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CASE STUDY

WORKING WITH PEOPLE: RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT WITH AYMARAS COMMUNITIES OF PERU

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Abstract

Working with people (WWP) is considered a conceptual approach for rural development projects in emerging countries and the EU. Projects have to be developed **BY people** with an active role instead of **FOR people**. The main objective is to involve people in the process of formulation, implementation, management and future success of the project. Participation does not only mean consulting with people, but in fact a "logical community action" (Cernea, 1991, 1999).

Planning to foster or to improve rural development involves more than just self organization in order to get people to work together in a community. Social Learning (Friedmann, 1993), as a planning approach, means learning from experiencing change, knowledge is validated and produces mutual learning enhancing expert knowledge of the planner and transfer of knowledge to people.

Rural Development projects are very efficient instruments to transform rural development processes, but do not work as a traditional engineering Project which goals and aims not always consider a clear and direct relation with local community during the management and project implementation. Rural development projects require from their conception and continuous, mutual learning approach to achieve its goals.

This paper summarizes a participatory model which integrates a social approach on different phases of a rural development project with the Aymaras Communities of Puno, Peru.

In this project a team work worked jointly with a local women Coordinator, which involves 320 partners organized in 21 rural communities. This experience have allowed to learn from experience of project managing and understanding the complex social realities, considering development as a product of learning (Ackoff, 1984) in a framework of continuous creative project management with flexible and informal approach (Chambers, 1993). At the same time, Local Woman Coordinator begins a self-learning process that gradually transforms its main productive activity into an efficient enterprise of success reinforcing its social organization and expanding its impact to other territories.

Keywords: *Working With People, Rural Development, Social Learning*

1. Introduction

Economic development doctrine, broadly developed on the 50s and 60s, introduced science, engineering and planning as infallible instruments for rational control of nature and society (Llano, 1988). Precision and domain will (Ballesteros, 1989) were dominant ideas in a line of thought that has come to be called "modernity" (Spaemann, 2004). At the same time, the concept of "modern project", also known as project "blueprint" was introduced based on engineering, scientific rationality and bottom up approach (Bond, Hulme, 1999). Since the concept blueprint project was created, models of development planning (Mannheim, 1949) (Lindblom, 1977) (Etzioni, 1968) and quantitative models for development (Friedmann, 1986, 1991) were implemented and developed "blueprint" is designed according to the ideal of

"unlimited progress" (Wolf, 1981) and unlimited natural resources (Friedmann, 1986, 1991), from a simplified perspective it seeks the "general welfare" values of individuals as arises so-called "homo economicus" (Petty, 1985) which sees progress as a phenomenon intrinsically linked to exploitation.

Considering primarily the "technical" setting and quantitative predominance, individuals are considered abstractly (Ballesteros, 1989) and projects relevant actors are not estimated in the decisions process (Cernea, 1991), their families and the wider culture and ethics world (Llano, 1992) are not incorporated into the design values of the people, leaving little room for the ethic (Llano, 1992) and relationship between man and nature (Berger, 1979).

These deficiencies of the "blueprint" and top-down approach resulted in a number of conflicts in relation to development, failing to be integrated into communities' social life. These conflicts arise in different areas: urban-rural differentiation (Chisholm, 1962), land use (Clark, 1982), urban-rural society division (Deane, 1978), family business disappearance (Moore, 1984), increasing of socio-economic differences (Razin, Hasson, 1994) (Murtagh, 1998), changes in society (Moore, 1984) and industrial development problems (Marsden, 1995) (Cloke, 1993).

Since the early 1990s, due to "blueprint" model problems, the notion of post modernity arises as a cultural-ideological effect reacting to the capitalist-industrial society (Llano, 1988). Different authors have referred to postmodernism focused on cultural changes in rural areas (Cloke, 1993) (Halfacree, 1993) (Murdoch, Pratt, 1993) (Philo, 1992, 1993). Other authors have called it "postmodern difference sensitivity" (Cloke, Philo, Sadler, 1991); modernity and not just in industrialization processes (Cloke, 1987).

Also numerous studies have analyzed cultural changes in rural communities (Miibourne, 1997) (Cloke, Little, 1997) (Cresswell, 1996) (Halfacree, 1993) (Kinsman, 1995) (Little, Austin, 1996) (Matless, 1995) (Sibley, 1992, 1995), urban-rural relations (Sibley, 1995), infrastructure technologies (Clark, 1982), industry spatial dispersion (Hodge, Monk, 1987) (Fielding, 1982) and new alternatives for rural development (Murdoch, Pratt, 1993).

A process of change in rural areas has begun, introducing a new complexity into rural development projects and demanding the need to incorporate human aspects and the community way of life into these instruments..

2. Working With People (WWP): a new approach for rural development project management

In this section is introduced a new approach to rural development projects which emphasizes on individuals contextual and behavioral skills (IPMA, 2010) and requires planners "social sensitivity" (Cazorla, De Los Rios, 2001) and ethical standards. This new model for formulating, implementing and evaluating **rural development projects** developed by the authors of this paper defines the term **WWP -Working With People-**. **WWP project** as a model of rural development being the result of three research lines:

- *Logic-participatory working models* (Chambers, 1993, 1994) (Cernea, 1987, 1991, 1992) (Korten, 1980) (Uphoff, 1985).
- *Models of planning as a social learning* (Friedmann, 1986, 1991, 1993) (Cazorla, Friedmann, 1995)
- *Formulation and evaluation methodologies and project plans for Rural Development* (FAO, 1998), as a result of a *wealthy experience in the field of rural planning and development projects promoted by international organizations* (Trueba et al, 1998).

WWP project suggest/ is based on the following **principles**:

Respect and primacy for the people – Firstly, the WWP project demand **respect for the people**, which are the main elements to be considered in any development strategy and in the design of any technical innovation. The authorities and professionals, who promote these projects, are obliged to respect the fundamental rights of these people, their traditions and cultural identity. Respect and social sensitivity must be extended to the people in charge of managing the development projects, and must be defined and negotiated through participative processes of social integration (Cazorla, De los Ríos, Díaz-Puente, 2005). The **contemplation** or complete outlook in the solution of the problems constitute two lines of thought and action, essential to achieve equilibrium of form and depth within the stresses created at the beginning of the century.

To guarantee social well being and sustainable development - On the other hand, *WWP projects* require to guarantee social well being and sustainable development of rural communities; technical investment and efforts made must be directed to satisfy the necessities of rural population and their well being. This principle requires that the WWP planners together with the local population define together development projects that will guarantee sustainability of rural areas, is maintained in time, ensuring activities, jobs and environmental resources for community development. Technology, knowledge and switch into innovation constitute determinant factors to guarantee social well being. Advance of new technologies have been a mean to a great step towards the resolution of social and economic problems, increasing the quality of life of all citizens, economic growth, strengthening competition and encouraging job creation.

Bottom-up and multidisciplinary approach - On the different stages of these WWP projects, becomes necessary to guarantee a **subsidiary** principle in which rural development projects are responsibility of rural community agents, integrating several representative actors from the different areas of the activity among them. The WWP approach used by new professionals must be top-down, bottom-up reinforcing people ability o, knowledge and practice to ensure permanent development of their territory allowing efficiency in public investments, acquiring a bigger social dimension. For this commitment, it is necessary improvement to create a network that facilitates an accurate knowledge of the territory, as well as the action of multidisciplinary teams that offer a positive view of the reality, from different perspective allowing to take actions with better perspective of success in terms of the possibility of giving appropriate answers to the population necessities.

Endogenous and integrated approach - Engineering projects, common element to all engineers, constitute an immobilisation of scarce commodities and resources (investment) in order to generate a flow of goods and future services susceptible of being evaluated from technical, economic, social and environmental perspective (Trueba, 1995). All projects have a series of stages (project cycle), a technical articulation, an economic investment, even a necessary evaluation of environmental impact compulsory not from many years ago. WWP development project requires a **global approach** taking into account all aspects such as multisector interventions and socio-economic agents and planning managers involvement, which will allow to create new combinations and synergies for new projects and activities.

In addition to the above principles, the **WWP project** can be sintetized around four components:

A. WWP organizational component: Assumes that responsible institutions and project planners are able to create learning spaces and social processes which assure collateral learning from the relevant actors of change. This component means to provide within the project with an organizational structure which facilitates participation and social activism

"from below." WWP demands that project own configuration itself leads into a process of organizational change in order to fit all people involved, assuming that it is not enough to make decisions to encourage development.

WWP organization has an instrumental character and therefore, is flexible and constantly evolving under the umbrella of learning advances. Its organization becomes a living entity that transmits values within a flexible organizational schemes to suit the needs of local population and work together.

B) Ethic-Normative Component. Ethical-legal normative component means that WWP project does not have a character of "neutrality", but is based on an ideal of service-offering and guided by determined values. Faced to the technocratic vision of modern project, which tended to exclude moral considerations, WWP model intends to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Firstly, it assumes the determined culture of participant organizations to ensure its ethical guideline. WWP planners are submitted to values requirement over the purely structural and technical part of the projects (Friedmann, 1986, 1991). WWP institution, unlike a simple Project Office, is able to set local values in order to promote and defend them (Selznick, 1957).

This component covers ethical and moral behavior of individuals which are the basis of the whole social system that surrounds the WWP project, laying the "structure" for people to come to work together based on commitment, trust and personal freedom. Values and ethics prevent potential moral conflicts in the project, and in relation to stakeholders (IPMA, 2010); seriously force planner's ideals, integrate less influential groups in economic and social development; preserve cultural diversity, support quality growth over quantity growth, introduce the notion of sustainability and equality of persons and respect for the environment (Friedmann, 1993).

C) Commerce component: business function. This component seeks to "bring together" people potentially affected by the project and build a commitment to work with them at an early stage. Therefore, WWP is an open system to social environment which requires entering into dialogue with the social framework in which it is inserted. WWP has its bases on the concepts of "Transactive planning (Friedmann, 1986, 1991) - Negotiating Planning (Cazorla, Friedmann, 1995) - which highlights competence relationship among the involved actors. WWP project planners identify the "client" with "affected population" to be integrated into the planning process work, to work "with" people. Negotiation goes further than purely commercial and economic aspects of project's results, which are not only "tangible" (ie "visible" benefits resulting from project), but are also concerned about "intangibles" (invisible benefits in the form of expansion of knowledge, social and cultural aspects). Negotiation, greater than participatory aspects, takes time and requires developing the ability to "listen" and look for shared responsibility ranks (Cazorla, Friedmann, 1995). It involves active participation to reach a mutual enrichment of individuals and develop their creativity, understood as the ability to think and act in an original and imaginative way (IPMA, 2010). WWP relations can enhance **creativity**, in an individual and collective way, for the benefit of individuals and common good. This element allows taking action as an emerging movement that breaks into people who discover something new (Llano, 1992). Each WWP project represents an investment unit consisting of social relations, in fact, it is an innovation, a unique experiment, and whatever is its outcome is always informative to society (Gilder, 1984). From this component, the WWP project adopts a "**business function**" as a human, economic, public and private resource moving instrument, which involves consultation and negotiation between various actors, and commitment and capability of being ready to assume and manage risks (Friedmann, 1993).

D) Component of social learning. From an excessively technocratic point of view of development, **innovation** may be understood essentially as a technical act for the *production*

of a new device. This **technological innovation** has been traditionally conceived as a simple act of production, design and engineering of product or process, without mentioning the social processes (Bricall *et al*, 2000). Considering this framework, another valuable **approach within WWP** is conceiving **innovation as a process of social learning** that includes new human relations, new management, administration and negotiation systems, new forms of learning, new ways of structuring and sharing information and knowledge among all social agents generated innovation. **Innovation as a process of social learning** might be therefore understood in a WWP project as a hard, open and interactive process with an important **social dimension**, which means a constant adaptation of the forms of knowledge and learning to the market and technological conditions that are constantly changing.

WWP approach integrates the “**planning as of social learning**” which identifies new roles for planners and the body of knowledge of *Planning Pluralism and Social* (Friedmann, 1986, 1991, 1993). The role of the planner in indigenous and social planning practice is to help people developing and planning for themselves (Cazorla, Friedmann, 1995), considering innovation as a social learning process with a collective dimension. This process interrelate different knowledges in the actions decision making process. This scheme have been applied in several experiences in LEADER areas (Cazorla, De los Ríos, Alier, Merino, 2008) (Cazorla, De Los Rios, 2001) (Cazorla, De los Ríos, Díaz-Puente, 2005).

The new trends tend towards acceleration and important changes in the ways of learning, betting for processes based in action –*learning by doing*–, as well as in the training of values and abilities essentially acquired through education. Scala said *the origin of knowledge is observation and experience, “saper vedere”* (Scala, 1991). This WWP approach of innovation as a learning process is especially relevant in **rural development projects**, where is demanded that rural population change from being an object to being a subject of projects and processes (Oakley, 1993).

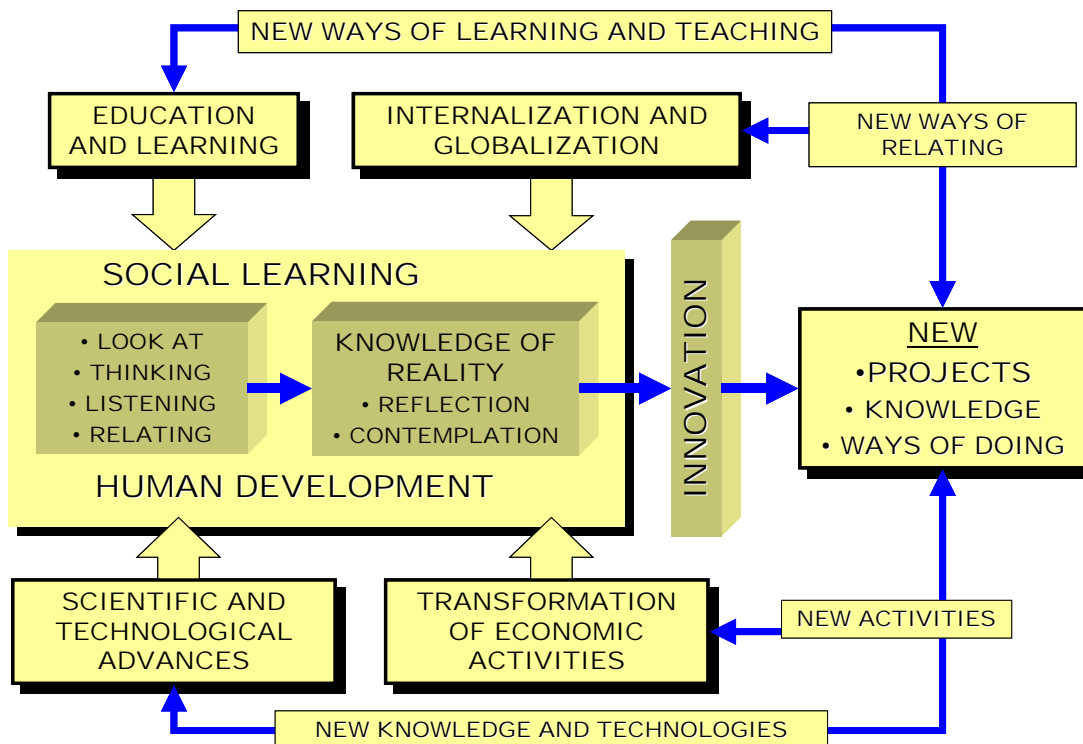


Figure 1: Innovation as a process of Social Learning on WWP projects
Source: Cazorla, De los Ríos, 2002

This way of considering development, similar to European LEADER model, innovation is mainly obtained from the local popular knowledge, which is considered appropriated for the action as the knowledge obtained from professionals and external input. Innovation in the European *Initiative LEADER* is essentially defined **as a process** and can be analysed on the basis of three components: *temporal, social and collective dimension* (AEIDL, 2001). By accepting and encouraging "intangible" investments, LEADER helps to reinforce the social, cultural and environmental sectors. In WWP the concept of **innovation** as a **learning process** means also development of the mental activity of **contemplation**. We understand contemplation as *the application of mind- to a material or spiritual object- with attention and particular affection*. Its aim is to know sensibly and intellectually realities, being always respectful with the others (Cazorla, De Los Rios, 2001). This knowledge seen with double perspective -sensible and intellectual- starts with a perceptive activity through the practice of view of things, thinking about them and listening to people. Figure 1 presented previously WWP approach and its main concepts with higher meaning when they are related to human development and its intangible factors.

Considering and understanding this approach to innovation processes, and WWP projects, it is required that development professionals to give up their own ideas and to create a new **social sensitivity**.

3. Rural development projects WWP in Aymara's community of Peru

WWP model was implemented in the Aymara's communities of Puno, Peru. Considered a sensitive area where natural resources are used inappropriately and local communities are among the poorest in the country, with a high population growth rate and a low level of development. The socio-economic and biological indicators in this area classify as extremely poor. Project activities were initiated in 2008 in six provinces in Puno Region (Chucuito, Juli, Huancane, Puno, Yunguyo and Moho), under the title: "Developing leadership capabilities of women in the Aymara communities of Puno (Peru)". It has been financed by Madrid City Council for a two years work period. The main objective of project is to increase micro-entrepreneurs technical and management capacities of Aymara women communities to *improve their level of independence by becoming leading actors in sustainable development of their communities and consequently alleviating poverty*.

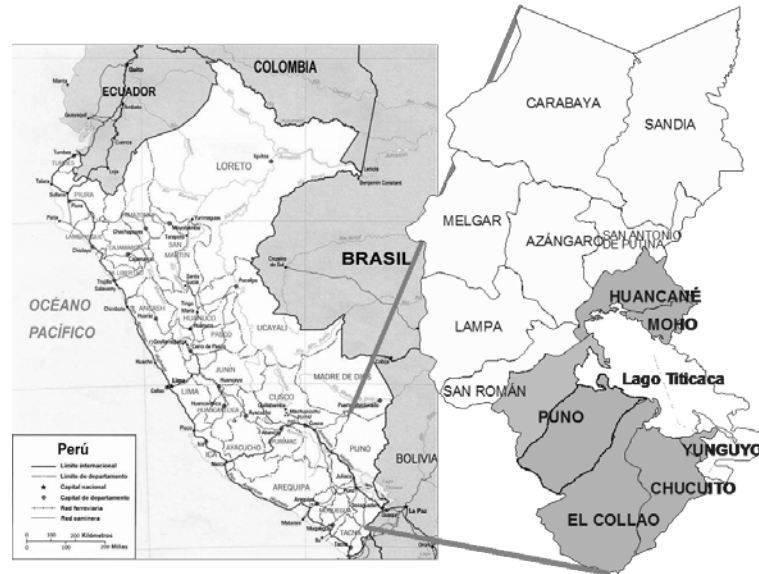
The department of Puno is located in the Andean region, in the south-eastern corner of Peru, distance from Lima is around 1.315 km, from Arequipa 325 km and 389 km from Cusco (main economic centres in the country). The territory surface is approximately 72.000 km² which represents 5.6% of Peruvian extension. Approximately, 70% of this territory is located on Collao's plateau and 30% is part of the Amazon area (INEI, 2005). Its population approximately near 257.000 inhabitants. The departmental capital is the city of Puno, located on the shores of Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world, 3.827 m (INEI, 2005).

The target populations considered for this experience were concentrated in the provinces of Mold, Huancane, Puno, Chucuito, Juli, Collao and Yunguyo. In all these communities the dominant language is Aymara and Spanish is the official language.

Characteristics and limitations of rural population in these areas from the production approach are summarized in the following points:

- Climate conditions are highly restrictive, largely due to the local height of nearly 4.000 m. determined by the proximity to Andean Mountains.
- Deficit of communications and transport infrastructures, particularly affecting small segregated communities in the study area.
- The main activity is agricultural production with low technological level. Limitation factors are local infrastructure, technical assistance, training and access to credit.

- Local production market is very poor with low prices paid by intermediaries, production dispersion, low volumes and lack of business organization.
- Difficulties for the group of women cover interrelated aspects such as: male idiosyncrasies, low education profiles -especially in women-, poor financial resources mobilization to women and their associations, Aymara language as the only way of interacting for many of them, little participation of women in decision-making processes of communities, among others.



Results of WWP model integrates two complementary sources of information. Firstly, a secondary source of information generated by project reports, official records, statistical databases and scientific literature (Nier, 2005). On the other hand, primary source for empirical knowledge based on local experience and main actors perception of the project: the Coalition of Aymara Women (CMA). To obtain this information two instruments were designed in a previous step: a) Questionnaire for CMA members, leading to a universe of 144 women (45% of the total 320 women who make up the CMA), b) Interview to local leaders: reaching 100% of the 21 women coordinators for each of the groups. The personal interviews were conducted by UPM GESPLAN team and took place in Puno, during the period between March and April 2010.

4. Results of WWP Model implementation: Aymara's community project

In this section the results of the effects of WWP process are discussed, according to the views of stakeholders and project 's monitoring reports.

A) WWP Organizational component: from the first moment the WWP project build up an organization scheme in order to facilitate participation and social activism with a bottom up approach" Actions are developed for the consolidation of of Coordinadora de Mujeres Aymaras (Aymara Women Coordinator) onwards CMA as a local organization. Actions at various project stages considered CMA, to the provision of a work venue to the development of a corporate image and media. The main results of this component are:

- Legal setting up of the Coordinator of Aymara Women as a legal entity; acquisition of Single Taxpayer Registry (i.e RUC, registration required to operate as a business entity) and statute adoption. (<http://grupogesplan.es/Aymaras/documentos/ESTATUTOS.pdf>)
- Creation of a Board of Directors of the CAM and appointment of the board of directors: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, legal advisor and vocal.

- Consolidation and assessment of work group to ensure quality and improve productivity: 87% of participant women value positively work together as a new work form within the project.
- Creation of logo and corporate image of the CMA (figure 2)



Figure 2: CMA Logo

B) WWP Ethical regulatory component. The project is designed as an ideal of service for Aymara women guided by values that enhance active participation the development of their communities, and promoting innovations for craft production and food products. Results of this component are:

- Creation of a series of internal rules from the CMA General Assembly, regularized in an approved statute.
- Creation of CMA based on Aymara's culture values, which recognize and protect women.
- Creation of mutual respect environment allowing the Aymara Board work without conflicts with the UPM / GESPLAN technical team involved in this project. Planning team ideals seeks to give voice to less powerful groups to integrate them into economic and social life.
- Design and launch of CMA website -www.mujeresyamaras.com- where goals, objectives, statutes, affiliates, spirit and values of the Aymara culture are collected and diffusion.

C) Component relational-negotiator business function. Works with Aymaras women allowed them to enter into new relations of dialogue and negotiation with the social environment in which the project fits. Different institutions from the relational component-negotiator, have influenced these results:

- Signature, in February 2009 of a partnership between the CMA and GESPLAN-UPM to establish a framework of relations between parties.
- Relations with the NGO Design for Development (DPD), to make the first collection of home textile and fashion business to incorporate entrepreneur culture in Aymara women.
- Collaboration agreement with the Institute of Rural Education (IER) of Juli, to provide infrastructure to support training activities (on international fashion trends, international markets, product marketing, technical, financial and marketing) and workshops for textile design crafts.
- Relations in Peru with Pizarro Foundation, to disseminate and present 2009 product collection in Lima on July 22, 2009, with the assistance of the Coordinator of Women CMA Aymara people, the Peruvian government and business representatives of Peru.
- Relations in Spain, the Association of Amas de Casa del Pilar de la Horadada (Alicante), for exhibition and sale of products of 2009 Collection, through an event held in November 2009 with over 200 ladies.
- Relations with the Fashion Shopping Mall (one of the most exclusive outlets in Madrid), allowing the sale of project's products and holding official presentation in Spain of the First Collection Modaymara 2009. This event was attended by senior regional government, business locals and numerous assistants. Some of these entrepreneurs incorporated as institutional gift products.
- Increased business and trade. During the project, women have increased their marketing efforts: from "the situation "without" project-57% of women who sell its products to 75% of women who sell their crafts in the situation "with" project WWP, as their main source of income.
- Increased new income for women communities. Total sales reached with the 2009 collection in the first six months of work were € 12,899.94 gross and orders on-line can be placed via web. 75% of these revenues flow back into the community as follows: € 6,064.88 to € 3,280.40 for artisans and Coordinator.

- Development of finance culture: 53% of women surveyed are interested in a loan to finance activities to improve their productive activity.
- Improved entrepreneurship capacity: 40% of the women interviewed expressed their desire to start a new business after being trained.
- New communication technologies have facilitated internal and external relations of the population. 65% of respondents have a cell phone.

D) Social learning Component: The new bargaining relationships and ongoing dialogues among the target population (women members of the CMA) and planners (GESPLAN-UPM) were developed through social learning processes. The expertise and experience are integrated into the actions of a leading WWP through dialogue with the affected population allowed a continuous enrichment process. From this component, the WWP works have allowed the following results:

- Knowledge sharing and joint research in the field with women communities to design joint actions for the project: product development, marketing strategies, organization and dissemination of CMA.
- Commitment and sustainability of the project through dialogue and negotiation: high percentage of women is interested in staying in their rural community.
- Improvement and capacity building (technical, contextual and personal) of the members of the CMA, and improvement of social learning system in planning activities to implement new projects.
- High interest of women (100%) for training to adopt technical innovations of the project, high coverage with 57% of women have been incorporated to learning procedures, and learning impact with 91% of women implementing innovations and incorporated improvements techniques in their production system.
- Positive population dynamics in communities involved within the project: 60% of women surveyed feel that the population is increasing in their communities.
- Improved income distribution in communities as a result of the high involvement and effort by the planning team to integrate less influential in economic and social life. The following graph (Graph.1) shows Lorenz curves (Ref. lorenz), representing monthly income of initial situation "without" project (in red) and "with" WWP project (in blue). It is observed income distribution in the initial situation "without" is more unequal, with a Gini index(without) of 0.708 - that the situation "with" the WWP project - where we obtain a Gini index (with) of 0.469, which shows a more equitable distribution of income for women.

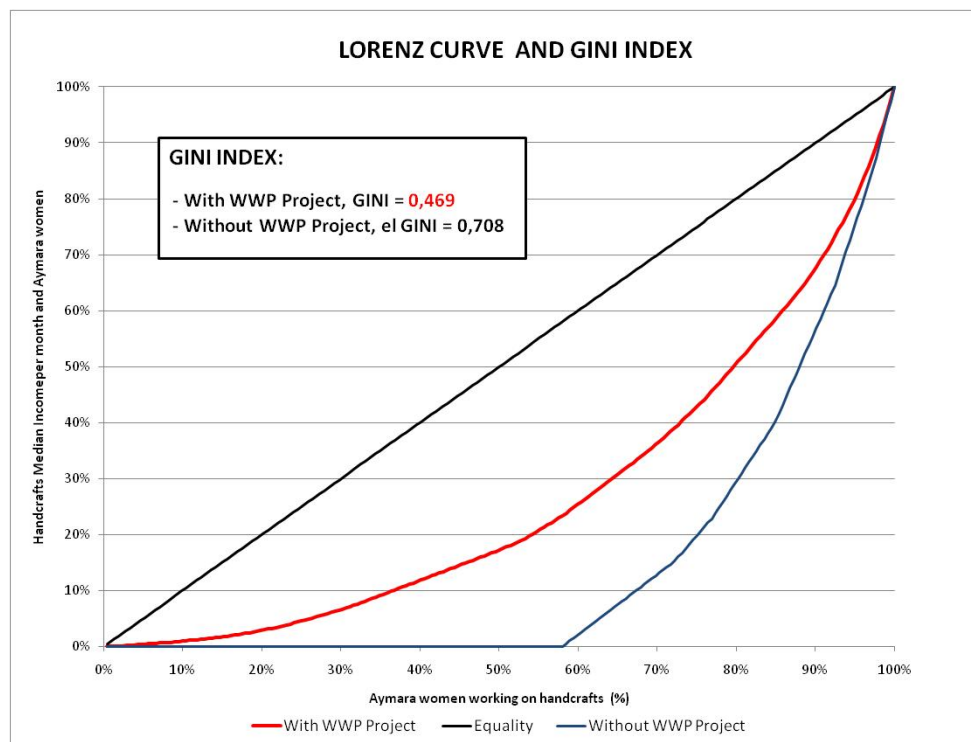


5. Conclusions

Working With People model (WWP), applied in Aymara communities, is confirmed as a new approach to rural development projects. From its different components WWP emphasizes individuals' contextual and behavioral skills. Success of WWP model requires planners' special "social sensitivity" and "stock assessment" to understand different perspectives and to be receptive to opinions, value judgments and ethical standards.

All discussed components of WWP have affected in four major dimensions in Aymara communities to create improvement of innovation processes and development, while respecting their own culture, values and beliefs. These effects can be summarized as follows:

1. New scientific advances and new technologies diffusion share: technical advances are focused on handmade product design, TICs implementation (CMA website), online product sale and commercialization.
2. Transformation and diversification of rural economic activities and subsequent maintenance of employment: improving economic and business development promoting micro-enterprise projects related to handicrafts made by women, such as textiles and small agricultural production with high added value. Improvement of rural economic activities beyond purely commercial and business products is accompanied with social and cultural effects of great importance.
3. Improving international relations and shifts towards globalization of societies and economies trend: since the establishment of CMA, recognized as a legal entity, improved international relations with various actors and institutions.
4. Increased level of education and knowledge base in rural societies: 320 women trained within the project are grouped into 21 groups of CMA and are the means to disseminate knowledge base and improve incomes of rural communities. Finally, we would like to highlight the necessity to make an effort in order to see a stronger emphasis on the social component of WWP project, and the need to reinforce social learning approach. Geographic scale of WWP project must be correspondent with territorial reduced dimensions which allows local community mobilization and involve them in the process of social learning that would allow an endogenous development process based projects on resources available in the local area.



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