

## Chapter 8

# CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

## Introduction

What can we do to make sure that our local endogenous development efforts are not frustrated by 'external' factors? What are the key strategic areas that we need to look into if we want to create a supportive environment? What are the challenges when mainstreaming the approach of endogenous development?

The cases in this chapter describe the joint efforts of communities, development workers and their organisations to address factors beyond the direct local influence but with a major impact at the local level. These factors are part of the 'wider environment' in which endogenous development takes place. The cases specifically show efforts in the field of policy advocacy and policy research, addressing resource rights and regulations, educational reform, and building wider economic linkages. Together these create the conditions for further up-scaling of successful local initiatives.

## Case 8-1

### Transforming traditional leaders into effective lobbyists in India

#### The need for policy lobby

In Prakasam District of Andhra Pradesh in India there are 37 Pattapu villages, called *Pattapupalems*, located along the coast. The total population of these villages is around 17,000. Although they are Hindus and follow Hindu culture, these people have their own customs, traditions and beliefs, which differ considerably from the present day Hindu traditions. Their traditional livelihood system, which is based on fishing and subsistence agriculture, is seriously threatened. Fish catches have been declining in fact since 1975. There are a number of reasons,



Three traditional leaders (*kapus*) of the Pattapu Community near the bay of Bengal, southern India. Through support to these traditional leaders the advocacy capacity of the communities was increased, in order to restore the local governance of the coastal ecosystem.

including the increased presence of larger fishing boats with high-tech equipment in the area; the building of shrimp farms, which led to the destruction of mangrove habitats, and the collection of shrimp fry in the fish breeding areas. Another major threat is the government plan to introduce a ship-breaking yard for dismantling oil tankers, which will seriously affect the natural resources in the coastal areas.

Even though there is legislation that in theory protects traditional fishermen, such as the Marine Regulation Act, the Coastal Regeneration Zone Bill, and the Aqua Culture Bill, these acts are not enforced. Lack of effective development incentives, such as price subsidies for diesel, insurance for traditional crafts and equipment, marketing linkages, cold storage facilities, and resolution of gender specific problems in fish selling, presents further hurdles in the development of these fisherfolk communities. These threats can only be addressed if existing government policies are really implemented in practice. The Society for National Integration through Rural Development (SNIRD), a local NGO, is therefore supporting local communities in their lobbying efforts. This they do by enhancing the advocacy capacities of the traditional community leaders, empowering the organisation of the community, and restoring local governance of the ecosystem.

### **The roles of traditional leaders**

The Pattapu villages have traditional leaders, called *kapu*—which means ‘protector of the village’. Each village can have three different *kapus*, the *Pedha Kapu*, *Nadu Kapu* and *Chinna Kapu*, who together form the village committee. These traditional leaders have administrative power, are responsible for social control, the economic affairs of the village, and conflict resolution. Women have traditionally had little access to *kapu* activities. Although the government has installed an official administrative and juridical system, the *kapu* leadership still functions in many of the Pattapu hamlets. Due to the westernisation of Indian society, however, the *kapu* traditional leadership structure is losing influence among the fisherfolk communities. This is partly due to the media, who often question the *kapus*’ decisions, while changing attitudes towards the elders and a liking for official court procedures are starting to influence the younger generation. The local political parties also have an adverse impact on the functioning of the *kapu*. If a *kapu* supports a particular political party, the supporters of the opposition may antagonise the *kapu* administration at village level. Overt confrontations between the traditional and the government system, however, are rare in the Pattapu communities.

### **Groundwork: community organisation and gender**

In 1992 SNIRD initiated the ‘Organisation of Marine Fisherfolk for Sustainable Resource Utilisation’ project in 45 villages in Prakasam District. Its mission is to facilitate the collective advocacy capacity of the target groups by empowering traditional leadership, and to facilitate sustainable development at macro-scale. All activities have a gender focus. Initially (1992-1995), SNIRD focused on strengthening the participation of women, by promoting women’s *sangams*,

groups. Then village action committees were formed, composed of representatives from traditional leaders, youth *sangams* and women *sangams*. SNIRD organised regular training sessions and meetings for the village action committees. Initially, the *kapus* treated women as inferior participants but after a while the *kapus* started to accept the women's participation, and they received equal recognition.

The youth and women *sangam* meetings were used to identify development interventions that needed to be discussed in the village action committee meetings. After they had obtained the *kapus'* permission and had agreed upon a course of action, the youth and women *sangams* lobbied the government department. In this way the *kapus* were involved as the decision makers, whereas the youth and women *sangams* were the implementers of the development interventions under the guidance of the *kapus*.

## Setting up the Fish Workers Union

Starting in 2000, SNIRD initiated a macro-level organisation in an effort to increase the bargaining power of the communities. This started with *kapu* leaders from 45 villages making an exposure trip to Kerala and Tamil Nadu, to look at various development interventions that had taken place there. On their return they organised a press meeting to highlight the way the state policies were hampering the future of the fisherfolk communities. To make the community aware of the unionisation process, the leaders organised a cycle rally covering all the fisherfolk villages in Prakasam District. After the rally, the leaders organised two '*kapu* conventions' to further plan the macro-level organisation, which would involve all the community leaders. After a series of executive body meetings, the Seaside Dwellers Fish Workers Union (locally known as STMKU), was set up and registered under the Trade Union Act of 1998.

The general meetings of the STMKU are organised every six months at village level, while the executive body meets every three months at district level. All members, both men and women, who have paid their membership fee, can participate in these meetings. About 34% of the membership of STMKU consists of women.

## Focus on policy lobbying

One of the main functions of STMKU is to lobby the authorities to enforce the implementation of existing legislation, and to influence policy making in favour of the fisherfolk community. For example, the STMKU has presented the issue of the ship-breaking yard to the relevant authorities at various levels. The STMKU became aware that the ship-breaking project would pollute the coastal ecosystem and also destroy livelihoods due to depletion of marine resources. The STMKU formed a cultural team from their own community and organised cultural programmes in each fisherfolk village in the Prakasam and Nellore Districts and made the community aware of the problem. The STMKU prepared information and education materials about the adverse effects of the project and made the general public aware of the magnitude of the issue.

While the awareness campaign was going on, the government gave orders to vacate an area surrounding three fisherfolk hamlets so that the project could be implemented, giving a deadline of two weeks. When the day arrived almost 3000 fisherfolk from neighbouring hamlets gathered in the proposed project area. Representatives of the construction company arrived and tensions rose, culminating in the arrest of the General Secretary of the STMKU. The STMKU members held a rally and prepared a representation to submit to the District administration, appealing for the release of the General Secretary, a copy of which was also faxed to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. The action was effective, as the STMKU general secretary was released a day later.

As part of the STMKU strategy, the union leaders prepared a detailed report highlighting the problem, accompanied by a request to halt the project. This was sent to the President of India, the Prime Minister and the relevant Indian government Ministers. A postcard campaign was initiated, whereby all the coastal villages in the Prakasam and Nellore Districts sent postcards to the Prime Minister asking him to withdraw the ship-breaking yard project. STMKU also conducted a signature campaign, collecting 10,000 signatures on a petition sent to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. In addition, STMKU lobbied with the Regional Pollution Board and environmental research institutes. As a result, three scientists from the national Institute of Oceanography visited the project area, conducted an in-depth project viability study, talked with leaders, the villagers and the general public and prepared a report which they submitted to the Government in which they stated that the project would endanger the coastal environment.

After six months' struggle, STMKU succeeded in procuring a High Court order to halt any construction activity in the project site. This has been a major relief for the local communities who would have been affected by this project.

Regarding the negative effects of the shrimp culture, similar lobbying activities have also been undertaken. As many of the shrimp farms fall within coastal regulated zones where shrimp culture is forbidden, the STMKU gave presentations to district, state and national administrators, to get the Coastal Regeneration Zone Bill actively enforced. As a result of their action, the shrimp farms in Gundamala village, which had occupied and destroyed mangrove areas, were removed, and the bill has now been implemented. Moreover, the *kapus* of all the fisherfolk villages have ordered the community to stop the collection of shrimp fry in breeding areas, so that fish resources can be regenerated.

### **Going beyond strengthening traditional structures**

Influences from outside pose a serious threat to the survival of the Pattapu coastal communities. The experiences of SNIRD show that the newly created democratic bodies, which build on traditional leadership and administrative systems, can be effective ways of enforcing conservation of the ecosystem. Hence, development efforts and policies are needed that promote endogenous development not just through involving the communities, but also their traditional leadership structures.

Nevertheless, only re-enforcing traditional leadership systems is not enough. Special efforts may be needed to enhance participation of women in decision-making, e.g. through the formation of new groups, such as the women's *sangam*, and the village action committees (Grama Sangam). The *kapu* convention, which is held once in a year at district level, is also a new institution that brings harmony and strengthens the *kapu* administration. The more formally organised STMKU Fish Workers Union was needed to strengthen the lobbying capacity of the traditional leadership structures.

For us it has become clear that basing development activities on traditional leadership systems, and facilitating traditional leaders' capacity for lobbying, can alter the negative cycle of events that threaten the existence of these fisher communities.

Source: J. K. Newport and G. P. Godfrey, SNIRD

## Case 8-2

### Up-scaling traditional organic agriculture in Sri Lanka

#### Introduction

ECO's involvement in organic and traditional farming in Sri Lanka goes back to the early 1980s when it started training in organic agriculture, gradually moving into traditional<sup>1</sup> agriculture. The ECO residential training facility has seen hundreds of farmers and agricultural workers from government organisations and from NGOs pass through, inspired by the need to reverse the negative effects of modern farming on the environment and people's health and livelihoods. Over the years ECO, and in particular its founder, have had a major impact in the country in terms of Indigenous Knowledge (IK).

In the past two to three years, ECO's strategy for working towards endogenous development has shifted to include up-scaling and mainstreaming traditional farming practices. This is done through education and conservation, research and extension, with policy lobbying taking place in each of these fields when appropriate. Through each of these, the goal is to influence people on a small-scale in a large geographical area, thus building up critical mass and pressure to make changes.

#### Creating training capacity

In the early years of ECO, training was done exclusively by its founder. It often took the form of a 3-5 day residential training course at the ECO centre, and teaching was of a practical, hands-on nature. However, as the demand for training increased and training programmes were conducted at other locations, there was a need for more trainers.



Improved traditional rice cultivation includes sowing according to monsoon winds and lunar cycles before the onset of the monsoon rains, minimal tillage and traditional crop protection measures. This form of rice cultivation requires half of the irrigation water normally needed and gives good yields.

Potential individuals were selected from the trainees at the training programmes, and they were given on-the-job training. Two major criteria in selecting these candidates were that they had had higher education in (modern) agriculture and had a strong affinity with traditional agriculture. Another important point is that trainers should be able to demonstrate what they teach, and believe in it, whether it is making compost or chanting a mantra to ward off pest attacks. The trainers were given freedom to select the aspects of agriculture that most interested them. None of these trainers works full time for ECO, but are invited to join training programmes as and when the need arises. These are called the second generation of trainers in IK and traditional agriculture.

ECO is now in the phase of building the third generation of trainers. These trainers are selected from the staff of NGOs and government organisations who have undergone ECO training. This way, their organisations will have the capacity to offer in-house training and also to offer training to others. This contributes to strengthening capacity at national level. This has already started and it is envisaged that this trend will gain momentum. Recent training that ECO has provided has been for the Department of Export Agriculture as part of their in-service training programme for agricultural staff, and for an NGO involved in national land and agricultural reform, which intends to offer a five-day residential training course in IK-related farming practices to staff members of nearly 500 NGOs throughout Sri Lanka.

### Step-wise training approach

When an organisation approaches ECO with a request for staff training, ECO responds by asking the organisation to organise a one-day seminar for at least one hundred participants to start with. For this, ECO only charges for its own staff's travel, food and accommodation costs. After this initial seminar, around 15 individuals are identified for a five-day intensive residential training programme in IK/traditional agriculture. ECO does not have a set curriculum for these training programmes, thus maintaining flexibility to adjust the programme to the needs of the participants during the course of training. However, there are two areas that are always covered:

- Modern agricultural practices and the effects of these practices (human, environmental, social, etc.);
- Alternatives in the form of traditional agriculture adapted to the current situation: bio-physical (organic); spiritual (*yantra*, *kem*, *pirith*); astrological/cosmic (auspicious days, times, periods).
- Whenever possible, ECO tries to conduct at least two follow-up visits to see how the trainers are faring in the field.

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<sup>1</sup> Traditional farming refers to the package of indigenous practices, ecological, spiritual, and astrological, as used in ancient Sri Lanka and now adapted to the current situation.

## Getting IK into university curricula

ECO's involvement with universities started when the founder invited a group of university academics to become involved with guiding ECO in its work. This happened in the mid 1990s when ECO had become part of a broader international network of organisations involved in endogenous development (Compas). This inspired ECO to form a group called the Compas Consultative Body (CCB), consisting of six or seven people from universities and research institutes. This group met twice a year on average.

Since then, some of the members of this group have become actively involved in doing research on different aspects of IK in agriculture, mainly with the purpose of validating IK. Other university and research people got involved in these experiments later. Examples include field experiments on *nawa kekulama* (an adapted version of traditional *kekulama* rice cultivation, developed by ECO), research on ancient water cleaning methods, and research to compare *nawa kekulama* with conventional methods. Their involvement in this research and the results obtained motivated the scientists to incorporate short courses in IK/organic agriculture into some of the universities' educational programmes. For example, the University of Ruhuna in Matara conducts a course on sustainable agriculture for which ECO teaches the part on integrated agriculture. The Peradeniya University in Kandy has run a course on IK in pest control. In this way, IK-related aspects of agriculture are gradually being incorporated into university curricula.

The Centre for Endogenous Research and Development, a recently established NGO, could be considered a step further in imbedding IK aspects in the university sector. Key posts in this NGO are held by former CCB members.

## Moving up to policy level

Closely linked to the work with the universities, ECO is trying to influence the thinking and practice at policy level in the country. Its main strategy to this end is the organisation of high-level seminars and workshops. For these events, ECO calls upon the university staff and government representatives collaborating in its programmes to give presentations and share experiences. Press coverage of the events contributes to a wider awareness raising on the relevance and impact of ECO's approach to agriculture development.

Source: G.K. Upawansa, ECO

## Case 8-3 Influencing wildfire management policy in Ghana

### The problem

Fire has always been a tool for land management and plays a central role in the maintenance of many natural ecosystems, as well as in the practice of agriculture and rangeland

management in Ghana. Communities use fire for small-scale land clearance and elimination of debris in their traditional slash and burn agriculture, taking advantage of the annual dry season. Fires are used not only for farming activities but also for hunting, pasture management and cultural practices.

With increases in population, these traditional farming practices are no longer able to provide sustainable farming systems. Particularly after the severe drought in 1982/3, wildfire became a major cause of forest and land degradation. Now wildfire threatens the promotion of timber plantation development, biodiversity conservation, agricultural production, watershed management and the maintenance of environmental quality. It is the poor who are particularly at risk because they depend directly on land for their livelihood and often live in fragile ecosystems.

### **The failure of top-down policy development**

The Ghanaian government has long recognised the need to control wildfires, the first legislation being passed in 1934, with various additions during the 1980s and 1990s. Experience has shown, however, that wildfires cannot be controlled through legislation, by-laws and annual educational campaigns all of which emanate from the central government level.

In 2003 Cecik, an NGO based in northern Ghana, supported the drawing up of a new Wildfire Management Policy document through an alternative bottom-up process, the three-tier approach, building on its years of experiences in supporting endogenous development in the communities. The challenge was to formulate a national policy that would give direction and influence people's attitudes while incorporating and building on local people's perceptions, experiences and needs, as well as government and donor interests.

### **The policy process: the Three-Tier Approach**

In bringing together stakeholders to discuss and inform the bushfire management in northern Ghana, a three-tier approach was used to allow discussion at each level, with each interest group using its own communications tools and any language that enhances sharing and cross-fertilisation.

The first stage involved only community representatives who discussed their experience and field level investigations. During this discussion the communities nominated representatives to represent them at the next level (Institutional/Organisational) forum. At the end of two days' deliberation the communities arrived at a statement of purpose, which the representatives were prepared to present.

The second stage involved mainly NGOs, as well as government ministries, departments and agencies, with a few representatives from the communities. Presentations were made on behalf of the various institutions, as well as a statement of purpose by community representatives. During the next two days there were discussions, which culminated in a statement of purpose

to be presented to the policy makers. At this level also, representatives were nominated to the next level (policy level) forum.

The final stage was made up of policy makers as the majority with Institution and Community representatives as Ambassadors. This session took one day. The communities presented their position paper, followed by the institutions. The policy makers also presented their speeches, after which a discussion followed.

After this process the representatives reported back and actions were taken, along with the planning of a follow-up review.

## The results

This process has led to a policy document with a truly holistic framework. Though stakeholders brought a variety of ideas into the process, the concept of endogenous development shows through in many paragraphs (see Box). The three-tier structure is also being used for disseminating the Food & Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP) by the Ghana government, and the University for Development Studies (UDS) is using it for teaching policy-planning and review in postgraduate courses.

### Statement three of Wildfire Management Policy

Sustaining wildfire prevention and control will be pursued by developing the appropriate *traditional structures and systems* to allow the full involvement of all stakeholders in decision-making, resource mobilisation and implementation of wildfire programmes. Strategies include:

- Institutionalisation of participatory approaches in wildfire management at all levels, and *empowering traditional authorities and community leaders* to take responsibility for the prevention and control of wildfires at community and village levels.
- Development of appropriate capacities of all stakeholders in wildfire management.
- Establishment of a National Wildfire Management Fund and a district-based insurance scheme to ensure sustainable participation of all stakeholders.
- Institution of incentive, reward and benefit-sharing schemes for communities, individuals and institutions that distinguish themselves in wildfire management.
- Ensuring that basic schools, Agriculture and Forestry Institutions of higher learning incorporate courses in wildfire management in their curricula.
- Promoting and sustaining public awareness, training and environmental education campaigns at all levels of governance to prevent wildfires, particularly among communities in high- to medium-risk fire areas.

It is envisaged that all relevant institutions and stakeholders will develop their own specific individual policy actions to achieve the overall policy objectives. This includes not only ministerial representatives but also that traditional authorities take a lead role in community mobilisation and support the enactment and enforcement of by-laws at community level. Non-governmental organisations have roles in awareness creation, community mobilisation and logistical support.

Source: Cecik and Care International, Ghana Office

## Case 8-4

# Intra- and inter-cultural education and university reform in Bolivia

## Introduction

Bolivia needs professionals who are able to do joint action research together with farmers, based on local resources and local knowledge.



In many parts of Latin America the modernisation-based development model has not been able to help reduce poverty. The indigenous population in particular experiences increased material poverty as this development approach ignores many fundamental aspects of their lives and is thus not able to generate viable alternatives.

At the same time, higher education in Latin America contains a contradiction: although universities and countries in general have a population of mixed cultural background

including a large portion of indigenous people, the curriculum content only encompasses modern western knowledge and related worldviews. Knowledge generated in the university is limited by the exclusion of knowledge inherent in native cultures.

Agruco, based at the San Simon Municipal University (UMSS) in Cochabamba, Bolivia, realised that this education model has little relevance to the social and economic problems of the local communities. Their poverty crisis cannot be resolved through a university-business paradigm, nor by means of a conceptual model which prioritises the market economy. Agruco is, therefore, now transforming the university education so that it is based on both western scientific knowledge and the wisdom of the native people. It aims at future graduates developing the skills necessary to further the endogenous development process of the increasingly impoverished population.

### Key concepts in the new education paradigm

**Inter-culturality:** The re-evaluation of local knowledge systems, especially the wisdom of native indigenous peoples, through exchange and dialogue between knowledge systems.

**Intra-culturality:** The first indispensable step in the process of strengthening cultural identity and transforming the knowledge system within the university.

**Transdisciplinarity:** A process of education and applied research based on the complexity of every situation, which transcends the knowledge of individual disciplines by using a range of methodologies. See also the Glossary on page 235.

## **Towards inter- and intra-cultural education**

For its work within the UMSS, Agruco has formulated its principal objective as 'to identify and implement actions for change within Latin American public universities, which rebuild the educative process through the inclusion of a new paradigm—re-evaluating the cultures of the native peoples and the dialogue between the knowledge systems involved (South-South, South-North), from an intra- and inter-cultural and transdisciplinary perspective' (see Box). Through their links with Compas, universities from Bolivia, Chile, Colombia and Guatemala are also participating in this effort.

### **The process of change**

Agruco's experience in trying to initiate change in the education has been a difficult path.

Summarising, it has consisted of the following steps:

- Developing an own experience of university education and research based on dialogue between western scientific knowledge and the wisdom of the original indigenous peoples. This process started about fifteen years ago and continues today in the fields of agroecology and municipal management at undergraduate and postgraduate level.
- About ten workshops and conferences have been organised within UMSS in which Agruco has shared and socialised its field experience. Other institutions and universities in Latin America have been invited and have shared their similar experiences.
- Various meetings and workshops have been held with the university authorities and student leaders that are committed to the need to implement changes and reform in higher education.
- Proposals have been formulated together with those involved about ways in which Agruco's specific experience can be translated to other areas and disciplines within university training.

### **Linking the university to local realities**

The education system of UMSS, principally through the faculty of agriculture and Agruco, has now changed to include a continuous interaction between university and the various social elements around it. This includes, for example, joint undertakings with the Cochabamba peasant workers trade union, with 44 town councils within Cochabamba department, and with small businesses, neighbourhood councils and the Cochabamba federation of private businessmen.

All undergraduate training programs, programs of research and development, and postgraduate projects, are also now linked to actual integrated community development, though pilot projects. These projects are in areas such as agro-ecology, agroforestry, fodder and forest crops, agricultural mechanisation, protected areas, inter-culturality, municipal administration and government processes.

The research and social interaction have generated important lessons, which have in turn fed back into the undergraduate academic education, thus transforming it.

## The research and education approach

If students are to gain an interdisciplinary understanding and interpretation of the rural situation, so that they can support sustainable solutions for the rural poor, their interaction with communities as part of their research projects needs to have a combination of three main components:

**Understand the situation** Field studies, which include the vision of development from the perspective of the peasant farmer. Analyse the technologies and customs of the community and its members in everyday life—with its material, social and spiritual elements—as it is seen from within the community itself.

**Strengthen and rebuild local knowledge** by means of participatory documentation: produce records of 'The Re-evaluation of Local Knowledge for Sustainable Development' which may then be returned to the community and passed on to other communities and organisations.

**Formulate projects** with the communities based on the technologies compiled, for the sustainable management of natural resources and the re-invigoration of local knowledge. The projects are elaborated in conjunction with the communities and submitted to municipal programmes for financing.

In all components, the research approach is active and participatory, with emphasis on methodologies from different scientific disciplines. Requests for research and integrated development need to arise from participatory community studies. The outcome of these studies makes a significant contribution to municipal development plans.

## Changing the institution itself

Experiences show that use of the new, participatory educational approach with its strong linkages to many organisations outside the university leads to changes in the organic structure of the universities and their decision-making bodies.

For example, the Honourable University Council (HCU) currently upholds the principles of autonomy and joint-government, with the participation of student and staff representatives. There has also been a proposal to create a People's Participation Council with representatives of peasant workers' organisations, the federation of private business, and the regional government. This council is to be responsible for proposing university policies and strategies to meet the social, cultural, economic and political needs of society.

Likewise, a proposal has been formulated to create a 'Council of the Wise', who will advise on the elaboration of university programmes for education, scientific research and social interaction. Participants in this council will be individuals of high standing from civil society, including leaders from native indigenous peoples and academia.

University centres fulfil educational functions in the areas of postgraduate courses, scientific research and social interaction. The role of these centres is to actively promote greater participation by the general population and they have arisen from pilot schemes conducted with civil society and international cooperation. To date five UMSS centres have been accredited within Mercosur as centres of excellence.

## Consolidating the efforts

This experience of transforming education has inspired the UMSS and the Ministry of Agriculture to collaborate in the setting up of a new research fund 'to develop general guidelines for an intra-cultural, inter-cultural and transdisciplinary reform in public universities of Bolivia and Latin America'. Partners from Switzerland and the Netherlands are supporting these efforts.

The fund aims to promote active, participatory, transdisciplinary and intra- and inter-cultural research in the different faculties of the UMSS. It also aims at the establishment of intra- and inter-cultural training programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level (diploma, masters and doctorate). Furthermore, 300 lecturers will specialise in participatory, transdisciplinary and intra- and intercultural research. Undergraduate and postgraduate training programmes will be modified with flexible curriculum matrices which encompass both modern western scientific knowledge and the wisdom of the native peoples.

In this way UMSS continues its process of change to fulfil its mission to be a multicultural and multilingual public university at the service of all the Bolivian population. Intra- and inter-culturality, and transdisciplinary and participatory research for an endogenous sustainable development are the basis for this university reform. A university education based on the two fundamental pillars—scientific western knowledge and the wisdom of the native peoples—will produce motivated professionals, with the skills required to support endogenous development.

*Source: Franz Vargas and Freddy Delgado, Agruco*

## Case 8-5

### Recognising the contribution of the Maya juridical system to the state of Guatemala

#### Introduction

The traditional authorities of the Maya K'iche Nation can be regarded as key examples in the debate surrounding the exclusionary state judicial system in Guatemala. The traditional authorities have devoted efforts to indicating the deficiencies and the state of crisis and collapse of the Guatemalan state, which has now started to recognise the indigenous juridical system of the Maya nation. The Maya authorities have suggested to the state that it is important to recognise the existence of the Maya juridical system, the traditional authorities,

Traditional leaders and government representatives participate in the dialogue on the role of Mayan juridical systems for the prevention and solution of conflicts, during a conference organised by Oxlajuj Ajpop.



methods of prevention and resolution of conflicts in communities and their contribution to social cohesion. At the same time, the need is recognised to revitalise the indigenous organisation of the traditional authorities so that it has the capacity to participate more fully in a process of transformation of the juridical system in Guatemala.

Compas partner Oxlajuj Ajpop has been involved in this process since 2000 within a project for juridical pluralism, supported by the United Nations PASOC-PNUD, designed to

support institutional and local strengthening. A large proportion of the effort has gone towards the process of research, clarification and systematisation that has been undertaken by the elders to understand the foundations of the traditional Maya system.

### **Step one: establishing the foundations**

During the first years, exchanges and consultations took place and agreements were reached on the steps that needed to be taken to reconstruct the organisation of the traditional authorities, and revitalise knowledge and indigenous forms of applying justice and sensitisation. The communities came to learn the importance of these for their own well-being. The elder members of Oxlajuj Ajpop carried out these first steps, with technical support from the central office.

### **Step two: identification, systematisation and diffusion of the sources and foundations of the Maya juridical system**

Maya Law is based on the Maya cosmovision, which integrates the spiritual, social, philosophical, moral and ethical spheres. Authority is a mission to which some are born, later on discovering this and taking it up to serve the community (see Case 3-6).

### **Step three: profiles of the authorities**

In the Maya culture both men and women may be elected to a position of authority, and both must fulfil the same requirements. They have to know the history of their culture, obey the wise advice of the ancestors, and be able to use the sacred calendar. A person of authority must have spiritual experience of the ancestors, be without vices, of good history, honourable, and respected by the community. He or she has to be able to defend the land and natural resources of the community and be capable of working for his or her community.

### **Step four: how authorities are elected**

According to the Maya cosmovision and calendar, no person can elect him or herself to a position of authority in the community, people or nation. An authority is elected by the

community because the community needs a person to act as a guide, to look after and guide it. This is a profound mission and requires strong spiritual experience to be able to carry it out.

- The authorities of the Alaxik lineage are chosen within the family.
- Various lineages within the community elect an authority for the community.
- The community authorities elect the authority of the Maya people (Pueblo)

The election involves special rites and consultations with the ancestors through the sacred '*envoltorio*', the Tz'ite'. All those proposed must be consulted to see whether they have the capacities required to assume the mission of being an authority.

### **Step five: investiture of the authority**

The person elected is invested as an authority in the Oxlajuj Kej (thirteen deer) according to the Maya calendar, a special event for the whole community. A special staff and ceremonial robes of authority are prepared for the elected person, special altars are assigned for the ceremonial rites in accordance with the Maya calendar and the elders' advice is presented. The investiture involves sacred ceremonies, dances, meals and speeches.

### **Step six: the mission of the traditional authority**

Persons of authority in the Maya nation have to listen to their people, devote themselves to defending the community's resources, strengthening social and spiritual organisation, promote native foods, spread values and science, celebrate special rites. A traditional authority is a prophet of the people. The person represents the community to the state authorities and religions of other cultures.

### **Step seven: using national and international laws to support the exercise of Maya authority**

In order to recognise the legitimacy of the spiritual, medicinal, territorial rights and the indigenous system of justice, Oxlajuj Ajpop is active in promoting the spread of legal instruments for defending these rights within the communities. One of these instruments is Convention 169 of the ILO which recognises the rights of indigenous peoples, and *Ley Marco de los Acuerdos de Paz* that recognises some aspects of the rights of indigenous peoples. The laws in general contain contradictions and always have opportunities and limitations. The use of the instruments obliges the state judiciaries to adopt a flexible stance in the face of the demands of the communities.

### **Final step: proposal for transforming the state judicial system into one of juridical pluralism in Guatemala**

The traditional authorities propose to the State judicial system that it recognises the indigenous systems of the Maya, Xinca and Garífuna nations to reflect the cultural reality in Guatemala. This is still at a preliminary stage: much work still needs to be done to formulate a proposal that will be supported by all sectors of civil society.

## Conclusion

The Maya judicial system possesses authority, procedures and norms based on the Maya cosmovision. It is an efficient system that solves problems in an integral manner. It could contribute big economic and time savings to the state system in Guatemala. It orients, corrects and transforms people. State recognition is urged in order to transform the current dysfunctional justice system.

Source: Felipe Gómez Gómez, Oxlajuj Ajpop

## Case 8-6 Marching for policy change in Nicaragua

### Introduction



The school ecological brigade participates in the March of the Chorotega. These young students are trained in nature- and biodiversity management.

The Totogalpa area in Northern Nicaragua was severely affected by hurricane Mitch in 1998. The NGO INPRHU initiated emergency reconstruction efforts with the native Chorotega people, focusing on housing and the productive system. From the start these efforts were based on local techniques and knowledge, and the reintroduction of traditional crops that had largely been abandoned in the 1970s. Learning with the people, the approach used evolved over the years towards supporting endogenous

development. When local policies governing access to forest resources and their implementation were found to be the main bottleneck for such development, the endogenous development process had strengthened the capacities of the Chorotega communities to the extent that they were able to address these policy issues successfully.

### Development of the collaboration

INPRHU first supported the community in better understanding its own history. Workshops with elders aimed at activating the oral history and comparing this with the 'official history' were held. Through this it became evident that for centuries the Chorotega had faced many difficulties, and had been forced to endure harsh conditions. But they also realised that they possessed an energy that helped them to resist the strong forces that stripped them of most of their lands, rights and wealth.

In our further support we resorted principally to the following methods and approaches:

- Meetings for reflection, evening talks by candlelight, visits to family in the evenings, social dramas and plays, stories and legends, illustrated histories of the community, families and other.
- Diagnosis using Participatory Action Research, with different participatory tools.
- Training to promote local human resources.
- Training through workshops, field visits and talks.
- Visits and trips to exchange experiences elsewhere.
- Participatory community planning.

However, the tools themselves are not as important as is their combined use within the framework of a strategy of self-education based on recovering a community's own culture.

## **Community organisation**

One important step in building local community strength was the participation of two members of the Chorotega native community in the newly formed Municipal Development Committee. Together with the also newly formed Local Development Committees composed of inhabitants of the micro regions, these created opportunities for the communities to influence the municipality's strategic plans.

In 2002, the next crucial step was the creation of the overall Council of Elders, with men and women from the Chorotega community, PICTAC. Ancestral symbols were chosen for its logo and flag. Local councils were subsequently created in each of the communities. PICTAC started to play an increasingly important role. It created the 'Chorotega coordination unit' including Chorotega people from other municipalities: Cusmapa, San Lucas, Telpaneca and Mozonte. The organisation collaborates with the Ministry of Education in organising Ecological School Brigades. The students in these brigades are trained in sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity, as part of the Chorotega Educational System. International exchanges within the context of the COMPAS programme further helped to build the capacity of the organisation.

## **The march**

The Chorotega people depend for their livelihood on access to forest resources. They were not, however, able to influence their use and management. Municipal officials had declared that there were no native people living in the Totogalpa area and that unrestricted use of the forests could be made. With this they tried to circumvent international (ILO Article 169) and national laws protecting the resources and identities of indigenous people. In 2004, PICTAC and its allies therefore decided to organise a massive mobilisation, a march to the public authorities in Totogalpa demanding the official recognition of the Chorotega native people and thus their right to manage the relevant resources.

Chorotega people of 40 communities participated in a march to their municipality under the motto: 'The Community Present in the Rescue of our Roots'. They decided to bring to the authorities' attention the existence of the native Chorotega people, and to demand custody of their forests.



Earlier in the year, several strategic alliances had been established that proved very critical to the success of the mobilisation, e.g. with the religious order of the Tertiary Capuchin Sisters of the Holy Family and with the Ministry of Education, partner in the School Ecological Brigade programme. The support of the local media was also important in building popular participation. In each of the 40 communities the existing local groups assumed the task of actually organising the people.

On September 12, 2004, 2000 people marched to Totogalpa. They had an outdoor mass service in the municipal stadium and then publicly presented their requests to the authorities to acknowledge the native Chorotega people of Totogalpa. In addition, they requested that the municipality's forests be declared protected areas, with the Indigenous Chorotega People of Totogalpa in Community Action (PICHAC) as the formal custodians.

## Results achieved

The march was a success. Already on the day of the March, the mayor of Totogalpa read a declaration acknowledging PICHAC and the Chorotega traditional authorities. She declared the Totogalpa municipality a native Chorotega territory, and stated that this event should be commemorated on 12 September each year. The local and national media covered the event, taking this historic news to every corner of Nicaragua.

After the event, the municipality granted PICHAC space to set up a small office for two years, and donated land to build a permanent office and an artisan centre. In 2005, a building for holding native people assemblies was built on a property located in Las Chilcas, which was donated by one of the members of the council of elders, Don Porfirio López Mejía. Two young Chorotega women have been trained as communication professionals. Every Saturday they broadcast on Segovia Radio giving an account of the situation of the Chorotega and other native peoples. News of events, achievements and PICHAC activities is broadcast, together with music by local groups.

## Still a long way to go

In December of 2004, representatives of the various local communities came together to evaluate the activities and the process of change. Quite a few difficulties were brought up. Some people are still ashamed of being natives, and not all community directives are working efficiently. Especially the young do not always appreciate the importance of PICHAC. Further work needs to be done with them to help create awareness. Without a doubt, the Chorotega

no longer face a situation of exclusion. The most important transformation has been the unification, organisation and mobilisation of the indigenous Chorotega communities, which has restored their dignity as human beings with rights and duties.

Source: INPRHU,  
Stephan Rist, CDE

## Case 8-7

### Regional cooperatives bridge the gap between policy and practice in Spain

#### Natural resources under threat

Olive trees are more or less synonymous with the Mediterranean area, and there are some that are more than 1000 years old in the province of Castellón in eastern Spain. Since 2001, astute merchants have been buying, uprooting and shipping them to France and Italy and even as far as China, where they are planted as unusual landmarks in natural parks and gardens. This natural resource and cultural heritage has thus come under serious threat.



Ancient olive tree in eastern Spain.

The mountainous areas of Castellón are not very wealthy. Farming consists mainly of rain-dependent olive, wine and dried fruit production. Even these activities have declined, with many people migrating to the richer coastal area, where irrigated citrus farming takes place and tourism is on the rise, leaving partially abandoned villages behind. Under these circumstances it is perhaps not surprising that the owners of such old olive trees have succumbed to the increasingly high prices being offered for their prize possessions. Amounts of around € 3,000 are not unusual and on one occasion € 24,000 was paid for a 1,800-year-old tree.

However, some farmers in the area of Cloth d'en Simó realised that what was happening amounted to the 'theft' of an important part of their cultural heritage. They developed a strategy not only to influence policies so that the olive trees could be retained, but also to develop this cultural heritage for the benefit of the region. This was done with support from a regional cooperative.

#### The cooperative strength in the region

Spain has a long tradition of organising agricultural production through cooperatives. Virtually all villages have their own cooperative. Of all cooperatives in the provinces of Castellón, Alicante and Valencia some 227 cooperatives are federated in a second-level cooperative

called InterCoop, which has a total of 80,000 farmer members. These cooperatives are federated in a second-level cooperative called InterCoop. Founded in 2000, InterCoop aims to create competitive advantages in sales, marketing, processing and to provide services to its members. Even though its annual turnover amounts to € 62 million, it is a fairly small cooperative compared to other Spanish second-grade cooperatives. Nevertheless, it distinguishes itself by its relatively high level of farmer participation in cooperative development and management.

The cooperative goes beyond simply defending farmers' immediate interests (e.g. securing subsidies to support the survival of agriculture) and has started a whole spectrum of rural development activities. In order to preserve agriculture in the area, InterCoop feels it must engage with socio-cultural issues as well: 'Our villages are our future'. InterCoop has an extensive social base in the region and is strong in delivering concrete results for rural people. It receives a small annual contribution from the provincial authorities for strengthening rural development in the ways it considers best.

InterCoop formed four regional cooperatives (*co-operativas comarcales*) in the province of Castellón, each consisting of first-level cooperatives that together constitute a region with a shared socio-cultural identity and similar or complementary agricultural activities. These regional cooperatives can take the lead in developing and implementing integrated regional development plans. One of the regional cooperatives, the Regional Cooperative of Cloth d'en Simó, is in the area where the olive trees were uprooted. It has 9 members: 8 first-level local cooperatives—all of them specialising in olive oil production—and InterCoop itself. All nine members invest capital (about € 30,000 each) and unite some 2,750 farmer members. This regional cooperative has successfully addressed the issue of the olive trees and used it as a focal point for economic development and strengthening the regional identity.

### Position of the regional cooperative between top and bottom / practice and policy

| <i>Geographical level</i>  | <i>Operating Organisation</i>  | <i>Output</i>  |
|--|--|--|
| Comunidad Autónoma<br>(3 provinces: Valencia,<br>Castellón and Alicante) | InterCoop<br>(Second-grade cooperative)  | Joint processing, sales, marketing of agricultural production and provision of services. Strategic and innovative power. |
| Province of Castellón  | Fundación Penyagolosa  | Lobbying, networking, policy alignment, strategy formulation.  |
| THE GAP  | Regional / territorial Cooperative<br>(of which <i>Cloth d'en Simó</i> is one) | Integrated Territorial Development plans and action.   |
| Municipalities   | First-grade cooperatives   | Joint processing of agricultural production, smallest socio-economic unit.   |

## Seeking formal recognition of the value of the olive trees

The first thing the members did was to survey and document the millennium trees. The farmers participated in the survey of their trees, and InterCoop supplied an expert who identified the tree varieties. Of an estimated thousand trees, about 250 olive trees have now been described and documented botanically as being over 1000 years old. A lobby campaign was carried out and in June 2006 a law was passed prohibiting the uprooting of monumental olive trees.

The successful passing of the law is also due to the Fundación Penyagolosa. This Foundation was initiated by InterCoop and is a broad coalition composed of representatives from the Province, the Chamber of Commerce, a rural bank, the University of Castellón, some farmers' associations, a cooperative for Associated Labour and InterCoop. It provides a strategic lobbying opportunity to ally people at the top-end with ambitions and initiatives arising locally. The fact that the provincial representative is a politician responsible for agriculture gave weight to the motion on monumental olive trees. The Foundation is also instrumental in generating vision and coherence among the agricultural policies existing at the level of Castellón province and the wider Valencia region.

## Creating economic benefits

The old trees still produce olives, and with technical support from InterCoop the olives from these trees are now collected separately, following procedures so that the origin of the olives can be guaranteed. The oil is bottled in a luxury edition, fetching 3 to 6 times the price of regular olive oil. While this direct income from the trees through this special oil is not very high because of the limited quantity, it serves as a 'flagship' product, attracting attention to the area. Research with InterCoop also showed that the old trees were of the Farga variety. Fruits of this not-so-common ancient variety have a balance of fatty acids which makes them very suitable for long storage. This is perhaps not so surprising, given that ancient cultures had no modern forms of cool storage. This discovery has led to recent replanting of olive trees of the Farga variety.

The trees are also used in more indirect ways to create economic benefits. They form one of the greatest tourist attractions together with the picturesque villages and attractive scenery in an area with a rich cultural, historical and spiritual tradition. Under the banner of InterCoop, a network of local shops has been established throughout Castellón where local quality products are sold. The Regional Cooperative of Cloth d'en Simó has bought a local petrol station and converted it into a tourist spot with a shop and a restaurant to entice tourists who are mainly based on the coast, to venture inland. Finally, the Regional Cooperative has also created the Association of Friends of the Olive Tree. All non-farmers who wish to contribute to the development of this local resource can become members by making a small financial donation. The association is a strategic instrument that is able to attract attention and support from other parts of society—including well known members of the public and the business community. Through their contacts, the Friends of the Olive Tree are trying to achieve Unesco world heritage

Source: Gaston Remmers, Bureau Buitenkans

status, with the aim of enhancing the image of the area and generating more possibilities for creating added value: another policy process ahead.

## Case 8-8

### Building the Rural Parliament: structured policy dialogue in the Netherlands

#### The need for an increased policy dialogue

In the Netherlands, rural areas face many challenges, including the liveability of the countryside, the decrease in farming opportunities and profitability, nature conservation, land-use planning of the very limited area available, domination of the rural areas by the city, and degradation of social and other facilities. There are many organisations and initiatives dealing with these issues. Many are sector specific and therefore look at sub-interests only. Others are collaborative efforts of local communities with other actors to try and address their issues in a more holistic and participatory way. Often these receive support through the innovative European Union programme for Rural Development (Leader). In all cases, rural issues and concerns attract little policy attention at the national level and local or regional initiatives are constrained by higher level frameworks. Rural people and organisations find it difficult to reach the national level with their concerns, except for a few large single-interest groups. The Rural Parliament is the first initiative in the Netherlands to bridge this gap, and started in 2005.

A rural parliament is an event for structured debate on rural issues: a debate between rural citizens and members of the national parliament. The focus is on implications at the national level. The Rural Parliament promotes the interests of rural areas and aims to catalyse change.

#### The first Rural Parliament

The inspiration for the first rural parliament came from Sweden, Hungary and Estonia where rural parliaments are organised regularly with success. This inspired the Association of Small Villages, an NGO of people supporting local and regional development and the team of the National Network for Rural Development, an independent network, to initiate the first rural parliament in the Netherlands.

The first step was to agree on subjects to be discussed. What are the concerns of the people and what do they want to raise with the national government? During the first Rural Parliament, this input was generated by giving all rural citizens the opportunity to submit subjects by post or e-mail. The initiators clustered these around nine themes. These formed the main topics for the nine discussion groups at the Rural Parliament.

The parliament lasted for one day and nearly 330 people participated. Apart from the discussion groups, there was a project market with ten interesting and inspiring rural development projects, representing 10 out of the 12 regions in the Netherlands. Here people

exchanged information about good practices on project implementation. The participants of the Rural Parliament could thus choose between 'talking' in a discussion group or 'doing' at the market. National politicians participated actively in the discussion group as well at the project market.

In the afternoon, all participants (rural inhabitants and politicians) debated the most important conclusions of the nine discussion groups. Conclusions were formulated using an open voting procedure on key issues. During this debate, agreements and commitments were made where possible.

## Participants

A Rural Parliament can only be a success if enough members of the national government participate. At the 2005 event, twelve members of the national parliament were present, which was very positive. These members of parliament had to be willing to invest in better contact and decision-making with citizens. The twelve politicians represented a variety of political parties as the organisers tried to have all parties involved.

The other three hundred participants were all inhabitants of rural areas, which is central to the concept of the Rural Parliament. We purposely targeted the inhabitants of the rural areas in the Netherlands as individuals. They were not there to represent a special interest group, but participated because they are committed to their rural livelihoods. They could be volunteers who are active in rural development initiatives as well as committed rural citizens. Most people attending the first Rural Parliament were members of village councils and members of Leader groups or programmes.

## Understanding the Rural Parliament

The Rural Parliament is an effort to improve the communication between rural citizens and the national government. Practice and policy meet each other during a session. Governments benefit as they need to have clear feedback from practice to adapt policies or create new ones. Moreover, the members of the national government are not always aware of the main problems in the countryside. On the other hand, citizens are often sceptical about anything that is organised by the national government. Due to the direct presence of the members of the national government, both parties understand each other better. The Rural Parliament is intended to influence policies, but it can also be seen as an opportunity for the administrative level to check and test ideas against the perceptions and ideas at a practical level. After all, it is at the administrative level that decisions are made and actual policies, rules and regulations are formulated, implemented and monitored. The Rural Parliament has no ambition to operate at this level.

However, there is more to the Rural Parliament. It is also a place where citizens demonstrate their own responsibility and initiatives and how the government can react to these. It is about

change and exchange. And it creates a platform for improving the expertise and competence of rural citizens in rural affairs.

Finally, the Rural Parliament should be seen as a movement, not as a static event. We aim to organise the Rural Parliament once every two years while the time in between will be used for improving expertise, lobbying for implementation of agreements made and information sharing on rural affairs.

## Results and way forward

The first Dutch national Rural Parliament has been a successful pilot. Several important agreements and commitments were made. The national government agreed to partly finance the Rural Parliament every year, an indication of how seriously it takes the Rural Parliament. Other commitments made include those on driver's licences for volunteer taxi drivers, free public transport for the young and the elderly, and more room in rural areas for entrepreneurs. Monitoring and following-up these agreements and commitments is of course a critical task. At this stage, the two main initiators of the first Rural Parliament, the Association of Small Villages and the team of the National Network for Rural Development have taken responsibility for this.

In the coming year we want to involve many more organisations in the organisation and management of the Rural Parliament. These will be organisations and networks, who serve the common interest of the countryside, including rural women's organisations, youth organisations, nature conservation organisation and farmers' organisations. In order to involve these groups a 'platform for Rural Parliament partners' has recently been established. These partners are expected to subscribe to the principles of the Rural Parliament. They will bring with them a broad series of perspectives and strengthen the follow-up of the Rural Parliament with their respective lobbying.

The first national rural parliament in the Netherlands was such a success that three *regional* Rural Parliaments were organised in 2006. In these regional Rural Parliaments rural people interacted in the same way with their regional provincial government in the Netherlands. The idea is now to organise a national Rural Parliament every two years and regional Rural Parliaments in the years in between. The regional Rural Parliaments will then generate the input, the issues, for the national one.

To keep everyone informed, a website has been established for the Rural Parliament where the latest news on the agreements and the new Rural Parliaments can be found. This is also the place where digital information can be obtained that can help improve the expertise and competence of the rural citizens in rural affairs.

The ambition of the Rural Parliament is to become a regular phenomenon in the rural areas/ sector: a platform seen by both sides (citizens and politicians) as an important movement for dealing with rural affairs.

Source: Marieke Koot,  
National Network Unit  
for Rural Development  
in the Netherlands

## Reflections on creating an enabling environment

### The need to look beyond the local level

Success and failure of local endogenous development activities such as those described in the previous chapters are often determined by factors beyond direct local influence, the wider 'environment' in which endogenous development takes place. The cases in this chapter describe the joint efforts of communities, development workers and their organisations to address these 'external' factors. Their experiences are summarised below, zooming in on four areas: policy advocacy and policy research; resource rights and regulations; educational reform; and creating wider economic linkages. Together these create important conditions for further up-scaling of successful local initiatives.

### Policy research and lobbying

Government policies may support or frustrate local development initiatives. Three groups of policy areas appear to be most relevant:

**Policies with direct impact on indigenous knowledge, institutions and practices:** These are national policies, for example on the rights of indigenous people, on the role of traditional institutions and leaders and their relationship with formal (e.g. state-based) organisations, on the position of traditional laws within legislation, on mechanisms to protect the use of traditional knowledge, Intellectual Property Rights, policies or mechanisms to protect or improve gender rights and or relations between classes and castes.

Several international policies and declarations—and international human rights standards in particular—that are consistent with indigenous protocols and values can be referred to in policy dialogues. Examples are the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the ILO

#### Kari-Oca Declaration

We, the Indigenous Peoples, walk to the future in the footprints of our ancestors.  
 From the smallest to the largest living being, from the four directions, from the air, the land, and the mountains, the Creator has placed us, the Indigenous Peoples, upon our Mother the Earth.  
 The footprints of our ancestors are permanently etched upon the land of our peoples.  
 We, the Indigenous Peoples, maintain our inherent rights to self-determination.  
 We have always had the right to decide our own forms of government, to use our own laws to raise and educate our children, to our own cultural identity without interference.  
 We continue to maintain our rights as peoples despite centuries of deprivation, assimilation, and genocide.  
 We maintain our inalienable rights to our lands and territories, to all our resources—above and below—and to our waters. We assert our ongoing responsibility to pass these on to the future generations.  
 We cannot be removed from our lands. We, the Indigenous Peoples, are connected by the circle of life to our land and environments.  
 We, the Indigenous Peoples, walk to the future in the footprints of our ancestors.  
 Signed at Kari-Oca, Brazil, on the 30th day of May, 1992.

169 convention. The Kari-Oca Declaration endorsed by representatives of indigenous peoples already in 1992 (see Box) can be referred to by indigenous peoples to get more policy support.

**Policies relevant for implementation of specific development activities:** These may be policies related to management of a specific natural resource (e.g. land, water or trees), environmental management, agricultural research and extension policies or health sector policies.

**Policies that regulate the economy:** These include policies to create price mechanisms for local products and stem competition from imported goods, policies that set quality development standards for local food items, organise marketing and product development of regional products, etc.

Efforts to address policy issues can also start with policy research. This research not only aims at finding relevant policy statements and examining their content, but also at collecting evidence on whether they are implemented or not. Another major task is generating evidence of the effectiveness and relevance of the endogenous development approach and the specific activities undertaken, upon which to base further policy dialogue. Good case studies with reliable data can be convincing. Short summary statements, policy briefs that formulate the main policy implications in terms and concepts relevant for policy makers can be equally useful.

But gathering and creating evidence is rarely enough to change policies. Several case studies describe efforts in actual policy lobbying. Common instruments like rallies, press conferences, petitions and even legal action can be part of this. From an endogenous development point of view the central question remains: how can development organisations empower communities and their leaders to take ownership of and lead this lobby process? Strengthening local leadership and combining it with the formation of larger representative organisations are major avenues for achieving this (see also Chapter 7). Development organisations can support this by providing capacity building in policy research and lobbying, facilitating linkages with like-minded organisations, and helping build coalitions.

### Resource rights and regulations

While endogenous development builds on and enhances local systems for resource use and management, communities are often confronted with formal rules and regulations that prevent them from using available resources effectively. This refers to access and use of natural resources such as land, water or trees. However, it is equally relevant for human, socio-cultural and even spiritual resources when rules and regulations discourage or prevent traditional knowledge practices, leaders or values from being given a serious role in the development process. The case studies in this book show how development agencies and communities jointly try to address the rights issues:

**Rights on the use of local knowledge, safeguarding intellectual property rights:** In the case of genetic materials a number of organisations have helped to create 'Village Biodiversity Registers' (Chapter 7, Case 7-2). Description of local plants and their uses in a register prevents outsiders from patenting these for their own commercial use. Equally important are efforts to

link up with Intellectual Property Rights issues at the international level and to support lobbies at the level of the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement.

**Territory and land rights:** The cosmovisions of most indigenous and rural peoples define territory and land as a totality, where human beings, spiritual beings and their reciprocity with animals and plants form a dynamic whole. These cosmovisions are in danger because of the implementation of development policies which have by-passed the traditional vision on territory, for example by privatising natural resources such as land or water. When governments discuss development policies, international and national conventions on the territorial rights of the indigenous people should be taken into account. They also have to be informed by indigenous peoples' cosmovisions and seek their consent before a decision can be taken.

**Right to use own legal system:** in the case of Guatemala (Case 8-5) in this chapter, communities and their support organisation have worked systematically towards the recognition of and right to use their own Maya legal system as the basis for governing many aspects of local development.

The bottom line of most activities in this field is the effort to understand and help document existing traditional systems for resource use and management, their strengths and weaknesses in the past and their present potential within an endogenous development context. This can form a foundation upon which to base lobbying efforts for approaches that are rooted in a fundamental respect for those rights and seek ways to give them a best possible place.

As case 5-5 on the Mapuche in Chile shows, it is important that traditional concepts of land and territory are appreciated and understood by development actors and made visible through intercultural learning and documentation.

### Educational reform

These insights and documents are also important to inspire educational systems at primary, secondary and university level. It is of fundamental importance that the new generations now being educated have a broader vision of life. In such a broad vision, the biological and cultural diversity of the earth is understood as richness that must be taken care of to ensure the survival of natural species, human species and the spirituality of the peoples.

The need to look at the educational system, from primary to university level is therefore evident. In many countries, the system tends to reproduce professionals, from development workers, researchers, to managers and politicians, who not only do not understand endogenous development but who frustrate local development efforts by ignoring local realities and designing and implementing unsustainable interventions. Formal education has often alienated students from their own cultural roots. Several organisations are therefore working towards changes in the educational system to ensure that the graduates are supportive of endogenous development.

Experiences in working with primary schools in Peru (Chapter 7, Case 7-6) have led teachers to define the critical characteristics of a school that is supportive of endogenous development:

- Culturally diverse, respects the wisdom of children and elders of the community;

- Provides education that allows children to know the modern without forgetting their legacy, knowledge from their parents, the community's wisdom;
- The teacher assumes a role as cultural mediator;
- Parents participate in the learning processes as co-teachers;
- There is harmony between what children are taught at school and what parents have taught their offspring;
- Helps the children to learn to read and write but at the same time maintain the knowledge about the signs given to us by nature;
- And where children learn science and intellectual abstraction without subordinating the possibilities of human development based on tradition and the senses;
- Organising the school curriculum around the main agro-cultural calendar, the use of a school plot to learn traditional and modern agricultural practices, exchange visits to communities and involving parents and elders in certain classes are the main instruments to realise such schools.

It is probably an even greater challenge to change the educational system and the curricula at the level of institutes of higher learning, the centres of 'science'. In most cases these institutes limit themselves to a conventional approach to science, in which there is little room for traditional forms of knowing and learning. Yet, in order to become relevant for supporting endogenous development, they need to be able to combine teaching on conventional science with transdisciplinary science and culture-specific traditional systems of knowing (epistemologies).

Although experiences so far are limited to a few universities, it is clear that it is not enough to introduce endogenous-friendly topics or content into the curriculum. One needs to go beyond lecturing on the relevance of farmer knowledge and practices, the concept of science vis-à-vis such local knowledge, the role of traditional leaders, and the endogenous approach itself. These efforts will not be effective unless the educational process, the *organisation and education methods* are also changed. Options mentioned in the cases to realise this include:

- Well-structured exposure of students to the realities of local communities, often through participatory research assignments;
- Incorporating a study of local knowledge, beliefs and institutions into the research assignments;
- Sharing of outcomes of participatory research assignments with communities for feedback;
- Organising education as social learning processes, in which all actors are as much students as they are teachers and where there is a close interrelationship between the development of cognitive, social, spiritual and emotional competences, and the relation these have to values and ethics (see chapter 2). Skills such as (group) facilitation and mobilising actors in stakeholder platforms are important for students to prepare for their role in supporting endogenous development.

It is clear that a university needs, either on its own or through field-based partners, good links with communities to be able to implement this over a longer period of time.

### **Creating wider economic opportunities and linkages**

In Chapter 5, reflections on the local economy indicate that the first challenge is to make the best use of local resources. Especially where marginal economic conditions prevail, it is therefore important to start from revitalising the local traditional agriculture, health care and other natural resource use practices before introducing modern practices.

Traditional products can be made attractive for urbanised and foreign consumers as well. By adapting them to the demands of potential consumers and by commercialising, it is often possible to raise the value of traditional products such as herbal medicines, local food specialties, organic agricultural products, handicrafts and art. Commercialisation of local products and services, however, should not be at the cost of food security, social solidarity or ecological sustainability.

The next challenge is to design strategies which balance localisation and globalisation, a process in which the rules of interaction between the local and the global are to an increasing extent controlled by the local actors (see for example Case 8-7, where olive farming cooperatives have created local selling points). Local communities connect to the global economy in such a way that local qualities (such as food self-sufficiency, cultural identity, ecological sustainability, biodiversity) and values (such as respect for the spiritual world, social reciprocity and solidarity) remain, or become the point of reference.

Up-scaling still poses a major challenge for many organisations supporting endogenous development. Several cases in this book refer to some of these activities (e.g. marketing of pottery and paintings in the case of SWOPA, Ghana, Chapter 6, Case 6-5) and as the endogenous development approach matures, activities in this area are expected to become more prominent.

