



## International development: challenges for a world in transition

### *Background to the ITDG Intervention*

Narrator:

Sustainability is a complex mix of social, economic and ecological processes. Gonzale LeCruz is the head of ITDG Peru. And also a professional economist. He paints a picture of the economic conditions, when the project first started in the early 1990's.

GL:

I could say that on those days when the [one word] started, the economy was under a high. A very high inflation. And hyper inflation. There were lots of ascosities of different main necessities there. People were struggling to make a living. And most farmers were trained to diversify the different sources of income. They were having a very difficult time. Right. In a way I think in a way, sometimes this period of crisis helps external agents to help people to find their own solutions.

Narrator:

Who are these people? In 1998 ITDG commissioned a study to find out more about the small scale farmers, of Campasino's, who live in the Vilcanotta valley. Manuel Glouk was one of the authors of this early study. In 2001 he returned to the valley to make a final assessment of the impact of the project.

MG:

My feeling is that all these families in the bottom part of the valley are really better off than most of the families in the southern Andes. They have these irrigation infra structure. They have a very diverse portfolio of crops. And they also are economically articulated to a very important economic pole of development, as it is the city of Sequani. It is in the middle of this network of trade, between Coscowholaka and Ikeepa. That doesn't mean that they are rich. But they should be among the top 25% or 30% or the rural poor in Peru.

Narrator:

The valley lies 3500 metres up in the Andes mountain range. Water is a crucial often scarce resource for agriculture there. It flows from glaciers, natural springs and upland swamps. As well as directly from rainfall. The Vilcanotta valley's supply of irrigation is deeply entwined with the geology of the mountains. And the history of it's people.

Water has been captured from rivers, streams and springs. And diverted into irrigation canals since Inca times. Patrick Malvanney from ITDG Great Britain, was involved in the Vilcanotta valley project right from the outset. He has a special interest in agro-environmental issues.

PM:

In the area in which we focussed there is light rain for part of the year. But not sufficient to maintain agriculture throughout the year. How can the maximum use be made of this resource. And so there are a whole range of technical things. From lining capture tanks, to improving impermeability of irrigation channels to improving the gates which distribute the water. To levelling off and making better the distribution within the field of the water that comes down.

Narrator:

Elba Zamayowa can trace her family roots through generations of Campasino's in the Vincanotta valley. Her job sometimes brings her back to the area. Although mainly she works in Lima, as a Financial Administrator for ITDG.

EZ:

I think with the irrigation project the farmers for example, when we went to visit them. Were very eager to talk to us. They could tell us that the project was really helping them. Besides that, because they don't work only with water, but they cultivated vegetables into a greenhouse. That was one of the most noticeable change. Kids could eat tomatoes, or lettuce or carrot. If you go to Sequani you could see that more families are eating vegetables, that they don't used to.

Narrator:

But no two families are exactly the same. Part of this variation depends on where they live. In the remote high altitude settlements at the top of the valley, people grow potatoes, and high Andean crops. They look after animals, such as Elpacka's, Llama's and sheep. Whereas crops at the bottom of the valley include maize, wheat and barley. The animals are often cattle. Being fattened for market. There is an important exchange of products between these communities. There are also some differences in relative wealth and poverty. Manuel Glouk.

MG:

The difference between the families in the lower zone. The level of life, the quality of life of the lower zone. With the quality of life of intermediate some is clear. The quality of life in the lower zone is much better. And the quality of life in the intermediate zone. I have the impression that the Indianapolis zones, that they might be even more poor.

Narrator:

Even within one village, there are big variations in poverty. This raises a huge challenge for any intervention project. The danger is that you can foreground one group of people at the expense of another. Who may even be poorer than the ones that benefit.

We asked Patrick Malvanney whether this was a problem for the design of the ITDG project.

PM:

Absolutely. That's ever a problem. And in any society in which we've worked and any society that any of us know, you only get to one group to find there's another group. And it's layer upon layer of poverty and lack of entitlement, and so forth. So I don't think there's any.. there's no magic about what to do. I think all one can do is to have explicitly in mind the need to achieve greater equity throughout that society. I think it's a question of recognising that you need some institutional base, from which you can then reach out.

Narrator:

In this case, ITDG decided not to put the primary focus on the poorest households in the first six communities they focussed on. Golzelo LeCruz explains.

GL:

The ones who have the capacity to adapt to new technologies are people who are in this middle class of the local community. They are poor. They don't have more than two acres of land. They have between four and five children. They have a minimum reserve base. And they have something much more important than that, they have the time to adapt and to do their own trials. And to test what is needed. The poorest, they do not have even time to work and so some trials. They are so poor that they're time is a luxury. They need to work every day, working here and there for a daily salary.

Narrator:

In the UK Patrick Malvanney also underlines the projects intention to work within existing social structures.

PM:

The strategy which is employed was to start in the valley bottom. Work very closely with the city authorities. With the church authorities. And with the power base in the valley. And really establish that the programme. I always find it quite difficult to come to terms with that. But it was important, and had been important. So that the programme, ITDG as an entity, is seen to be an important player, important actor in the development of the province.

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