino women have such opportunities. We asked Carlos Delatorre about livelihoods in the community more generally.

CD:

I think that if we did a diagnosis at the beginning of our work, we would have found that there are up to five or six different social strata within the Campasino community. At home there are men and women who find themselves in different situations. These studies find that women have a distinct position. Amongst women there are certain types. Because a married and her situation are very different to that of a widow. Who still had children and grandchildren to look after.

Female:

I remember that when there was a time which the project was concerned about the rights of the widows. Because widow's they didn't have too much power inside the community. So there was a concern to improve the access to the water for women. Who were household [one word]. And besides that, with the gardens, there was improvement on the participation of the women. Because they were usually the ones who took charge of the gardens. And because there were sales of the vegetables in the market too. Then they could have some type of income. But at the same time, it usually would mean that they have to work longer. Because they have to take charge of the garden at the same time as this household and agricultural chores.

Narrator:

The difficulties can be particularly acute for families in the more remote mountain communities.

Male:

Life is hard. There is no getting around it. And it's hard for everybody. But sometimes when you're tucked away at 4,300 metres, six hours walk away from the road, and it's bitterly cold and snowing. There are attractive lights down in the valley. The kids move. And they don't always go back.

Narrator:

Even in the lower parts of the valley, there's a lot of migration.

Male:

Basically 90% of the kids go away from the fields to the cities. And really they don't have enough resources to survive. But the other face of the challenge is really the inability of the women market economy to absorb these migration to the cities. So they really are marginalised in the cities. And they face a huge pressure upon their natural resources in the field. If this society doesn't come up with a solution in the [one word] market economy, and the society don't really transform the productivity with the natural resources in the field. It may be a tragedy, in the middle [one word].

Narrator:

And this is where the livelihoods of Campasino's in the Vilcanotta valley intersect with the national picture. If you accept Gonzala LeCruz's interpretation of how this happens, it puts the project's sustainability into a whole new light.

GL:

If we talk about the whole society. The Peruvian society. I must say that until now the modern sector has been unable to provide enough employment and a solution for the poor. It is something that has to do with development. Well some analyst could divide the economy in terms of the modern, or the traditional, or the under developed. Or the black, or the informal sector. Whatever you want to call this. But we find is that we have another area developed, which work under rules of capitalism, with true developed markets. With people properly employed. And proper employment or adequate employment is the one which provides enough income for people for a decent living. However this farm assistant, this economic unit, works as a kind of huge social unemployment system. You know. Those who can not be employed in the modern sector, are employed here. And employment also exists in the developed countries. But they have so much surplus's and savings, they can pay for the unemployed directly. The safety nets there are more developed. The [one word] community sake is a kind of safety net. The modern economy couldn't exist and work without this. And this is not recognised.

Narrator:

So we get to the fourth and final dimension of our sustainability framework. If agriculture is supporting the modern sector, it's even more important that it's done in an ecologically responsible way. Which doesn't endanger the physical resources.

Male:

If nothing's done in the valley, there will be an erosion of water resources. Of soil, and genetic resources. And that's evident anywhere in the Andes. The very fragile eco systems. And so a do nothing approach is going to be ecologically very damaging.

Male:

Fortunately.. fortunately, farmers have been trained and prepared to manage it properly. By the team, and also by the Camayok also. They don't use too much pesticides. They don't use too much non organic material. In general we are contributing towards the environment.

Narrator:

It's not a perfect record. There has been some salination, mainly in areas where communities haven't fully co-operated with the team. There has been some loss of traditional knowledge about for example Inca ways of preventing soil erosion or harvesting local medicines. But Patrick Mulvanney, broadly agrees with Golzalo LaCruz.

PM:

The whole designer programme rests on there being better management of the water resources. That's it's initial purpose. And so each of the communities that have been involved, have been very careful to utilise that water resource better. And it's quite interesting because it's not just as you described earlier. It's not just the water resource itself. It's the fertility it brings. It's the way in which it is used. But also the source of the water. The springs. And protection of those springs. It's the protection of the water resources from which the springs draw their own resource.

Narrator:

The stewards of those sources of water, are the Campasino's in the remote communities at the top of the valley. Communities at the bottom of the valley play a different but equally important role. So the tough challenge is to build a holistic approach to sustainability. It's not just constructing new forms of livelihood and alternatives to migration. It's finding ways of sustaining all Ketchua communities wherever they are in the valley. A perfect example of how inter connected the different faces of sustainability are.

Male: That longer term environment sustainability is very dependant on people. It's dependant on people having a long term vision of where they are now. And not seeing it as simply a resource to utilise and waste. At the moment I think the evidence is that the use in the slightly better off communities are more likely to stay. Or at least have some kind of roots in those communities. Whereas those in the most remote communities are probably not. And I think that the realisation is going to come, and it is coming now with very few people. But I think it's going to come as a mass realisation. That the livelihood of the communities in the bottom of the valley depends on healthy communities at the top of the valley. Because if those communities die, then the water sources die. Then the livestock industry dies. There's a

whole set of cascading effects impacts. And I think that times are fast coming where that integration becomes a necessity, and not just a desirable addition.